

2024/25

**Swindon Borough Council & Group
Statement of Accounts**

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Introduction by the Director of Finance and Audit

The 2024/25 financial year has continued to be challenging for the Council. Like many local authorities, Swindon has continued to feel the ongoing effects of inflation, alongside increasing demand for services. The budget was balanced by the end of the year despite significant pressures on the budgets, particularly for Adults and Children's Social Care and Housing Services.

The 2025/26 budget was set based on the use of capital funds to meet revenue costs, a facility known as exceptional financial support. The continued increases in demand for and costs of services, particularly for Adults and Children's social care, SEND and housing combined with the, as yet unknown, impact of funding reforms means there continues to be considerable uncertainty about the council's funding position.

Work is progressing on the Swindon 2028 transformation plan to enable the Council to both respond to the anticipated financial challenges and deliver against the Council's Missions set out in the Swindon Plan.

On 11th June the Government published the spending review covering three years from 2026/27 to 2028/29. The move to multi-year funding settlements will aid financial planning over the medium term.

Kim Chequer

Director of Finance and Audit

June 2025

Narrative Report

These accounts relate to the financial year ended 31 March 2025 and have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in Great Britain (The Code). The Code is to be adopted by Local Authorities when publishing their accounts. The accounting convention adopted is historical cost, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of tangible property, plant and equipment (PPE) assets. Any diversion from the Code is stated where applicable.

Updates to the Accounts Required Under Changes to Accounting Practice

There have been no prior period updates to the accounts from changes to accounting practice. IFRS16 Leases has been implemented under a cumulative catch-up process, without restating prior period balances.

The Statements

The financial statements follow recommended practice and are split between core statements of the authority and their notes, and supplementary statements.

Financial Overview

Swindon Borough Council is a Unitary Council that, alongside its other core functions, also provides Council housing. It is required to account for its expenditure in three distinct categories:

- General Fund (GF) Revenue Account

This includes day-to-day expenditure on all services except those directly relating to council housing. Expenditure is financed mainly from government grant, (Formulae Grant, Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)), other specific grants, fees & charges and Collection Fund income.

- Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Included within this account is all expenditure on the day-to-day management of the Council's housing stock. Expenditure is principally funded from council house rents. HRA income cannot be used to fund GF services beyond the extent that it buys support from those services.

- Capital

All improvements and enhancements to the Council's long-term assets are included in this category. This expenditure is funded from the sale of capital assets, borrowing, Government grant support or contributions from developers/revenue. Capital funding cannot be used for revenue activities unless a capitalisation directive is authorised by the Secretary of State.

Financial Overview – The General Fund (GF)

The net GF budget for the year was set at £178.8m. This excludes funding for schools, which is provided via the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

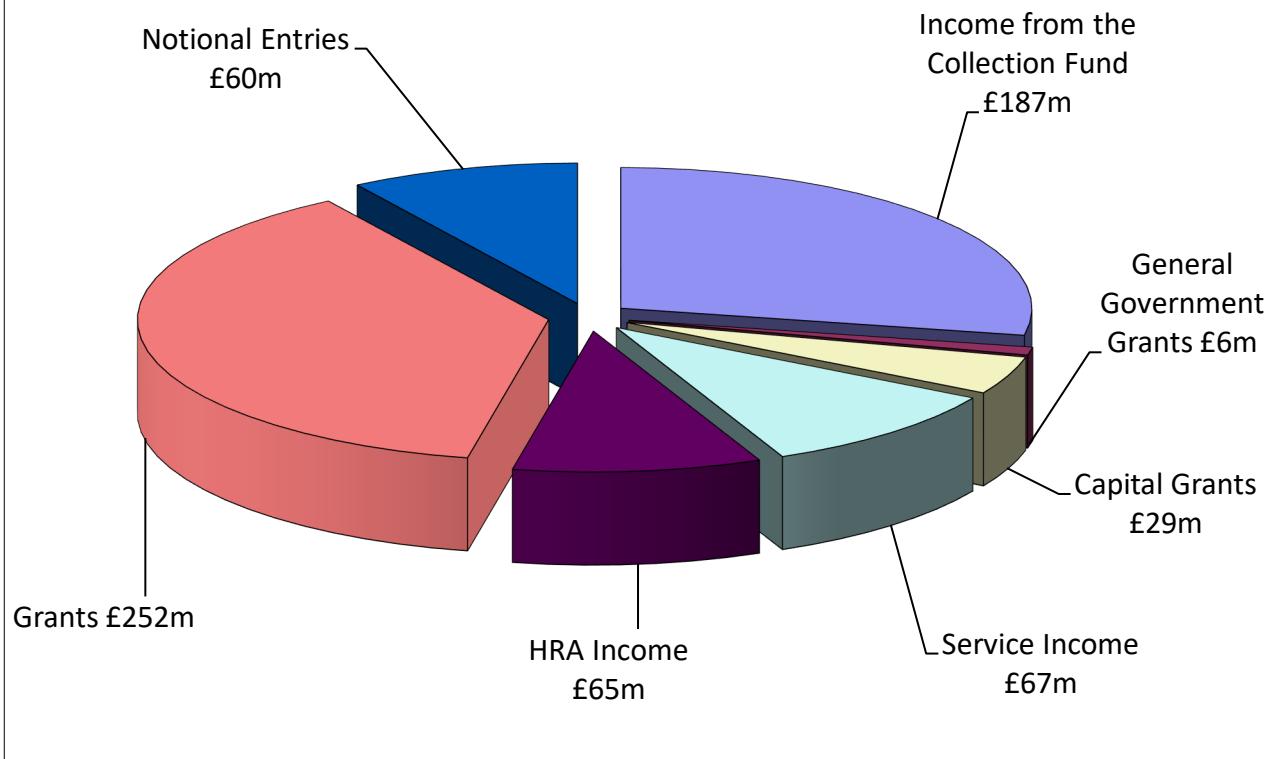
The overall budget was delivered with the balance on the general fund able to be increased but there remain variations within individual Service Areas. As has been reported throughout the year, this includes significant pressures on Children services, which has been partially offset from savings in other services.

The following table provides more detail on the outturn position for the year for each of the Council's service areas.

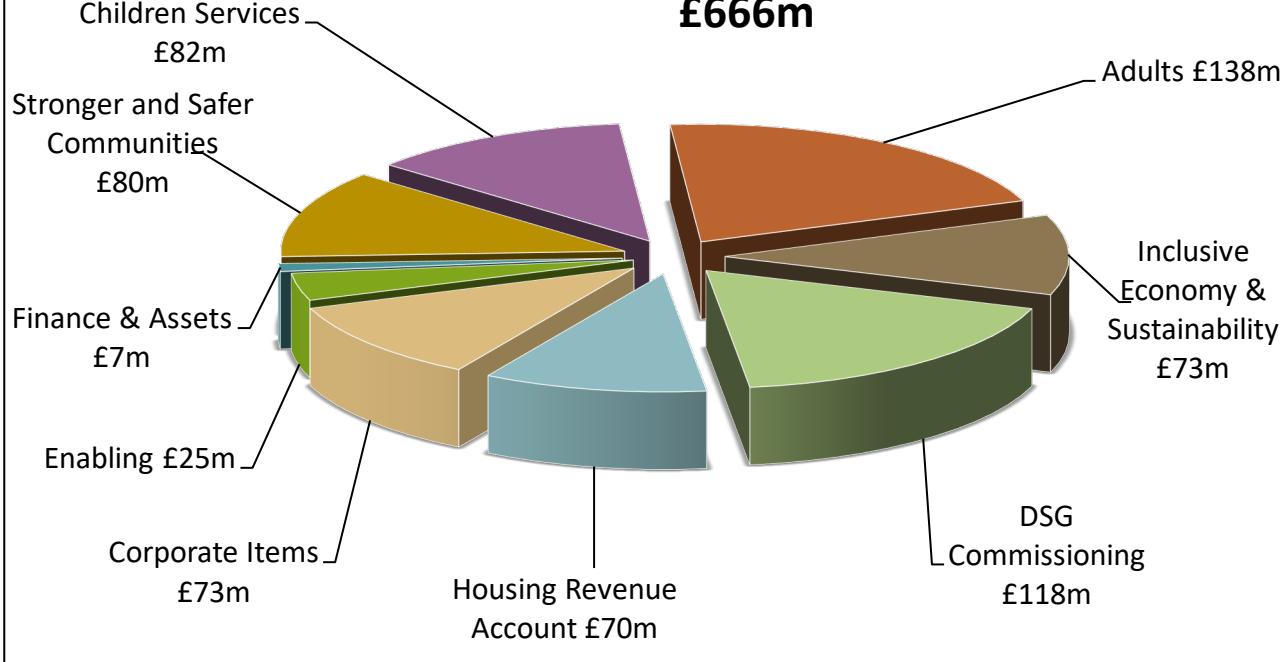
	Budget £000	Actual £000	Variance £000
Enabling	19,069	18,848	(221)
Finance & Assets	(11,381)	(17,581)	(6,200)
Stronger and Safer Communities	4,472	5,161	689
Children Services	67,382	70,663	3,281
Adults	83,868	84,165	297
Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	15,450	16,919	1,469
Net Cost of General Fund Services (outturn)	178,860	178,175	(685)
<i>Reconciliation to Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement</i>			
Parish Precepts		11,637	
Net Corporate Income and Expenditure		69,042	
Net HRA, Capital, Reserves and other Appropriations in Net Cost of Services		28,053	
Sub-total		286,907	
Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income		(219,605)	
Net (Surplus)/Deficit For Year on Provision of services in CIES		67,302	

The following charts analyse the main income flows to the Council in 2024/25, and the gross expenditure on services. Income includes grants funding revenue expenditure, HRA income, service fees and charges, net corporate notional income streams representing the surplus/deficit on provision of services and the transfer of capital grants.

Council Funding Sources 2024/25 £666m



Where the Money was Spent on Services 2024/25 £666m



Financial Overview – The Collection Fund

The Council Tax Collection Fund is credited with Council Tax income and debited with Swindon Borough Council's budgeted call on the fund plus the precepts of the Fire and Police Authorities and Town and Parish Councils. The Fund is used to smooth the difference between the actual and budgeted amount of Council Tax collected each year. Any surplus or deficit on the Fund is reflected in the following year's Council Tax calculations.

A Business Rates Collection Fund account is also held within the overarching Collection Fund. In general terms this operates in the same way as the Council Tax Collection Fund account. The Collection Fund as a whole has a net surplus of £3.1m at 31 March 2025 which has reduced since 31 March 2024 when it was £5.5m.

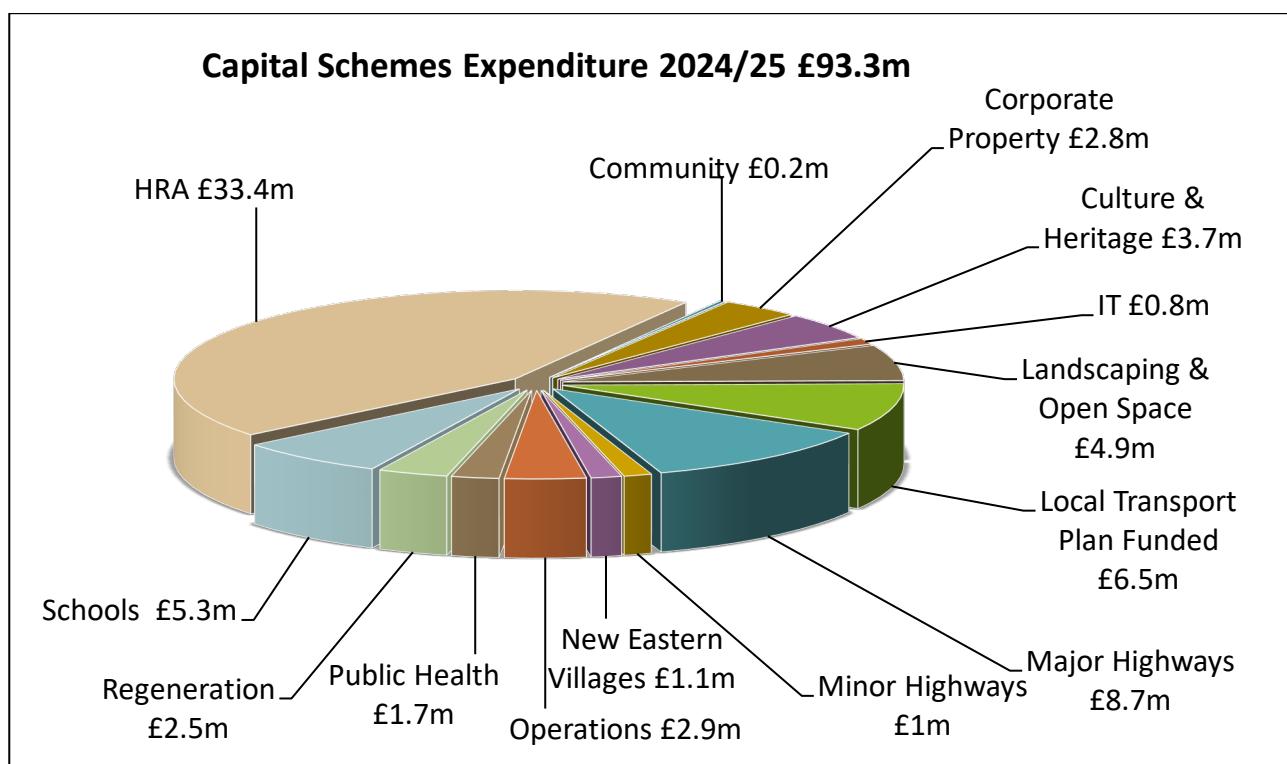
The accounting treatment for the Collection Fund means the Council shows only its own proportion of balances through the accounts on an agency basis. This does not change the Collection Fund itself, which is prescribed under statute, but does remove the overall Collection Fund balance from the Council's Balance Sheet. It is replaced by a Collection Fund Adjustment Account to account for the Authority's movement on the fund, and debtors or creditors for amounts owed to/from major preceptors.

Financial Overview – The Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

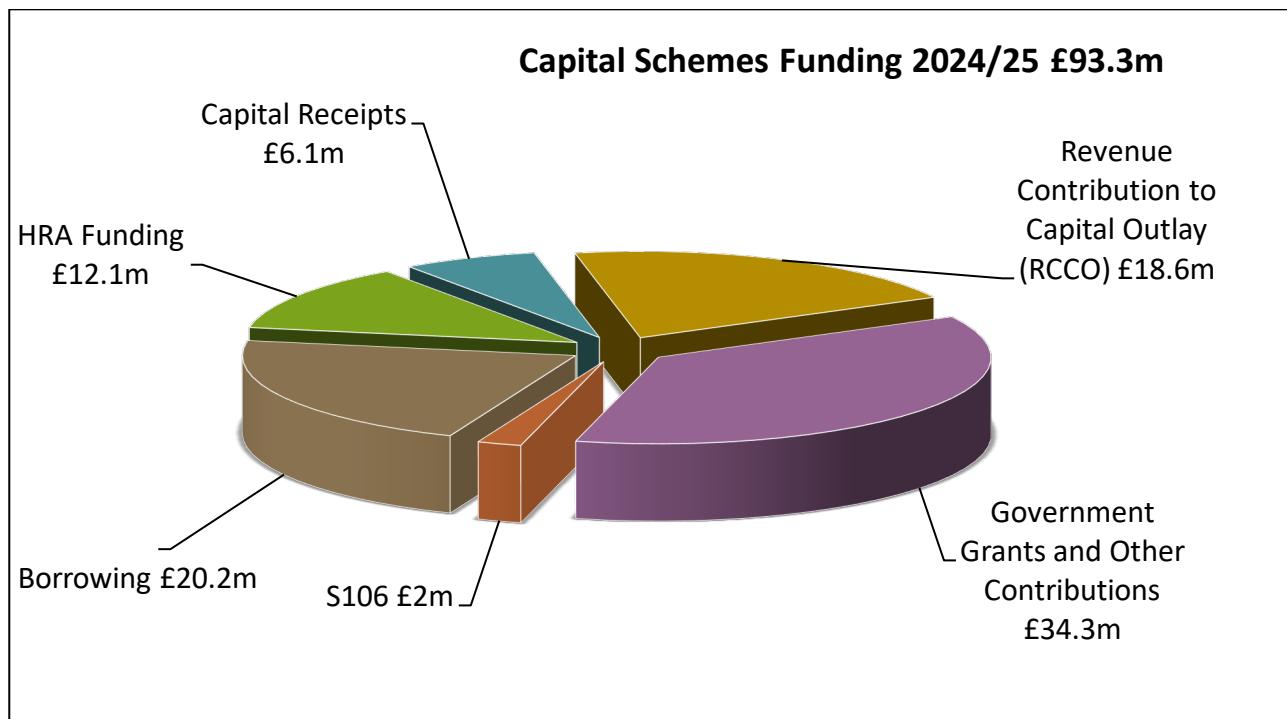
During the year the HRA came in overspent by £5.5m. This has seen the HRA reserve decrease to £4.1m at 31 March 2025.

Financial Overview – Capital Income & Expenditure

During the year, the Council incurred additional borrowing of £25.9m towards capital expenditure of £93.2m. This expenditure is analysed in the following chart into key service areas of the Council.



In-year borrowing contributes to total borrowing of £395.5m, inclusive of HRA debt, with a related capital finance requirement of £577.9m. This should be seen in the context of a non-current asset base of £1,404m.



Financial Overview – Other Key Disclosures

Pension Liability

The net pension liability as disclosed in the balance sheet, under International Accounting Standard 19 (IAS19) requirements is reported as £54.5m (£57.4m for 2023/24). The base position on the fund was a valuation that produced a net asset of £115m, however, the Authority is limited in the extent of that asset which it can report as receivable in future after accounting for funding uncertainties. This asset ceiling adjustment of £169.8m reduces the net asset to the net liability on the balance sheet.

Within the pension liability is a balance for unfunded Teacher pensions. The actuary has applied a roll forward approach to this for 31/3/25 balances due to challenges with underlying data. It remains in line with previous years' at around £2.6m.

Major Asset Transfers

The Council continues to see transfer of schools into Academy status. Once transferred to Academy status the underlying assets are not classed as Council property but disposed of under long-term finance leasing at nil value. There were three such transfers in 2024/25 removing £36.7m from the balance sheet value of non-current assets. There were three transfers in 2023/24 removing £24m.

Business Combinations

The Authority is involved with three local developments which, although continuing to have immaterial impact on the accounts, will affect the Borough more over future years. The main development is the joint venture (JV) for the Wichelstowe southern development area

(Wichelstowe LLP). This has seen the creation of a joint venture company with a housing developer; the Authority contributing land and the developer funding the infrastructure and building the housing, which will then go for sale with split proceeds.

The second development is the ongoing activity from two energy production solar farm companies, Swindon Chapel Farm Solar Plc and Swindon Common Farm Solar Community Interest Plc. The third development relates to the establishment of a group of companies for the construction of dwellings for sale or rent through the Swindon Housing Development Company Ltd. The Authority is parent company to these. It was also parent company to Public Power Solutions (PPS), which previously operated waste and recycling services in the Borough but has not been in operation and is being wound down.

The Authority has a joint 50% ownership in the JV, which has the relevant share of net equity consolidated in the group statements, and is the controlling shareholder for the remaining companies and fully consolidates these in the group accounts.

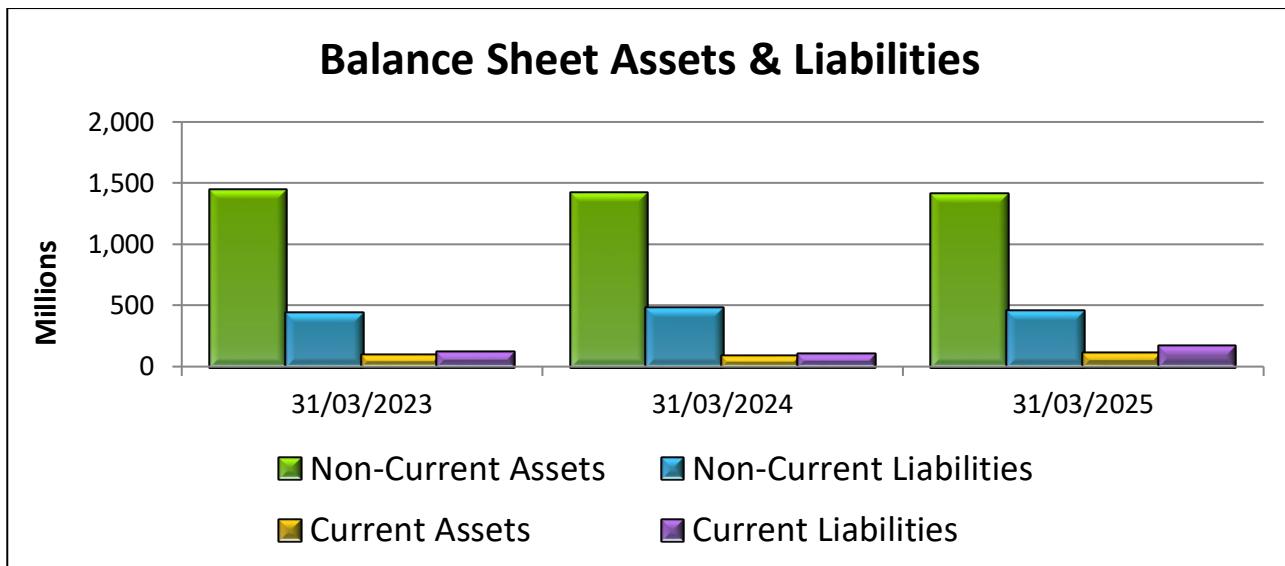
Impact of Materiality

Materiality impacts the accounting statements by either reducing the number of disclosures or the amount of detail within them, for example by combining several balances together which has no impact on understanding of the statements. It also acts as an aid when assessing the impact of events or transactions and whether they change the understanding of the statements if not corrected or highlighted. In preparation of the accounts materiality is concerned with whether a reader would reach an incorrect conclusion on the authority's financial position from the way in which data, or the lack of, is presented. Inconsistencies between balances in separate notes are due to rounding variances and are not adjusted for.

Financial Overview – Financial Outlook

General Fund earmarked reserves have slightly increased during 2024/25. This was mainly due to planned support to the general fund budget and carrying forward of grant balances utilised over several years. Planned use of reserves will see continued reduction in future years, recognising the need to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Council. The General Fund balance increased from £8.5m to £9.2m.

Non-current assets have reduced by £12m, mainly due to the revaluation of Property assets and academy disposals. The liabilities of the Council generally remain constant, with the pension liability being a specific and significant variable. The chart below shows the year-by-year values of main balance sheet categories.



Most Authorities also face challenging financial positions, and the changing relationship with Central Government may impact on future cash flows. With the potential for future cash flow changes Treasury Management will continue to be important in ensuring that cash is available when needed.

Financial Overview – Medium Term Financial Plan

The Local Government finance settlement for 2025/26 represented another single year settlement with funding increases being significantly lower than the cost pressures the council is experiencing. The absence of a multi-year funding settlement combined with the business rates reset and funding reforms means future funding is uncertain beyond 2025/26.

The planning assumption is that funding will remain at the same levels, or increase in line with inflation. This incorporates the current funding streams of Revenue Support Grant, Better Care Fund and the baseline level of retained business rates.

Assumptions about future increases in council tax are based on those used by the Office for Budget Responsibility however, this would be subject to both future government policy decisions and local tax setting decisions.

Allowance has been made for growth in the council tax base and business rates, in line with recent experience.

We acknowledge the challenges posed by limited resources and funding constraints. While we are committed to achieving our goals within existing budgets, additional funding through external grants and reprioritisation may be necessary in the future.

Forecast Expenditure

Following the experience of recent years, the key expenditure pressures are anticipated to be related to demand pressures in children and adults social care. More generally, the council will face pressures relating to population growth.

The Bank of England's inflation assumptions expect inflation to be fairly stable during 2025 and over the medium term, however the significant increases in the council's cost base over recent years

means that variations in inflation compared to current assumptions can have a more significant impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The medium term financial plan estimates for inflation and financing costs have regard to published forecasts. These assumptions will need to be carefully monitored over time as the medium-term financial plan is refreshed.

The Council's Strategy

The impact of the increased pressures on the base budget arising from inflation and demand has been unprecedented and it is evident that the savings required to achieve a sustainable budget cannot be achieved solely by individual service area savings plans.

The Swindon 2028 transformation plan is the council's response to make sure the council is set up and operates in a way that maximises resident outcomes, whilst also being financially sustainable.

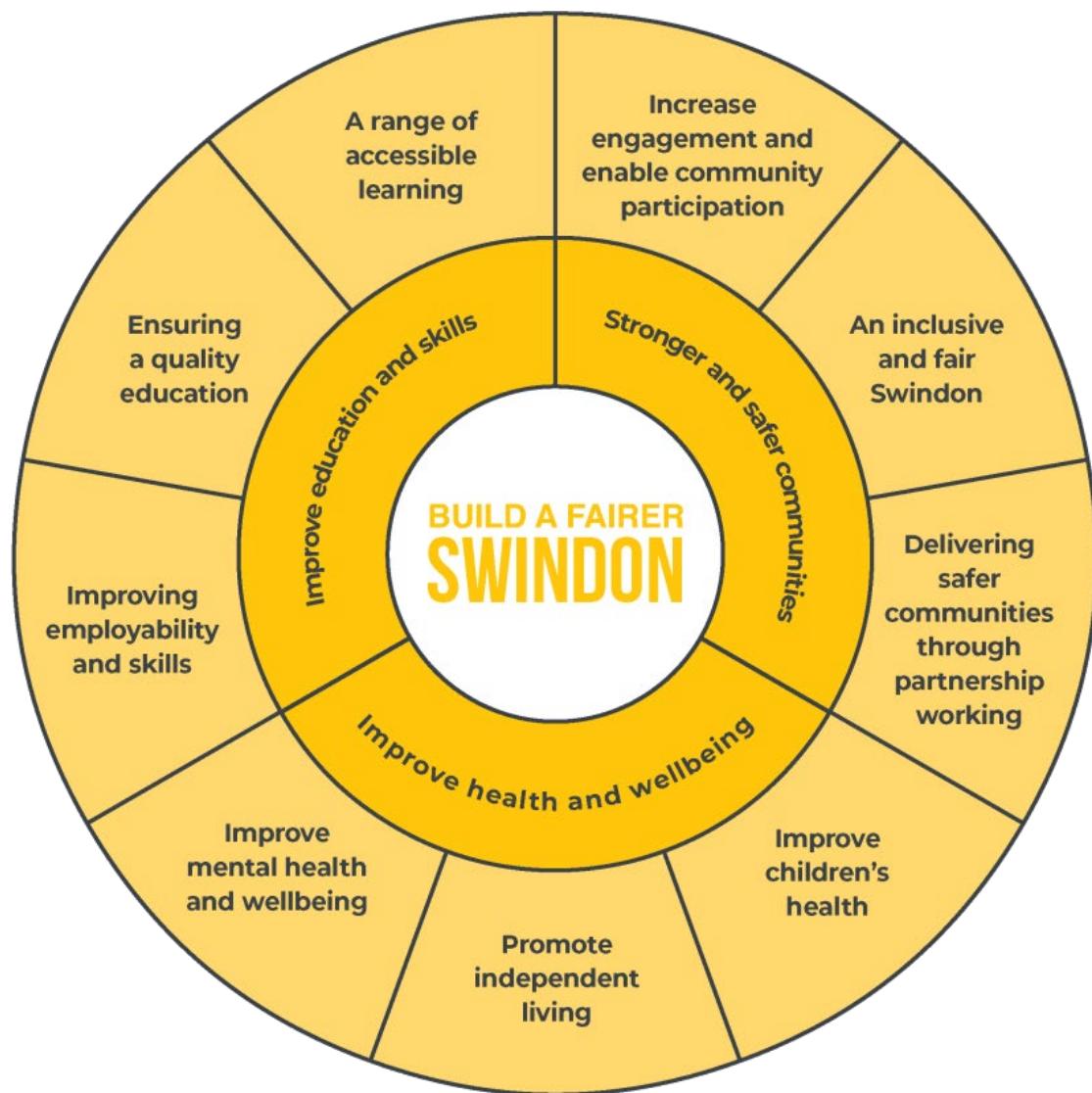
Financial Projections from 2025/26

Budget Summary	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Base Budget	178.8	188.4	194.6
Inflation	11.7	4.5	4.4
Spending Pressures	30.4	18.5	20
Savings Plans	(14.4)	(8.9)	(9.5)
Funding Changes	(8.5)	2.2	0
Reversal of Planned use of reserves	5.1	0	0
Proposed Budget before EFS	203.1	204.7	209.5
Exceptional Financial Support (EFS)	(14.7)	14.7	0
Proposed Net Budget after EFS	188.4	219.4	209.5
Less Funded By:			
Council Tax	139.8	148	156.5
Business Rates	39.7	40.7	41.7
Revenue Support Grant	5.7	5.9	6.1
Collection Fund Surplus	3.2	0	0
Total Funding	188.4	194.6	204.3
Indicative Gap	0	24.8	5.2

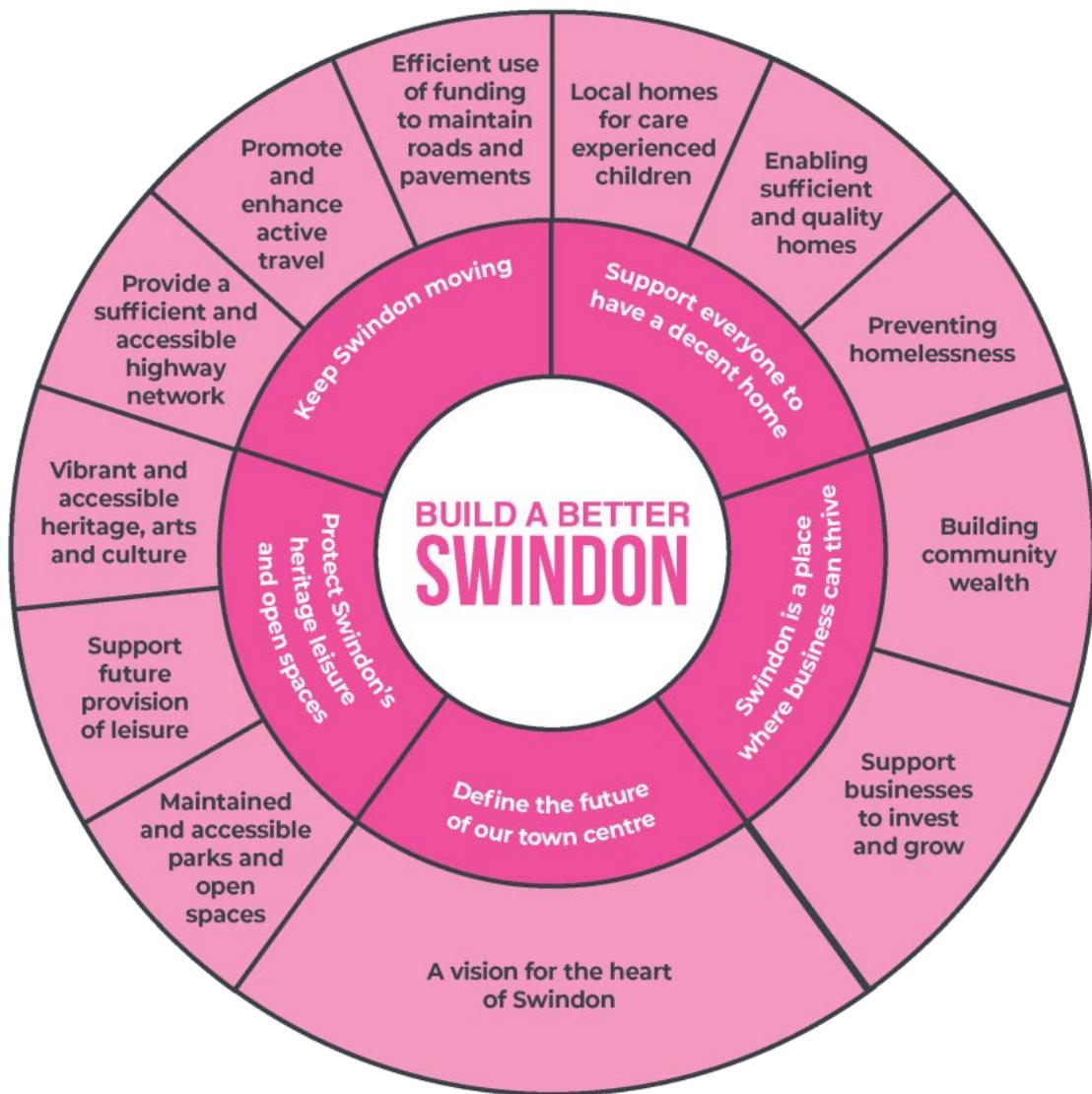
Organisational Overview

Following a borough-wide engagement exercise held in early 2024, the Council finalised the Swindon Plan in July 2024 that sets out our long-term priorities to improve the quality of life for all of the Borough's residents:

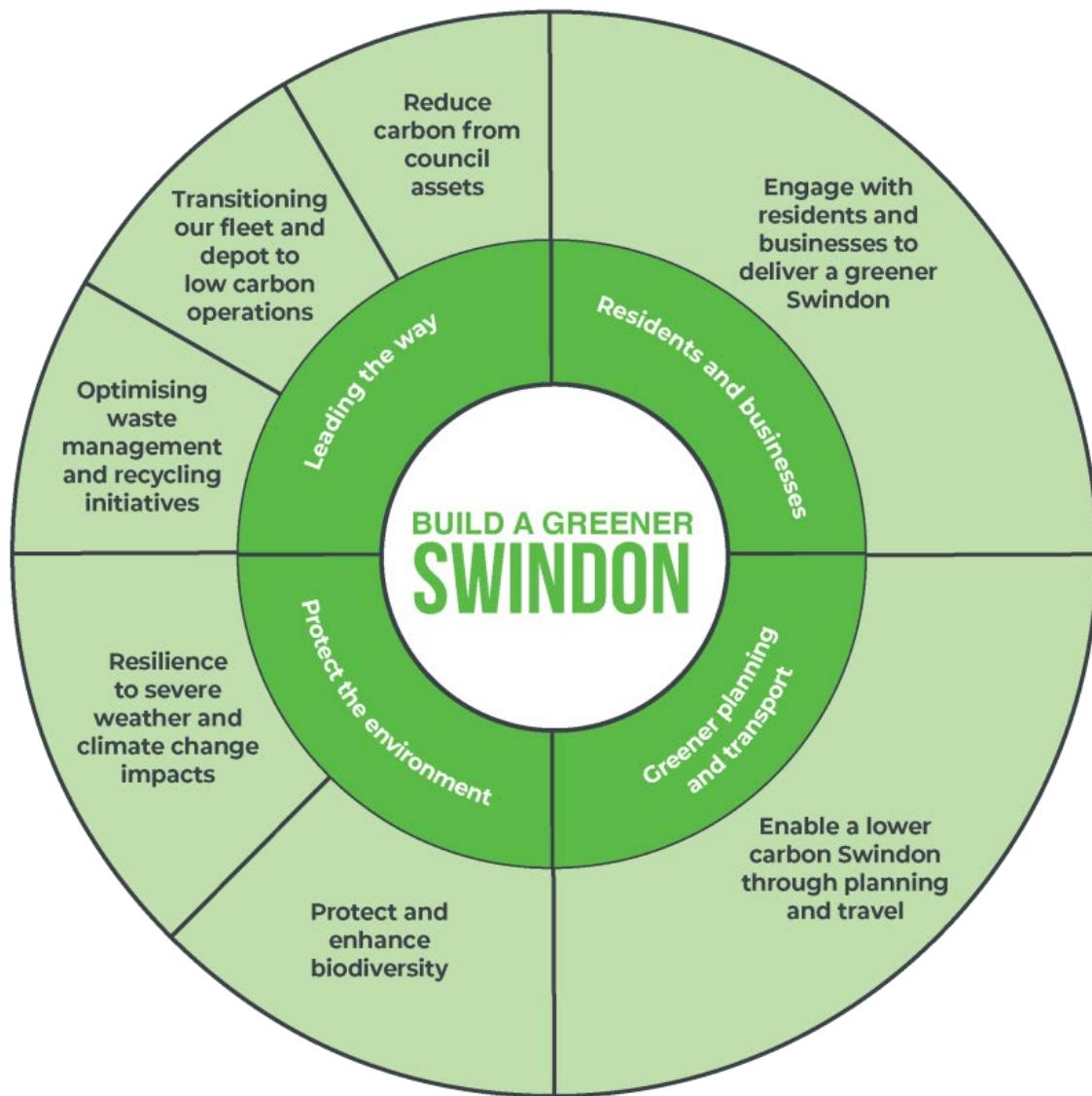
- **Build a Fairer Swindon** - Making Swindon a fairer place, reducing disadvantages and reducing big disparities in life expectancy, education levels and social justice.



- **Build a Better Swindon** - Creating a town ready for the challenges of the coming decades. Where possible, leading town centre improvement and creating more affordable housing with the private sector.



- **Build a Greener Swindon** - Fully playing our part as a council and a town in combatting climate change. Working with communities to find new ways of doing things that help, not hinder, the natural environment.



Acknowledging the ongoing financial pressures on public finances, the Swindon Plan sets out how the Council is looking to progress each mission working with communities and partners across the private, public and voluntary sectors

An accompanying performance framework sets out the action we will take to progress each objective over the next three years and how we will measure progress.

In December 2024, the first of what will be a bi-annual performance report was tabled at the Council's Cabinet meeting. This looks at our progress up to the end of September 2024 in delivering the commitments set out in the Swindon Plan performance framework.

Within this performance report, the following progress was noted:

- Build a Fairer Swindon: 26 deliverables in Progress and 22 Achieved
- Build a Better Swindon: 23 deliverables in Progress and 19 Achieved
- Build a Greener Swindon: 18 deliverables in Progress and 5 Achieved

A new Performance Governance Framework was set which outlines the process from Individual Deliverable/ KPI owners, to Directorate Leadership Teams, Mission Boards, CMT Performance & Improvement Board, Informal Cabinet and then bi-annual reporting to Cabinet.

In January 2025, Mission Boards commenced for each of the three missions. They are co-chaired by a CMT member and the Cabinet Ambassador for the Mission. All relevant officers attend to discuss progress quarterly against their deliverables and measures so that any escalations can be taken to CMT.

Performance has continued to be an intrinsic part of the Corporate Management Team (CMT) Performance & Improvement Board which is attended by CMT and Directors. The main mechanism for this is through the Corporate Scorecards and the Mission Dashboards:

- [Build a Fairer Swindon](#)
- [Build a Better Swindon](#)
- [Build a Greener Swindon](#)

Directors are expected to attend the Performance & Improvement Board with a one page Director Performance Summary with an overview of Performance/ KPI's going well or improved, Performance/ KPI's requiring improvement or worsening and the KPI of most concern.

Audit Report

The draft accounts are required to be approved by the 30 June 2025 by the Director of Finance and Audit, the Council's designated Section 151 Officer, and independently audited and published in their audited form by 27 February 2026. The Council's auditors are Grant Thornton UK LLP and their audit report is at the end of this document.

Further Information

If readers would like to know more about the accounts of the Council, please write to Kim Chequer, Director of Finance and Audit, Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon SN1 2JH, or email kchequer@swindon.gov.uk

Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts

The Council's Responsibilities

The Council is required:

To make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs (Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972). During the financial year 2024/25, the designated officer was the Director of Finance and Audit.

To manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.

The Officer's Responsibilities

The Director of Finance and Audit had the responsibility to ensure that these final accounts were prepared in accordance with best practice. The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in Great Britain ("the Code") requires the Statement to give a true and fair view of the financial position of the authority at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025.

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Director Finance and Audit:

- Selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- Made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent;
- Complied with the Code.

The Director Finance and Audit also:

- Kept proper accounting records which were up to date;
- Took reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approval of the Accounts

I certify that the above responsibilities have been accounted for in the production of these statements and that they give a true and fair view of the financial position of the authority at 31 March 2025.

Signed: *Kim Chequer*

Date: 20 January 2026

Kim Chequer
Director of Finance and Audit

Approval of the Final Accounts

The Council's Audit Committee, being the relevant body within the Authority for such purpose, approved the final accounts on the date below. The dates of approval are also taken as the dates that the accounts were authorised for issue.

Signed: *Claire Crilly*

Date: 20 January 2026

Chair of Audit Committee

The Financial Statements

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)

This statement summarises the income and expenditure on all functions of the Authority and shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation. Authorities raise taxation to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. Negative figures denote income.

15	2023/24 Restated	2023/24 Gross Expenditure	2023/24 Gross Income	2023/24 Net Expenditure	2024/25 Gross Expenditure	2024/25 Gross Income	2024/25 Net Expenditure
Note	Continuing Operations:	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
	Enabling	24,605	(3,221)	21,384	24,743	(3,765)	20,978
	Finance & Audit	6,533	(35,032)	(28,499)	8,193	(36,737)	(28,544)
	Stronger and Safer Communities	76,005	(71,943)	4,062	79,052	(71,689)	7,363
	Children Services	79,059	(9,076)	69,983	80,943	(9,428)	71,515
	Adults	135,491	(53,418)	82,073	137,806	(49,298)	88,508
	Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	89,570	(30,187)	59,383	72,150	(38,639)	33,511
6	DSG Commissioning	109,820	(102,218)	7,602	116,969	(108,889)	8,080
	HRA - Housing	56,998	(59,394)	(2,396)	54,821	(66,388)	(11,567)
	HRA - Operations	14,900	(183)	14,717	16,585	(201)	16,384
	Surplus / Deficit on Continuing Operations	592,981	(364,672)	228,309	591,262	(385,034)	206,228
4	Other operating expenditure			40,238			64,863
5	Financing & investment (income)/expenditure			12,676			15,816
7	Taxation and non-specific grant income			(226,191)			(219,605)
	(Surplus) / Deficit on Provision of Services			55,032			67,302
16	(Surplus) / Deficit on revaluation of PPE assets			(34,269)			(46,189)
33	Re-measurements on pension assets / liabilities			34,234			(812)
	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			(35)			(47,001)
	Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			54,997			20,301

Movement in Reserves Statement (MiRS)

This statement shows the movements between the CIES revenue account and balance sheet 'usable reserves' (i.e. revenue and capital reserves that can be applied to fund relevant expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other reserves. The (Surplus) / Deficit on the Provision of Services line shows the true economic cost of providing the authority's services, more details of which are shown in the CIES. The 'General Fund Balance' column shows that after accounting adjustments and reserve transfer the General Fund balance has increased by £684k. Earmarked GF reserves are a part of the statutory General Fund balance, whilst HRA balances are a statutory ring-fenced section for housing.

	GF Balance £'000	HRA £'000	Earmarked GF Reserves £'000	Earmarked HRA Reserves £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Major Repairs Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Authority Reserves £'000
1 April 2024	(8,496)	(9,639)	(46,946)	(998)	(8,365)	(1,881)	(57,011)	(133,336)	(792,628)	(925,964)
(Surplus) / Deficit on Service provision	54,756	12,546	0	0	0	0	0	67,302	0	67,302
Other (Income) / Exp.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(47,001)	(47,001)
Total Comprehensive (Income) / Exp.	54,756	12,546	0	0	0	0	0	64,409	(47,001)	20,301
Adjusts between accounting & funding basis (note 13)	(48,698)	(7,436)	0	0	(1,267)	1,881	10,107	(45,413)	45,413	0
Transfer of DSG deficit	(6,746)	0	0	0	0	0	0	(6,746)	6,746	0
Net (Increase)/ Decrease before Reserves	(688)	5,110	0	0	(1,267)	1,881	10,107	15,143	5,158	20,301
Transfers to / (from) Other Reserves (note 14)	4	381	(4)	(381)	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Increase)/ Decrease in-year	(684)	5,491	(4)	(381)	(1,267)	1,881	10,107	12,250	5,158	20,301
31 March 2025	(9,180)	(4,148)	(46,950)	(1,379)	(9,632)	0	(46,904)	(118,193)	(787,470)	(905,663)

Movement in Reserves Statement continued

	GF Balance £'000	HRA £'000	Earmarked GF Reserves £'000	Earmarked HRA Reserves £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Major Repairs Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Authority Reserves £'000
1 April 2023	(8,335)	(12,340)	(52,854)	(1,294)	(11,388)	(1,855)	(44,145)	(132,211)	(848,750)	(980,961)
(Surplus) / Deficit on Service provision	36,977	18,055	0	0	0	0	0	55,032	0	55,032
Other (Income) / Exp.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(35)	(35)
Total Comprehensive (Income) / Exp.	36,977	18,055	0	0	0	0	0	55,032	97	54,997
Adjusts between accounting & funding basis (note 13)	(28,131)	(15,058)	0	0	3,023	(26)	(12,866)	(53,058)	53,058	0
Transfer of DSG deficit	(3,099)	0	0	0	0	0	0	(3,099)	3,099	0
Net (Increase)/ Decrease before Reserves	5,747	2,997	0	0	3,023	(26)	(12,866)	(1,125)	56,122	54,997
Transfers to / (from) Other Reserves (note 14)	(5,908)	(296)	5,908	296	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Increase)/ Decrease in-year	(161)	2,701	5,908	296	3,023	(26)	(12,866)	(1,125)	56,122	54,997
31 March 2024	(8,496)	(9,639)	(46,946)	(998)	(8,365)	(1,881)	(57,011)	(133,336)	(792,628)	(925,964)

Balance Sheet

This statement shows the balance sheet assets and liabilities of the Council at the 31 March. The net assets of the authority (assets less liabilities) are matched by reserves held. Reserves are reported in two categories; those that are useable 'cash-backed' reserves and can be used in funding revenue or capital spend, and those that are unusable for funding and represent as yet unrealised gains and losses.

Note		31st March 2024	31st March 2025
		£000	£000
16/49	Property, Plant & Equipment	1,369,273	1,364,636
	Intangible Assets*	0	2,226
18	Investment property	4,750	4,580
19	Heritage	29,215	29,215
44	Long term investments	6,745	4,738
22	Long term debtors	6,713	10,108
	Total Non-Current Assets	1,416,696	1,415,503
	Cash & Cash equivalents	32,071	17,520
	Inventories & Work in Progress	786	962
23	Short term debtors	45,011	45,703
34	Short term investments	300	15,293
	Assets held for sale (current)	6,527	18,195
	Current Assets	84,695	97,673
24	Short term creditors	(78,311)	(75,416)
34	Short term borrowing	(20,348)	(82,936)
25	Provisions (short term)	(1,141)	(931)
	Current Liabilities	(99,800)	(159,283)
34	Long term borrowing	(350,850)	(312,541)
31/34	Long term creditors	(36,682)	(44,177)
25	Provisions (long term)	(8,812)	(7,558)
33	Pension Liability	(57,410)	(54,545)
7	Capital Grants receipts in advance	(21,873)	(29,409)
	Non-Current Liabilities	(475,627)	(448,230)
	Net Assets	925,964	905,663

Balance Sheet continued

Note		31st March 2024 £000	31st March 2025 £000
	General Fund Balance	(8,496)	(9,180)
	HRA Balance	(9,639)	(4,148)
14	GF Earmarked Reserves	(46,946)	(46,950)
14	HRA Earmarked Reserves	(998)	(1,379)
51	Major Repairs Reserve	(1,881)	0
	Capital Receipts Reserve	(8,365)	(9,633)
	Capital Grants Unapplied	(57,011)	(46,903)
MiRS**	Usable Reserves	(133,336)	(118,193)
26	Capital Adjustment Account	(244,774)	(222,364)
27	Revaluation Reserve	(611,448)	(631,464)
28	Pension Reserve	57,410	54,545
29	Collection Fund Adjustment Account	(1,507)	(2,539)
	Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account	523	437
6	DSG Deficit	8,400	15,146
	Deferred Capital Receipts	(1,232)	(1,231)
	Unusable Reserves:	(792,628)	(787,470)
	Total Reserves	(925,964)	(905,663)

*Intangible Assets consists only of non-operational development expenditure

**MiRS – Movement in Reserves Statement

The unaudited accounts were issued on 27 June 2025 and the final audited version authorised for issue on 20 January 2026.

Kim Chequer

Kim Chequer

Director of Finance and Audit

S151 Officer

Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the authority during the reporting period. The statement shows how the authority generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources, which are intended to contribute to the authority's future service delivery. Negative figures denote losses or reductions.

Note		2023/24	2024/25
		£'000	£'000
	Net surplus or (deficit) on the provision of services	(55,032)	(67,302)
36	Adjustments to net surplus or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	117,999	113,014
36	Adjustments for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities	(52,137)	(38,093)
	Net cash flows from Operating Activities	10,830	7,619
37	Investing Activities	(17,125)	(33,835)
38	Financing Activities	4,436	11,665
	Net increase or (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(1,859)	(14,551)
	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	33,930	32,071
	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	32,071	17,520

Notes to the Financial Statements

Disclosures Relating to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

1. Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The objective of the Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA) is to demonstrate to council tax and rent payers how the funding available to the authority (i.e. government grants, rents, council tax and business rates) for the year has been used in providing services in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. The EFA also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the council's service functions. Transfers to earmarked reserves are items not chargeable to the GF or HRA.

	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25
	Net Exp. Report to Cabinet £000	Remove Not Chargeable to the GF or HRA £000	Net Exp. Chargeable to GF and HRA £000	Changes Between Funding & Accounting Basis £000	Net Expenditure In the CIES £000
Enabling	18,848	(84)	18,763	2,214	20,978
Finance & Audit	(17,581)	2,593	(14,988)	(13,556)	(28,544)
Stronger and Safer Communities	5,161	604	5,765	1,598	7,363
Children Services	70,663	710	71,373	142	71,515
Adults	84,165	4,060	88,226	283	88,508
Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	16,919	(6,886)	10,033	23,478	33,511
DSG Commissioning	0	(1,000)	(1,000)	9,080	8,080
HRA - Housing	(16,681)	5,110	(11,571)	4	(11,567)
HRA - Operations	16,681	0	16,681	(297)	16,384
(Surplus)/Deficit on Continuing Operations	178,175	5,107	183,282	22,946	206,228
Other Income & Expenditure	11,637	0	11,637	53,226	64,863
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	0	0	0	15,816	15,816
Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	(190,497)	0	(190,497)	(29,108)	(219,605)
(Surplus) / Deficit on Provision of Services	(685)	5,107	4,422	62,880	67,302

Reconciliation of Movement to Balances		Opening	(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	Closing
General Fund		(8,496)	(684)	(9,180)
HRA		(9,638)	5,491	(4,147)
Net Exp. Chargeable to the GF and HRA Balances			4,807	
Earmarked reserves		(47,945)	(385)	(48,330)
Remove Not Chargeable to the GF or HRA		(47,945)	(385)	(48,330)
(Surplus) / Deficit on Provision of Services			4,422	

Reconciliation of Reserve Movements not chargeable to GF or HRA as shown in Movement in Reserves (MiRS)

Movement Reason £000	Net Reserve movement in EFA	Direct BS reserve transfer to GF balance	Net Transfers from earmarked reserves	Net Adjustment for reserves
	5,107	(5,491)	385	0

2023/24 Restated	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
	Outturn	Presentation adjustment on Tariff	Net Exp. Report to Cabinet	Remove Not Chargeable to the GF or HRA	Net Exp. Chargeable to GF and HRA	Changes Between Funding & Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure In the CIES
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Enabling	17,895		17,895	662	18,557	2,827	21,384
Finance & Audit	(21,834)	835	(20,999)	3,870	(17,129)	(11,370)	(28,499)
Stronger and Safer Communities	2,866		2,866	0	2,866	1,196	4,062
Children Services	67,024		67,024	1,650	68,674	1,309	69,983
Adults	81,924		81,924	(662)	81,262	811	82,073
Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	18,390		18,390	678	19,068	40,315	59,383
DSG Commissioning	0		0	(291)	(291)	7,893	7,602
HRA - Housing	(14,514)	(503)	(15,017)	2,997	(12,020)	9,624	(2,396)
HRA - Operations	14,882		14,882	(1)	14,881	(164)	14,717
(Surplus)/Deficit on Continuing Operations	166,633	332	166,965	8,903	175,868	52,441	228,309
Other Income & Expenditure	10,320	0	10,320	0	10,320	29,918	40,238
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	12,676	12,676
Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	(177,446)	0	(177,446)	0	(177,446)	(48,745)	(226,191)
(Surplus) / Deficit on Provision of Services	(493)	332	(161)	8,903	8,742	46,290	55,032

Reconciliation of Movement to Balances	Opening	(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	Closing
General Fund	(8,335)	(161)	(8,496)
HRA	(12,339)	2,701	(9,638)
Net Exp. Chargeable to the GF and HRA Balances		2,540	
Earmarked reserves	(54,149)	6,267	(47,882)
Remove Not Chargeable to the GF or HRA	(54,149)	6,267	(47,882)
(Surplus) / Deficit on Provision of Services		8,807	

Reconciliation of Reserve Movements not chargeable to GF or HRA as shown in Movement in Reserves (MiRS)

Movement Reason	Net Reserve movement in EFA	Direct BS reserve transfer to GF balance	Net Transfers from earmarked reserves	Net Adjustment for reserves
£000	8,966	(2,701)	(6,267)	0

The following note details the adjustments that are made in the EFA and total comprehensive income and expenditure recognised by the Authority in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Authority to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

‘Pensions’ adjustments are for the change in accounting for the pension liability under IAS19, which represents adjusting in-year payments made to the fund and including current / past service / interest costs per actuary estimates. ‘Capital’ adds in depreciation, impairment and revaluation gains and losses. ‘Treasury’ accounts for adjustments in interest payable / receivable and minimum revenue provision that are not service expense within the CIES. ‘Other’ relates mainly to grant adjustments.

2024/25	Pensions £'000	Capital £'000	Treasury £'000	Other £'000	Total £'000
Enabling	(560)	2,927	(153)	0	2,214
Finance & Audit	1,080	6	(16,918)	2,276	(13,556)
Stronger and Safer Communities	(539)	3,936	(2,062)	263	1,598
Children Services	(891)	1,110	(77)	0	142
Adults	(642)	925	0	0	283
Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	(788)	25,302	(1,036)	0	23,478
DSG Commissioning	(1,339)	3,677	(4)	6,746	9,080
HRA - Housing	(320)	2,836	(2,512)	0	4
HRA - Operations	(297)	0	0	0	(297)
	(4,296)	40,719	(22,762)	9,285	22,946

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Other Income & Expenditure	0	53,226	0	0	53,226
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	2,243	84	13,489	0	15,816
Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	0	(26,116)	0	(2,992)	(29,108)
(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	(2,053)	67,913	(9,273)	6,293	62,880

2023/24 Restated	Pensions £'000	Capital £'000	Treasury £'000	Other £'000	Total £'000
Enabling	(267)	1,640	(139)	1,593	2,827
Finance & Audit	(1,259)	0	(12,875)	2,764	(11,370)
Stronger and Safer Communities	(248)	1,444	0	0	1,196
Children Services	(430)	50	(41)	1,730	1,309
Adults	(280)	1,098	(7)	0	811
Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	(374)	41,726	(1,037)	0	40,315
DSG Commissioning	(717)	5,511	0	3,099	7,893
HRA - Housing	(171)	17,042	(7,247)	0	9,624
HRA - Operations	(164)	0	0	0	(164)
Total Adjustments	(3,910)	68,511	(21,346)	9,186	52,441
Other Income & Expenditure	0	29,918	0	0	29,918
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	1,170	1,187	10,319	0	12,676
Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	0	(49,073)	0	328	(48,745)
(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	(2,741)	50,544	(11,027)	9,514	46,290

2. Subjective Analysis of Service Expenditure

This disclosure shows the type of expenditure and income incurred through the CIES:

Expenditure and Income Type	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Employee related expenses	162,669	162,730
Other service expenses	346,230	365,703
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	83,746	61,227
Interest Payments	18,348	20,829
Precepts & Levies	10,320	11,637
Payments to Housing Capital Receipts Pool	2,716	1,870
Gain or Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	27,202	51,356
Total operating expenses	651,231	675,352
Fees, charges & other service income	(114,667)	(125,862)
Interest and investment income	(5,672)	(5,013)
Income from Council Tax and Business Rates	(170,897)	(187,139)
Government grants and contributions	(304,963)	(290,036)
Total Income	(596,199)	(608,050)
Surplus or deficit on the provision of services	55,032	67,302

Description	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Non-grant contributions to service provision		
Contributions from social care clients	(10,743)	(13,151)
Income from fees & licenses		
Includes parking, planning, permit and professional services income	(19,297)	(21,080)
Income from rentals and hires		
Includes income from rentals/hires, including HRA rents	(62,236)	(68,102)
Income from sales of goods & services		
Includes service charges, waste management and sales of goods	(17,492)	(17,932)
Other Miscellaneous Income		
Total Fees, charges & other service income	(114,667)	(125,862)

3. Material Items of Income and Expense

Within the net cost of services of the CIES there are variances between years on service expenditure and income. Some of these changes will be due to general higher costs of purchasing external goods and services and changes in the cost of employing Council staff, some of which is offset by changes in income from fees and charges. Other changes will be due to the year-on-year variation of asset charges, such as depreciation and impairments. There are no unusual material items in 2023/24 or 2024/25.

4. Other Operating Expenditure

Breakdown of items included under Other Operating Expenditure. The disposal of schools to academy status continues to see the high balances on disposal of non-current assets.

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
(Gains)/losses on the disposal of non-current assets	27,202	51,356
Parish council precepts	10,320	11,637
Payments to the Government Housing Capital Receipts Pool	2,716	1,870
Total Other Operating Expenditure	40,238	64,863

5. Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure

Breakdown of items included under Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure.

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Interest payable and similar charges	15,991	18,502
Interest receivable and similar income	(5,060)	(4,434)
Investment income	(612)	(579)
Movement on market value of investment property	1,005	170
(Gains)/losses on assets held for sale	182	(86)
Net interest on the net defined benefit liability	1,170	2,243
Total Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	12,676	15,816

6. Dedicated Schools Grant

Schools' funding is provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). DSG is ring-fenced and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget. The Schools Budget includes elements for a restricted range of services provided on an authority-wide basis and for the Individual School Budget, which is divided into a budget share for each school. Over- and under-spends on the two elements are required to be accounted for separately. Recent changes to legislation require a deficit recovery plan for any deficit value. The deficit is shown as a specific unusable reserve on the balance sheet with a debit balance.

	Restated Total 2023/24 £'000	Central Expenditure 2024/25 £'000	Schools Budgets 2024/25 £'000	Total 2024/25 £'000
Final DSG before Academy Recoupment	244,662			268,727
Academy figure recouped for the year	163,814			181,188
DSG after Academy Recoupment	80,848			87,539
Brought Forward from prior year	0			0
Carry Forward agreed in advance	0			0
Agreed initial budgeted distribution	80,848	61,034	26,505	87,539
In year adjustments	(28)	(177)	0	(177)
Final budgeted distribution for year	80,819	60,857	26,505	87,362
Less actual central expenditure	54,188	69,519		69,519
Less actual ISB deployed to schools	29,730		24,589	24,589
Carry forward to next year (including carry forward agreed in advance)	(3,099)	(8,662)	1,916	(6,746)

DSG unusable reserves at the end of Year	(5,300)	(8,400)
Addition to DSG unusable reserves at end of year	(3,099)	(6,746)
Total of DSG unusable reserves at the end of the Financial Year	(8,399)	(15,146)

7. Tax & Grant Income

The Authority credited the following grant related income to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. 2023/24 has been restated to match 24/25 analysis.

Area of Grant	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Dedicated Schools Grant	(80,576)	(87,142)
Housing Benefit Subsidy	(39,487)	(40,931)
Public Health Grant	(10,933)	(11,309)
PFI Grant	(5,012)	(5,012)
Pupil Premium Grant	(2,474)	(1,990)
Homelessness Prevention	(2,502)	(2,518)
Improved Better Card Fund	(5,395)	(5,395)
Adult Social Care Projects	(13,923)	(18,129)
Rates relief	(12,935)	(12,648)
Household Support	(3,000)	(2,822)
Social Care Health Funding	(23,817)	(16,541)
Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children	(1,911)	(1,740)
Placements - Positive Futures	(833)	(1,084)
Other Schools Grants	(17,032)	(17,774)
Better Care Fund	(6,869)	(7,258)
Total of Other Grants	(22,967)	(25,275)
Total	(249,666)	(257,571)

The value of Business Rates received by the authority under taxation and grant income is lower than the Billing Authority share disclosed in the Collection Fund statement due to the application of a government tariff.

Credited to Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Collection Fund Income - Council Tax	(135,742)	(142,730)
Collection Fund Adjustments – Council Tax	226	(6,371)
Collection Fund Income - Business Rates	(53,460)	(57,740)
Collection Fund Income - Prior Year Surplus	(2,620)	(5,093)
Collection Fund Income - Business Rates Tariff	19,531	20,563
Collection Fund Adjustments – Business Rates	1,168	4,232
Revenue Support Grant	(5,155)	(5,497)
Other non-ring-fenced government grants	(1,066)	(853)
S106 - used in funding	(6,592)	(1,961)
Capital grants and contributions - to CGUA*	(42,481)	(24,155)
Total	(226,191)	(219,605)

*Capital Grants Unapplied Account

The Authority has received a number of capital contributions that have yet to be recognised as income as they have conditions attached to them which are not reasonably assured to be met and may require the funds to be returned to the giver. The balances at the year-end are as follows:

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Capital Grants Receipts in Advance		
Balance at 1 April	(27,020)	(21,873)
New funds received	(45,075)	(40,874)
Funds written out to fund capital schemes	50,184	33,338
Funds written out for repayment	38	0
Balance at 31 March	(21,873)	(29,409)

8. Members' Allowances

The Authority paid the following amounts to members of the council during the year.

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Basic Allowances	519	532
Special Responsibility Allowances	226	237
Expenses	1	2
Total	746	771

9. Officers' Remuneration

The below shows estimates of remuneration to senior officers of the Corporate Management Team. There were a number of changes across the team which resulted in a number of interim appointments, some of which were made permanent during the year and one post incurred agency costs. In both years some senior officers were not in the pension scheme.

Position	Period	Remuneration	Emp. Pension Contributions		Total Remuneration
			£	£	
2024/25					
Chief Executive Officer - Sam Mowbray	Full Year	179,819	38,481		218,300
Corporate Director of Childrens Services	Full Year	148,626	31,806		180,432
Corporate Director of Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	Full Year	143,500	30,709		174,209
Chief Operating Officer	Full Year	143,500	30,709		174,209
Corporate Director Integrated Adult Social Care	Full Year	139,678	29,891		169,569
Director of Finance and Audit (S151 Officer)	Full Year	112,750	24,128		136,878
Corporate Director of Stronger & Safer Communities	Started 01/07/24	107,625	23,032		130,657
2023/24					
Chief Executive Officer – Susie Kemp	Left 31/10/23	108,418	0		108,418
Chief Executive Officer – Sam Mowbray	Started 01/08/23	116,955	25,028		141,983
Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (S151 Officer)	Left 30/09/23	66,982	14,334		81,316
Director of Finance and Audit (S151 Officer)	Started 25/09/23	54,661	11,697		66,358
Corporate Director of Inclusive, Economy and Sustainability	Started 25/09/23 left 8/4/24	70,549	0		70,549
Corporate Director for Adults, Health and Housing	Left 02/02/24	125,421	26,840		152,261
Corporate Director Integrated Adult Social Care	Started 01/02/24	21,167	4,530		25,697
Corporate Director of Children Services	Agency until 01/06/23	120,834	25,858		146,692
Chief Operating Officer	Left Role 31/07/23	47,938	10,259		58,196
Chief Operating Officer	Started 11/09/23	71,342	15,267		86,609

The Authority's other employees due more than £50,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer's pension contributions) were paid the following amounts:

Remuneration Band			Number of Employees	
£	£		2023/24	2024/25
50,000	to	54,999	94	97
55,000	to	59,999	51	51
60,000	to	64,999	33	53
65,000	to	69,999	32	21
70,000	to	74,999	11	26
75,000	to	79,999	14	9
80,000	to	84,999	5	10
85,000	to	89,999	3	4
90,000	to	94,999	2	2
95,000	to	99,999	3	4
100,000	to	104,999	2	3
105,000	to	109,999	2	1
110,000	to	114,999	1	0
115,000	to	119,999	0	1
125,000	to	129,999	0	1

10. Exit Packages

The Council incurred costs of £0.99m (£0.63m in 23/24) for known compulsory redundancy and other departure reasons payments.

Exit Package Band	2023/24			2024/25				
	£	£	Compulsory	Other	Total Cost £	Compulsory	Other	Total Cost £
0 to 19,999			10	15	156,433	13	22	201,591
20,000 to 79,999*			8	3	473,398	3	3	251,660
80,000 to 260,000*			0	0	0	3	0	538,489
Total			18	18	629,831	19	25	991,740

* Under the Code, ranges can be grouped if it could otherwise identify individual staff.

11. External Audit Costs

The Authority has the following scale fees in relation to the audit of the Statement of Accounts and certification of grant claims provided by the Authority's external auditors.

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Statutory Audit of the Accounts	370	404
Review of Grant Claims	28	45
Other services	22	20
Scale Fees Due	420	469
Total Fees including additional	420	469

12. Better Care Fund

The government created the Better Care Fund in 2015 with the aim of developing and improving joint health and social care planning. The Better Care Fund is a pooling of existing Health and Social Care budgets. The Care Act 2014 amended the NHS Act 2006 to provide the legislative basis for the Better Care Fund. It allows for the NHS Mandate to include specific requirements relating to the establishment and use of an integration fund.

The Council entered into an arrangement in 2015, with Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), now the NHS BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) to comply with the requirements of the Better Care Fund. The Section 75 ("S75") agreement covers a range of budgets as well as the Better Care Fund. Each year a Deed of Variation to the S75 is drawn up and agreed by both partners, this variation document provides up to date budget allocations for the financial year.

Swindon's Better Care Fund was presented to and approved by Swindon's Health & Wellbeing Board and NHS England. The funding provided by each partner and risk share are identified within the Section 75 agreements. This results in the budgets not being a true pooled budget arrangement, as Swindon Borough Council generally retains responsibility for service and financial pressures on social care and public health services, and ICB retains responsibility for service and financial pressures on health services.

The following table is for information only and provides a memorandum of the split between parties. The budget is hosted by the Council on behalf of the two partners to the agreement, so it nominally collects and redistributes all funds, but does not control ICB commissioning activities and expenditure. It operates on an agency basis with amounts shown against the Council as Better Care Fund included within the Adults Section 75 arrangement balances. Costs from activities directly commissioned by the ICB are shown at the foot of the table.

	2023/24			2024/25		
	SBC £'000	ICB £'000	Total £'000	SBC £'000	ICB £'000	Total £'000
Adult Section 75	8,792	16,778	25,570	9,783	14,846	24,629
Public Health	0	0	0	0	33	33
Children - Commissioning & Service Delivery	0	2,902	2,902	0	2,573	2,573
Capital - DFG	972	0	972	1,663	0	1,663
Total	9,764	19,680	29,444	11,447	17,452	28,898
Better Care Fund						
SBC Commissioned activities	6,152	12,182	18,334	6,656	12,671	19,327
Capital - DFG	972	0	972	1,663	0	1,663
Total	7,124	12,182	19,306	8,320	12,671	20,990
Activities directly commissioned and recorded within NHS BaNES, Swindon & Wiltshire ICB accounts.	0	6,116	6,116	0	6,462	6,462

13. Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations

Adjustments shown within the Movement in Reserves statement – the net balance of entries against Total Useable Reserves is matched by entries to an Unusable Reserve, generally used for accounting adjustments and not for supporting the General Fund:

2024/25	General Fund Balance £'000	Housing Revenue Account £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Major Repairs Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:						
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement						
Charges for depreciation of non-current assets	(26,749)	(10,262)	0	0	0	(37,011)
Charges for impairment and revaluation losses of non-current assets	(2,855)	(21,360)	0	0	0	(24,215)
Movement in the market value of investment properties	(170)	0	0	0	0	(170)
Capital grants and contributions applied	1,961	0	0	0	0	1,961
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(8,309)	0	0	0	0	(8,309)
Movement in the value of donated assets	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	(51,934)	(8,691)	0	0	0	(60,625)
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:						
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment	8,695	0	0	0	0	8,695
Voluntary provision for the financing of capital investment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital expenditure charged against the GF and HRA balances	28	18,524	0	0	0	18,552
Adjustments for capital grants:						
Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	24,155	0	0	0	(24,155)	0
Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the CAA	0	0	0	0	34,262	34,262
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve:						
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	5,942	3,327	(9,268)	0	0	1
Flexible use of receipts to finance transformational projects	0	0	0	0	0	6,132
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	0	0	6,132	0	0	0
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve Voluntary debt funding	0	0	0	0	0	0

Contribution from the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance the payments to the Government capital receipts pool.	(1,870)	0	1,870	0	0	1
Adjustments primarily involving the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve (England and Wales):						
Transfer of deferred sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	0	0	(1)	0	0	(1)
Adjustment primarily involving the Major Repairs Reserve						
HRA resources credited to the MRR	0	10,262	0	(10,262)	0	0
Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	0	0	0	12,143	0	12,143
Adjustments primarily involving the Pensions Reserve:						
Net reversal from CIES of items relating to IAS19 retirement benefits	1,288	764	0	0	0	2,052
Adjustments primarily involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account:						
Amount by which council tax / business rate income credited to the CIES is different from that calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	1,032	0	0	0	0	1,032
Adjustments primarily involving the Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account:						
Reversal of the Gains or Losses on AHFS	88	0	0	0	0	88
Total Adjustments	(48,698)	(7,436)	(1,267)	1,881	10,107	(45,413)

2023/24	General Fund Balance £'000	Housing Revenue Account £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Major Repairs Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:						
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement						
Charges for depreciation of non-current assets	(23,986)	(9,478)	0	0	0	(33,464)
Charges for impairment and revaluation losses of non-current assets	(23,642)	(26,639)	0	0	0	(50,281)
Movement in the market value of investment properties	(1,020)	0	0	0	0	(1,020)
Capital grants and contributions applied	6,592	0	0	0	0	6,592
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(4,004)	0	0	0	0	(4,004)
Movement in the value of donated assets	15	0	0	0	0	15
Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	(24,180)	(7,870)	0	0	0	(32,050)
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:						

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Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment	5,415	0	0	0	0	5,415
Voluntary provision for the financing of capital investment	0	5,000	0	0	0	5,000
Capital expenditure charged against the GF and HRA balances	163	9,597	0	0	0	9,760
Adjustments for capital grants:						
Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	42,481	0	0	0	(42,481)	0
Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the CAA	0	0	0	0	29,615	29,615
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve:						
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	185	4,663	(4,848)	0	0	0
Flexible use of receipts to finance transformational projects	(3,302)	0	3,302	0	0	0
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	0	0	1,854	0	0	1,854
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve Voluntary debt funding	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contribution from the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance the payments to the Government capital receipts pool.	(2,716)	0	2,716	0	0	0
Adjustments primarily involving the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve (England and Wales):						
Transfer of deferred sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	0	0	(1)	0	0	(1)
Adjustment primarily involving the Major Repairs Reserve						
HRA resources credited to the MRR	0	9,478	0	(9,478)	0	0
Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	0	0	0	9,452	0	9,452
Adjustments primarily involving the Pensions Reserve:						
Net reversal from CIES of items relating to IAS19 retirement benefits	2,550	191	0	0	0	2,741
Adjustments primarily involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account:						
Amount by which council tax / business rate income credited to the CIES is different from that calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(2,500)	0	0	0	0	(2,500)
Adjustments primarily involving the Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account:						
Reversal of the Gains or Losses on AHFS	(182)	0	0	0	0	(182)
Total Adjustments	(28,131)	(15,058)	3,023	(26)	(12,866)	(53,058)

14. Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund and HRA 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. Transfers out are generally used to support specific projects, or budgeted contributions to the general fund.

	Balance 31/3/23 £'000	Transfers In £'000	Transfers Out £'000	Balance 31/3/24 £'000	Transfers In £'000	Transfers Out £'000	Balance 31/3/25 £'000
HRA Earmarked	(1,294)	(137)	433	(998)	(392)	11	(1,379)
Service Earmarked	(25,833)	(5,935)	7,473	(24,295)	(12,102)	10,593	(25,804)
Major Project Cashflowing	(1,244)	0	1,125	(119)	(380)	0	(499)
Schools	(4,336)	(63)	651	(3,748)	0	743	(3,005)
Infrastructure & Regeneration	(982)	0	107	(875)	(24)	96	(803)
Budget Delivery Cashflowing	(20,459)	(3,995)	6,545	(17,909)	(1,164)	2,234	(16,839)
General Fund Reserves per BS	(52,854)	(9,993)	15,901	(46,946)	(13,670)	13,666	(46,950)
Total Earmarked Reserves	(54,148)	(10,130)	16,334	(47,944)	(14,062)	13,677	(48,329)

The reserves above serve a number of purposes and can be summarised as:

Reserve	Purpose
HRA Earmarked	These reserves support the specific service requirements of the HRA
Schools	For schools' related rollovers
Service Earmarked	To support individual services of the GF, such as commuted sums, self-insurance, children's development and public health
Major Project Cash flowing	Ongoing Wichelstowe and PFI-related support
Infrastructure & Regeneration	To provide support to activities in these areas
Budget Delivery Cash flowing	To mitigate fluctuations in funding

15. Impact of Prior period Adjustments

The following table indicates the restatements necessary to the 2023/24 CIES classification to adjust for the internal re-alignment of services within reported Directorates.

	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	Amounts Removed			Amounts Reclassified			2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Restated	Restated	Restated
Continuing Operations	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Enabling	70,128	(47,348)	22,780	(45,523)	44,127	(1,396)	0	0	0	24,605	(3,221)	21,384
Finance & Assets	6,533	(35,032)	(28,499)	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,533	(35,032)	(28,499)
Stronger and Safer Communities	0	0	0	0	0	0	76,005	(71,943)	4,062	76,005	(71,943)	4,062
Children Services	82,517	(10,445)	72,072	(3,458)	1,369	(2,089)	0	0	0	79,059	(9,076)	69,983
Adults	161,968	(79,341)	82,627	(26,477)	25,923	(554)	0	0	0	135,491	(53,418)	82,073
Economy & Development	90,117	(30,711)	59,406	(547)	524	(23)	0	0	0	89,570	(30,187)	59,383
DSG Commissioning	109,820	(102,218)	7,602	0	0	0	0	0	0	109,820	(102,218)	7,602
HRA - Housing	56,998	(59,394)	(2,396)	0	0	0	0	0	0	56,998	(59,394)	(2,396)
HRA - Operations	14,900	(183)	14,717	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,900	(183)	14,717
Surplus / Deficit on Continuing Operations	592,981	(364,672)	228,309	(76,005)	71,943	(4,315)	76,005	(71,943)	4,315	592,981	(364,672)	228,309

The EFA and group CIES were also restated for these realignments to services that impacted the CIES.

Disclosures Relating to the Balance Sheet

16. Property, Plant and Equipment

In 2024/25 the Council made no material changes to its accounting estimates methods for Property, Plant and Equipment.

The revaluation programme is such that the top twenty assets by value are revalued annually, whilst the majority of the remaining items of Other Land and Buildings are revalued bi-annually. This results in the majority of assets going no longer than a year without undergoing revaluation review. Accumulated depreciation is written back at the revaluation date.

	Council Dwellings £'000	Other Land and Buildings £'000	Vehicles, Plant, & Equipment £'000	Community Assets £'000	Surplus Assets £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Total £'000
Carried at historical cost	0	0	32,398	15,480	0	75,422	123,300
Value of assets revalued in year ending:							
31-Mar-25	588,329	290,331	0	0	20,459	0	899,119
31-Mar-24	0	126,746	0	0	13,786	0	140,532
Total Value of category on the balance sheet	588,329	417,077	32,398	15,480	34,245	75,422	1,162,951

The revaluation decreases recognised in the surplus/deficit on provision of services relates to a general fall in prices across the relevant asset categories for General Fund assets. HRA council dwellings are also subject to specific impairment where the value of new build property is affected by social housing valuations. The certified valuation date is the 31 December but the Valuer confirms any material change to the valuations at the end of the year. There has been an improvement in the housing market during the year which is reflected in the increase to HRA dwellings valuation, although such valuations are limited by application of a social housing discount factor.

In accordance with the temporary relief offered by the Update to the Code on infrastructure assets this note does not include disclosure of gross cost and accumulated depreciation for infrastructure assets because historical reporting practices and resultant information deficits mean that this would not faithfully represent the asset position to the users of the financial statements.

2024/25	Council Dwellings	Other Land & Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, & Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total PPE
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or Valuation B/F	572,409	448,904	28,878		14,431	28,943	65,659	1,159,224
Adjustment to brought forward		(224)						
At 1 April 2024	572,409	448,680	28,878		14,431	28,943	65,659	1,159,000
Additions	28,440	26,177	3,520		1,049	171	18,175	77,532
Revaluation + / (-) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	17,719	9,704	0		0	(57)	0	27,366
Revaluation + / (-) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(21,360)	(2,957)	0		0	(1,505)	0	(25,822)
Derecognition – disposals	(9,066)	(48,034)	0		0	(313)	0	(57,413)
Reclassification	187	(16,493)	0		0	7,006	(8,412)	(17,712)
At 31 March 2025	588,329	417,077	32,398		15,480	34,245	75,422	1,162,951
Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment B/F	(2,273)	(5,344)	(15,438)		0	(42)	0	(23,097)
Adjustment to brought forward		224						
At 1 April 2024	(2,273)	(5,120)	(15,438)		0	(42)	0	(22,873)
Depreciation charge	(9,867)	(13,881)	(3,545)		0	(14)	0	(27,307)
Depreciation w/b on Revaluation	9,297	9,526	0		0	0	0	18,823
Depreciation written to/from the CIES	0	1,671	0		0	0	0	1,671
Depreciation written to/from the CIES - Reclassifications	0	27	0		0	(27)	0	0
Derecognition – disposals	375	210	0		0	17	0	602
At 31 March 2025	(2,468)	(7,567)	(18,983)		0	(66)	0	(29,084)
Net Book Value as per the Balance Sheet								
At 1 April 2024	570,136	443,560	13,440	233,146	14,431	28,901	65,659	1,369,273
At 31 March 2025	585,861	409,510	13,415	230,769	15,480	34,179	75,422	1,364,636

2023/24	Council Dwellin gs	Other Land & Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, & Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total PPE £'000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Cost or Valuation								
At 1 April 2023	551,820	495,146	18,338		13,014	28,032	61,159	1,167,509
Additions	16,742	5,814	10,540		1,417	23	27,629	62,165
Revaluation + / (-) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	16,099	(1,040)	0		0	(100)	0	14,959
Revaluation + / (-) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(26,639)	(21,349)	0		0	(4,323)	0	(52,311)
Derecognition – disposals	(8,742)	(24,621)	0		0	265	0	(33,098)
Reclassification	23,129	(5,046)	0		0	5,046	(23,129)	0
At 31 March 2024	572,409	448,904	28,878		14,431	28,943	65,659	1,159,224
Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment								
At 1 April 2023	(2,205)	(6,799)	(12,375)		0	(103)	0	(21,482)
Depreciation charge	(9,088)	(11,825)	(3,063)		0	(22)	0	(23,998)
Depreciation w/b on Revaluation	8,148	11,114	0		0	43	0	19,305
Depreciation written to/from the CIES	0	1,992	0		0	38	0	2,030
Depreciation written to/from the CIES - Reclassifications	0	(2)	0		0	2	0	0
Derecognition – disposals	872	176	0		0	0	0	1,048
At 31 March 2024	(2,273)	(5,344)	(15,438)		0	(42)	0	(23,097)
Net Book Value as per the Balance Sheet								
At 1 April 2023	549,615	488,347	5,963	234,098	13,014	27,929	61,159	1,380,125
At 31 March 2024	570,136	443,560	13,440	233,146	14,431	28,901	65,659	1,369,273

The authority has chosen not to disclose this information as the previously reported practices and resultant information deficits mean that gross cost and accumulated depreciation are not measured accurately and would not provide the basis for the users of the financial statements to take economic or other decisions relating to infrastructure assets.

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Net movement in Infrastructure Assets		
Net Book Value (modified historical cost) at 1 April	234,098	233,146
Additions	8,514	7,327
Reclassifications	0	0
Depreciation	(9,466)	(9,704)
Net book value at 31 March	233,146	230,769

The authority has determined in accordance with Regulation 30M England of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England/Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 that the carrying amounts to be derecognised for infrastructure assets when there is replacement expenditure is nil.

The infrastructure accounting policy for Swindon Borough Council was revised in 2021/22 to reflect component parts of the network and changes in the useful lives following review. Carriageway/Path/Lighting components and street furniture are now depreciated over 30 years, with structures over 100. The following table shows the revised estimated useful lives, the recorded net book value of the relevant component element of the network and their relative proportion of the overall net book value.

Infrastructure Components	Useful Life	In-year Depreciation	31/3/25 NBV £000	Percentage
Carriageways	30	(8,494)	171,883	74%
Footways/ Cycle Tracks	30	(158)	4,382	2%
Structures (bridges, tunnels, underpasses)	100	(408)	38,414	17%
Street Lighting	30	(534)	13,744	6%
Street Furniture	30	(110)	2,346	1%
NBV per the Balance Sheet		(9,704)	230,769	100%

In valuing surplus assets the valuers have used a desktop valuation with physical inspections. There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year for surplus assets. The material proportion of surplus assets (82%) relates to land available for development, which is considered the highest and best use of the asset.

Description of Asset	Valuation Hierarchy	Basis of Valuation	Observable and non-observable inputs	Key sensitivities			
Surplus assets	Level 2	Valued at Fair Value as at 31 December 2024 using the market approach.	Review of similar markets for development land.	The inputs listed are exposed to future market changes. These are either at a macro level based on factors such as the performance of the economy, or micro level such as the local demand for development, however, a material value of the surplus assets is for known future development.			
				Asset	Valuation Range	Value as at 31/3/25	Valuation Variation
The valuation report states that there is a valuation tolerance of +/- 10%, and the impact of this range on the closing value of surplus assets at 31/3/25 is shown.				Surplus assets	+/- 10%	34,182	3,418

17. Assets Held For Sale

The below balances represent the movements on assets held for sale:

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Balance at start of the year	6,515	6,527
Expenditure	7	60
Disposals	0	(3,814)
Revaluations	5	(64)
To/from Property, Plant and Equipment	0	15,486
Balance at end of the year	6,527	18,195

18. Investment Properties

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

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Balance at start of the year	5,770	4,750
Net gains/losses from fair value adjustments	(1,020)	(170)
Balance at end of the year	4,750	4,580

The valuers have used a desktop valuation with physical inspections, with valuations taking account of the following factors: existing lease terms and rentals taken from the tenancy schedule and independent research into market evidence including Market rentals and yields. There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year for investment properties. In estimating the fair value of the Authority's investment property, the highest and best use of the properties is deemed to be their current use.

Description of Asset	Valuation Hierarchy	Basis of Valuation	Observable and non-observable inputs	Key sensitivities			
				Asset	Valuation Range	Value as at 31/3/25 £'000	Valuation Variation £'000
Investment property	Level 2	Valued at Fair Value as at 31 December 2024 using market and income approach.	Estimated rental value. Capitalisation rate. Local market rate.	The inputs listed are exposed to future market changes. These are either at a macro level based on factors such as the performance of the economy, or micro level such as the local tenant demand for property or house prices.			
Sensitivity of asset				Lysander House	+/- 10%	4,580	458
The Council owns one material investment property, Lysander House in Bristol, which it has considered the potential impact of valuation changes on. The valuation report states that there is a valuation tolerance of +/- 10%, and the impact of this range on the closing value of this investment at 31/3/25 is shown.							

19. Heritage Assets

The valuation rules are relaxed in relation to heritage assets and values for collections have been taken by reference to accepted valuations by external insurers and the expertise of service staff. The nature of heritage assets means they are expected to have indefinite lives, as they are held for future prosperity without consumption of benefits. The Council's holdings can be broken down to collections held at the following sites:

Collections held on location at:	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Steam Railway Heritage Centre	14,200	14,200
Bath Road Museum	11,815	11,815
Lydiard Park House	2,500	2,500
Richard Jefferies Museum	120	120
Agricultural Store Coate	120	120
Whitehall Farm Stores	60	60
Transport Depot Stores	60	60
Civic Regalia	340	340
Total Valuation	29,215	29,215

20. Capital Commitment

At 31 March 2025, Council has approved a Capital Programme of £800m with £481m remaining budgeted to be spent on the construction or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment in 2025/26 and future years. Whilst a departure from the Code and not contractually committed, there is reasonable expectation that the work will be undertaken. External grants and borrowing will primarily fund this programme of works, which includes the major New Eastern Villages and Kimmerfields developments. Further expenditure depends on borrowing, grants and other contributions, some of which have already been received or promised. Similar remaining budgeted commitments at 31 March 2024 were £423m.

21. Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the Authority, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Authority that has yet to be financed. The CFR was £560.6m as at 31/03/24 and has increased by £17.2m to £577.8m as at 31/03/25.

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Property, Plant & Equipment	45,732	51,495
HRA Dwellings & AUC	24,954	33,424
Total Additions to Balance Sheet	70,686	84,919
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute	4,004	8,309
Total Expenditure to be Financed	74,690	93,228
HRA Funding	(9,452)	(12,143)
Capital Receipts	(1,854)	(6,132)
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	(9,760)	(18,552)
Government Grants and Other Contributions	(29,615)	(34,262)
S106	(6,592)	(1,961)
Sources of non-borrowing finance	(57,273)	(73,050)
Opening CFR	553,639	560,641
Balance of capital expenditure financed from borrowing	17,417	14,438
Balance of capital expenditure financed from borrowing - ROU Assets	0	5,740
Reduction from MRP	(5,415)	(8,695)
Reduction from Voluntary HRA repayments	(5,000)	0
Movement in CFR	7,002	11,483
Closing CFR	560,641	572,124

22. Long-term Debtors

The balance of long-term debtors consists of the following elements:

	Balance at 31 March	2024	2025
		£'000	£'000
Mortgage Advances		229	225
Finance Lease Asset		1,232	1,231
Long term loans		5,252	8,652
Total		6,713	10,108

23. Short-term Debtors

The balances of short-term debtors are summarised in the following table.

	Balance at 31 March	2024	2025
		£'000	£'000
Central government bodies		8,822	6,044
Other local authorities		1,370	1,412
NHS bodies		1,979	1,837
Collection Fund		25,447	27,879
Sundry organisations and individuals		26,734	25,047
Payments in Advance		4,364	5,437
Sub-total		68,716	67,656
Impairment of debtors		(7,878)	(8,500)
Collection Fund loss allowance		(15,827)	(13,453)
Net Debtors		45,011	45,703

24. Short-Term Creditors

	Balance at 31 March	2024	2025
		£'000	£'000
Central government bodies		(23,552)	(18,086)
Other local authorities		(830)	(971)
NHS bodies		(1,140)	(2,210)
Collection Fund		(6,706)	(5,107)
Short-term Lease Payments		0	(1,967)
Sundry organisations and individuals		(28,830)	(33,230)
Receipts in advance		(17,253)	(13,845)
Total		(78,311)	(75,416)

25. Provisions

Insurance

The provision is in respect of employers and public liability claims where incidents have already taken place but the claims have yet to be settled. The provision is based on the total of the individual claim “reserves” estimated by the Council’s loss adjusters and Insurance Manager. It includes a provision for outstanding Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI – relating to old Mesothelioma claims) claims that are now becoming certain that payment will be necessary in future.

Capitalised Landfill

This provision represents the sixty year liability for the reclamation of the Shaw landfill site. The cost of the provision represents a capital cost as part of the decommissioning of the asset.

Rates Appeals

This provision is required under the revised business rate accounting of the collection fund and is based upon estimates of valuations appeals.

Other

The other provisions mainly relate to Housing, where housing review costs are known to be payable every fourth year, or where the Authority is required to underwrite accommodation costs and may need be charged if amounts are not paid.

Expenditure relating to these provisions occurs when the Insurers close claims, when confirmation of NDR balances can be used is received, or as temporary housing needs require. This occurs during the course of any year and is not fixed to specific dates. The provisions are reviewed annually to ensure they cover prudently estimated liabilities.

2024/25	Insurance £'000	Landfill £'000	Rates Appeals £'000	Other £'000	Total £'000
Balance Outstanding at start of year	(2,176)	(2,115)	(5,538)	(124)	(9,953)
Additional provisions made	(419)	0	0	0	(419)
Amounts used	686	235	883	79	1,883
Balance outstanding at year end	(1,909)	(1,880)	(4,655)	(45)	(8,489)
Relating to short-term	(931)	0	0	0	(931)
Relating to long-term	(978)	(1,880)	(4,655)	(45)	(7,558)

26. Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or enhancement of those assets under statutory provisions.

The Account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or enhancement as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The Account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Authority as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and enhancement. The Account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties.

The Account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains.

The movement in reserves statement provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the Account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Balance at 1 April	(273,902)	(244,774)
Reversal of capital related items debited or credited to the CIES:		
Charges for depreciation of noncurrent assets	33,464	37,011
Charges for impairment of noncurrent assets	52,522	25,886
Depreciation written back on disposals	(1,049)	(591)
Depreciation written back on general gain/loss	(2,241)	(1,671)
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	4,004	8,309
Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	33,099	61,216
Application of the HRA debt	(5,000)	0
	114,798	130,160
Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(23,986)	(26,173)
Deferred Receipts	(1)	(1)
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	(1,854)	(6,132)
Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	(9,452)	(12,143)
Capital grants and contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	(6,592)	(1,961)
Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account	(29,615)	(34,262)
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund	(5,415)	(6,806)
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund – ROU Lease liability	0	(1,889)
Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund and HRA balances	(9,760)	(18,552)
Movement in the value of donated assets	(15)	0
Movement in the market value of investments	1,020	170
Adjusting balance for rounding	(1)	(1)
	(85,670)	(107,750)
Balance at 31 March	(244,774)	(222,364)

27. Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains gains made by the Authority arising from increases in the value of its non-current assets. The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

- Revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost
- Used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation
- 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
Balance at 1 April	(601,165)	(611,448)
Revaluation of assets in asset table note	(14,964)	(27,366)
Depreciation added back on revaluation	(19,305)	(18,823)
Surplus or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(34,269)	(46,189)
Adjustments against historic cost	8,936	8,260
Accumulated gains on assets sold or scrapped	15,050	17,913
Balance at 31 March	(611,448)	(631,464)

28. 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 Authority 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.

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April	25,917	57,410
Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability	34,234	(812)
Net reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the CIES	(2,741)	(2,052)
Rounding on closing balance	0	(1)
Balance at 31 March	57,410	54,545

Statutory arrangements, however, require a benefit earned to be financed as the Authority makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the Authority has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid. Note 32 contains more detail on the pension fund.

29. Collection Fund Adjustment Account

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

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April	(4,007)	(1,507)
Amount by which council tax income credited to the CIES is different from council tax income calculated under statute	1,306	(5,243)
Amount by which business rates income credited to the CIES is different from business rates income calculated under statute	1,194	4,211
Balance at 31 March	(1,507)	(2,539)

30. Leases

Authority as Lessee

Change in Accounting Policy and Transition to IFRS 16 Lease Accounting

In 2024/25 the Authority applied IFRS 16 Leases for the first time. The main impact of the new requirements is that for arrangements previously accounted for as off balance sheet operating leases, a right-of-use asset and a lease liability are to be brought into the balance sheet at 1 April 2024. Leases for items of low value and leases that expire on or before 31 March 2025 are exempt from the new arrangements.

IFRS 16 has been applied retrospectively, but with the cumulative effect recognised at 1 April 2024. This means that right-of-use assets and lease liabilities have been calculated as if IFRS 16 had always applied but recognised in 2024/25 and not by adjusting prior year figures. However, some practical expedients have been applied as required or permitted by the Code:

- Lease liabilities are measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at 1 April 2024, discounted by the Council's incremental borrowing rate at that date
- The weighted average of the incremental borrowing rates used to discount liabilities was 4.84%
- Right-of-use assets are measured at the amount for the lease liability, adjusted for any prepaid or accrued lease payments that were in the balance sheet on 31 March 2024

This has resulted in the following additions to the balance sheet:

- £5.740m Property, plant and equipment – land, buildings and vehicles, plant and equipment (right-of-use assets)
- £1.883m Non-current creditors (lease liabilities)
- £1.996m Current creditors (lease liabilities)

The newly recognised lease liabilities of £3.851m compares with the operating lease commitments of £2.929m at 31 March 2024. This is explained by the fact that the new lease liabilities include additional agreements and the continuation of operating leases that would have ended by 31 March 2024.

Authority as Lessee for Right of Use Assets

Movement of Right-of-use assets

This table shows the change in the value of the right-of-use assets held under lease by authority:

	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25
		£'000	£'000
	Land and Buildings	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	Total
Balance at 1 April	0	0	0
Additions	5,725	15	5,740
Revaluation	0	0	0
Depreciation	(1,908)	(3)	(1,911)
Disposal	0	0	0
Balance at 31 March	3,817	12	3,829

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

	2024/25
	£'000
Interest expense on lease liabilities	198
Expense relating to short-term leases	30
Expense relating to exempt lease of low-value items	29
Balance at 31 March	257

The lease liabilities are due to be settled over the following time bands (measured at the undiscounted amounts of expected cash payments);

	2024/25
	£'000
	Total
Less than one year	(1,967)
One to five years	(1,884)
Total	(3,851)

Authority as Lessor

Finance Leases

The Authority has leased out a range of property across the Borough where it holds assets on commercial estates, farms and office space. Most of these are classified as operating leases, but one lease for a recreational site is a finance lease.

Operating Leases

The Authority leases out property under operating leases for the following purposes:

- For the provision of community services, such as sports facilities, tourism services and community centres
- For economic development purposes to provide suitable affordable accommodation for local businesses.

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

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Not later than one year	8,361	8,686
Later than one year and not later than five	28,656	29,814
Later than five years	116,808	117,338
Total Payments Due	153,825	155,838

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

31. Private Finance Initiatives and Similar Contracts

Schools PFI Scheme

In 2004/05 the Council entered into a PFI contract with Equion plc. to provide seven schools in the northern sector of Swindon. The Department for Education & Skills sponsored the project and has issued the Council with a Notional Credit Approval of £62.8m. The Council is committed to making payments estimated at £269.5m under the contract although the actual level of payments will depend on contract performance by the provider. Periodic contract reviews may also increase or decrease payments depending on inflation and utility costs. This payment covers a range of on-going services in the management of the schools, with the expectation that the schools will be available for educational use throughout the school term and day. The contract expires in 2032.

As the Council is deemed to control the services that are provided under its PFI scheme and as ownership of the schools will pass to the council at the end of the contracts, the council carries the PPE used under the contracts on the Balance Sheet. Assets are transferred out if a PFI schools changes to academy status. There are no known implications to the accounting model, or impact of onerous contracts, from agreed academy transfers that have taken place.

The original recognition of this PPE was balanced by the recognition of a finance lease liability for amounts due to the scheme operator to pay for the assets. In a departure from the Code, that is not material, lifecycle costs are recorded through revenue as modelled, rather than carried forward as a payment in advance if renewal works have not been undertaken. This ensures a consistent flow through revenue and limits the impact of significant prepayment balances building up over the duration of the contract.

As part of the transition to IFRS16 the value of the associated lease liability for the service concession arrangement is required to be revalued by accounting for future contingent rents (increases in the amount to be paid for the property arising during the contract), as part of the overall liability. This has seen an increase to the carrying liability of £9.653m. This also required the balance sheet value of the related assets to be enhanced by an equivalent amount of expenditure, however, as all PFI schools have transferred to Academy status, that value is then disposed of, leaving a nil carrying value.

The amounts payable to the PFI operators each year are analysed into different elements:

- Fair value of the services received during the year – debited to the relevant service in the Income and Expenditure Account
- Finance cost – an interest charge of 13% on the outstanding Balance Sheet liability, debited to Interest Payable and Similar Charges in the Income and Expenditure Account
- Payment towards liability – applied to write down the Balance Sheet liability towards the PFI operator
- Lifecycle replacement costs – recognised as expensed in the CIES.

PFI assets are accounted for on the Council's balance sheet at current value with a related finance lease liability. Movements in their value over the year are detailed in the analysis of the movement on the Property, Plant and Equipment balance in Note 16.

Although the payments made to the contractor are described as unitary payments, they have been calculated to compensate the contractor for the fair value of the services they provide, the capital expenditure incurred and interest payable whilst the capital expenditure remains to be reimbursed.

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Brought Forward Balance	(40,433)	(37,444)
Remeasurement	0	(9,653)
Opening Balance	(40,433)	(47,097)
Unitary Charge Paid	11,681	12,505
Expenditure / Financing Cost	(8,692)	(8,662)
Closing Balance	(37,444)	(43,254)

The payments due, as calculated under the finance lease methodology, which relate to service charges, interest and lease liability are shown in the following table.

Balance at 31 March	2024			2025		
	Service Charges £'000	Interest £'000	Liability £'000	Service Charges £'000	Interest £'000	Liability £'000
Within 1 Year	4,201	4,320	3,232	3,273	4,990	4,242
Within 2 - 5 Years	18,620	13,207	15,947	17,989	16,726	27,811
Within 6 - 10 Years	16,946	4,659	18,265	4,812	1,702	11,201
	39,768	22,186	37,444	26,074	23,418	43,254

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

Lease Liabilities	2023/24		2024/25	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
- Current		(3,232)		(4,242)
- Non-current		(34,212)		(39,012)
Finance Cost Payable in Future Years		(62,266)		(49,492)
Minimum lease payments		(99,710)		(92,746)

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

	Minimum Lease Payments		Lease Liabilities	
	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2023/24	2024/25
			£'000	£'000
Not later than one year	11,358	12,505	(3,232)	(4,242)
Later than 1 not later than 5	58,535	62,525	(21,024)	(27,811)
Later than 5	29,554	17,716	(13,188)	(11,201)
	99,447	92,746	(37,444)	(43,254)

The minimum lease payments do not include rents that are contingent on events taking place after the lease was entered into.

32. Pensions Schemes Accounted for as Defined Contribution Schemes

Teachers employed by the Authority are members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by the Department for Education. The Scheme provides teachers with specified benefits upon their retirement, and the authority contributes towards the costs by making contributions based on a percentage of members' pensionable salaries.

The Scheme is technically a defined benefit scheme, however, the Scheme is unfunded and the Department for Education uses a notional fund as the basis for calculating the employers' contribution rate paid by local authorities. The Authority is not able to identify its share of underlying financial position and performance of the Scheme with sufficient reliability for accounting purposes. For the purposes of this Statement of Accounts, it is therefore accounted for on the same basis as a defined contribution scheme.

In 2024/25, the council paid £0.174m to Teachers' Pensions in respect of teachers' retirement benefits as part of the employer's payroll, representing 28.55% of pensionable pay. The figures for 2023/24 were £0.132m and 23.9%.

The Authority is responsible for the costs of any additional benefits awarded upon early retirement outside of the terms of the teachers' scheme. These costs are accounted for on a defined benefit basis.

Health staff transferred to the Council in 2013/14 and many maintained their membership in the NHS Pension Scheme. The Scheme provides these staff with specified benefits upon their retirement and the Council contributes towards the costs by making contributions based on a percentage of members' pensionable salaries.

The Authority is not able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and performance of the Scheme with sufficient reliability for accounting purposes. For the purposes of this Statement of Accounts, it is therefore accounted for on the same basis as a defined contribution scheme.

33. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

Participation in Pension Schemes

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

The authority participates in two post-employment schemes:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme, administered locally by Wiltshire Council – this is a funded defined benefit final salary scheme, meaning that the Authority and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions liabilities with investment assets.
- Arrangements for the award of discretionary post-retirement benefits upon early retirement – this is an unfunded defined benefit arrangement, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. However, there is no investment assets built up to meet these pension liabilities, and cash has to be generated to meet actual pension payments as they eventually fall due.

The Council paid an employer's contribution of £17.7m (£16.6m in 2023/24) into Wiltshire Council's Pension Fund. Wiltshire Council manages the fund, which provides participants with defined benefits relating to pay and service. This represented 21.4% of employees' pensionable pay. The basic contribution rate to cover the cost of on-going pensions was 21.4% for General Fund staff, with additional lump sum payments being paid to reduce the deficit on the Pension Fund.

The Fund's Actuary, based on triennial actuarial valuations, determines the contribution rate. The last review was as at 31 March 2022. Future contribution rates are set so that fund assets should be sufficient to meet 100% of the overall liabilities of the fund over time; however, the current position of the pension fund is that it is not fully funded. Though a significant liability, the Council can meet the proportion applicable.

Transactions Relating to Post-employment Benefits

We recognise the cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge we are required to make against council tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post-employment/retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement.

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

IAS19 Summary Disclosures Through The CIES	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Within Net Cost of Service:		
Current service cost	18,523	16,996
Non-Distributed cost/(benefit) (impact of past service costs and settlements and curtailments)	(1,190)	1,245
Within Net operating Expenditure:		
Interest cost	1,170	2,244
Within Reserves Movement:		
Movement on Pensions Reserve	2,741	2,052
Actual Amount Charged Against Council tax for the Year:		
All employer's contributions payable to the scheme	(21,244)	(22,537)
Net effect on Council Tax of IAS19 adjustments	0	0

The principal assumptions used by the actuary have been:

Assumptions as at 31 March	2024	2025
Pension Increase Rate (CPI)	2.8%	2.9%
Salary Increase Rate	3.3%	3.4%
Discount Rate	4.9%	5.8%
Inflation	n/a	3.3%
The average future life expectancies at age 65 , in years	Female	Female
Current Pensioners	24.0	24.00
Future Pensioners	25.5	25.20
	Male	Male
Current Pensioners	21.0	21.00
Future Pensioners	22.0	21.70

A previous court case involving Virgin Media considered that where the rules of a contracted-out defined benefit scheme were amended, the Scheme Actuary would provide a “section 37” confirmation that the scheme continues to meet the contracting-out requirements. The original court case in June 2023 decided that certain rule amendments were invalid in the absence of the actuarial certification (potentially including cases where such a confirmation cannot now be located).

At this point in time there remains insufficient information to assess the potential impact, and it is unable to be quantified by the actuary.

Commutation Adjustment

An allowance is included for future retirements to elect to take a percentage of the maximum additional tax-free cash up to HMRC limits. There are different rates for pre- (50%) and post (75%) - April 2008 service.

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 Local Government Pension Scheme has 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.

There are risks associated with the pension liability around scheme membership, where the life expectancy of members may be longer than estimated, resulting in benefits being payable for a longer period.

The liabilities show the underlying commitments that the authority has in the long run to pay retirement benefits. The total liability of £696m has a substantial impact on the net worth of the authority as recorded in the Balance Sheet, resulting in a negative overall balance of £54m. However, statutory arrangements for funding the deficit mean that the financial position of the Authority remains healthy:

- The deficit on the local government scheme will be made good by increased contributions over the remaining working life of employees (i.e. before payments fall due)
- Finance is only required to be raised to cover discretionary benefits when pensions are paid
- The total contributions expected to be made to the Local Government Pension Scheme by the council in the year to 31 March 2026 is £21.707m.

Fair Value of Employer Assets

Asset Category	Non-Quoted Prices			Total 2024 £'000	Quoted Prices in Active Markets		Non-Quoted Prices in Active Markets			Total 2025 £'000		
			%				£'000	£'000	%			
	£'000	%			£'000	£'000						
Equities	320,937	320,937	40.0%		264,478	62,038	326,516	40.2%				
Bonds	219,361	219,361	27.4%		288,839	0	288,839	35.6%				
Property	256,985	256,985	32.1%		0	184,253	184,253	22.7%				
Cash & Temporary Investments	3,610	3,610	0.5%		0	12,297	12,297	1.5%				
Total	800,893	800,893	100.0%		553,317	258,588	811,905	100.0%				

As part of the valuation of the 31 March 2025 net pension asset/liability the position on the fund was such that a net asset was present. However, the effect of accounting regulations limits the recording of an asset to take account of any asset ceiling – a reduction for the economic benefit that would be available from a reduction in future contributions. The impact of the asset ceiling is to reduce the original net asset to a net liability.

	2023/24	2024/25
Pension Asset Adjustment for the Asset Ceiling	£'000	£'000
Original Net Asset	16,832	115,268
Asset Ceiling Adjustment	(74,242)	(169,813)
Revised Net Liability	(57,410)	(54,545)

Reconciliation of present value of the scheme liabilities:				2024	2025	
	Asset £'000	Obligation £'000	Net £'000	Asset £'000	Obligation £'000	Net £'000
Fair Value of Employer Assets	750,904	0	750,904	800,893	0	800,893
Asset Ceiling Adjustment	0	0	0	(74,242)	0	(74,242)
Present Value of Liabilities	0	(776,821)	(776,821)	0	(772,984)	(772,984)
Opening balance adjustment	0	(631)	(631)	0	(11,077)	(11,077)
Opening Position 1 April	750,904	(777,452)	(26,548)	726,651	(784,061)	(57,410)
Current Service Cost	0	(18,523)	(18,523)	0	(16,996)	(16,996)
Past Service (Costs) / Gains	0	(89)	(89)	0	(269)	(269)
Effect of Settlements	(1,760)	3,039	1,279	(1,073)	1,061	(12)
Total Service Cost	(1,760)	(15,573)	(17,333)	(1,073)	(16,204)	(17,277)
Interest Income on plan assets	35,551	0	35,551	38,543	0	38,543
Interest cost on obligation	0	(36,721)	(36,721)	(3,601)	(37,185)	(40,786)
Total Net Interest	35,551	(36,721)	(1,170)	34,942	(37,185)	(2,243)
Total Cost Recognised in Profit/(Loss)	33,791	(52,294)	(18,503)	33,869	(53,389)	(19,520)
Plan participant contributions	6,305	(6,305)	0	6,176	(6,176)	0
Employer contributions	20,232	0	20,232	21,457	0	21,457
Benefits Paid	(29,801)	29,801	0	(38,741)	38,741	0
Unfunded Benefits Paid	(1,012)	1,012	0	(1,080)	1,080	0
Contributions for Unfunded Benefits	1,012	0	1,012	1,080	0	1,080
Admin Expense	0	0	0	(964)	0	(964)
Expected Closing Position	781,431	(805,238)	(23,807)	748,448	(803,805)	(55,357)
Change in financial assumptions	0	42,925	42,925	0	88,857	88,857
Change in demographic assumptions	0	4,801	4,801	0	13,280	13,280
Other experience	0	(26,549)	(26,549)	0	5,031	5,031
Return on assets excluding interest	19,462	0	19,462	(14,386)	0	(14,386)
Asset Ceiling Adjustment	(74,242)	0	(74,242)	(91,970)	0	(91,970)
Total Re-measurements in Other Income	(54,780)	21,177	(33,603)	(106,356)	107,168	812
Sub-Total	726,651	(784,061)	(57,410)	642,092	(696,637)	(54,545)
Fair Value of Employer Assets	800,893	0	800,893	811,905	0	811,905
Asset Ceiling Adjustment	(74,242)	0	(74,242)	(169,813)	0	(169,813)
Present Value of Funded Liabilities	0	(772,984)	(772,984)	0	(686,892)	(686,892)
Present Value of Unfunded Liabilities	0	(11,077)	(11,077)	0	(9,745)	(9,745)
Closing Position 31 March	726,651	(784,061)	(57,410)	642,092	(696,637)	(54,545)

34. Financial Instruments

Categories of Financial Instruments

The Authority's Treasury strategy is mainly to borrow or invest in Government institutions or highly credit-rated financial organisations. The majority of instruments are carried at amortised cost, whilst the Property Fund is carried at fair value (through profit and loss). The statutory override for IFRS9, extended until 31 March 2029, requires any gain/loss on revaluation of the Property Fund to be cleared to a Pooled Investments Adjustment Account and therefore any revaluation currently has no general fund impact. Current and non-current investments relate to deposits made with both group and other institutions.

The following categories of financial instrument are carried in the Balance Sheet, debtors and creditors relate only to trade activities. Money market funds were fully repaid during the year.

	Non-Current	Non-Current	Current	Current
	31st March 2024	31st March 2025	31st March 2024	31st March 2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Amortised Cost				
Investments	2,268	175	300	15,293
Debtors	5,251	8,652	15,316	11,850
Cash & Cash Equivalents	0	0	32,071	17,520
Fair value through profit and Loss				
Property Fund Investment	4,477	4,563	0	0
Total Financial Assets	11,996	13,390	47,687	44,663
Borrowings at Amortised Cost				
Financial liabilities PWLB	(347,998)	(306,520)	(3,890)	(81,478)
Financial liabilities Money Market	0	0	0	0
Financial liabilities Other Temporary Borrowing	(2,852)	(6,021)	(16,458)	(1,458)
Creditors	0	0	(1,460)	(631)
Other Long Term Liabilities	(2,470)	(4,553)	0	0
PFI	(34,212)	(39,624)	(3,231)	(3,630)
Total Financial Liabilities	(387,532)	(356,718)	(25,039)	(87,197)

Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

The gains and losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in relation to interest and investing financial instruments are shown below.

	2023-24		2024-25			
	Financial liabilities at amortised cost	Financial assets at amortised cost	Financial assets measured at fair value through profit and loss	Financial liabilities at amortised cost	Financial assets at amortised cost	Financial assets measured at fair value through profit and loss
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Interest expense	9,940	0	0	13,073	0	0
Loss on financial assets at fair value through profit and loss	0	0	182	0	0	0
Gain on financial assets at fair value through profit and loss	0	0	0	0	0	(86)
Interest income	0	(4,821)	(227)	0	(5,883)	(234)
Net (gain) or loss for the year	9,940	(4,821)	(45)	13,073	(5,883)	(320)

Fair Values of Assets and Liabilities

One of the authority's financial assets is measured at fair value on a recurring basis and is described in the following table, including the valuation technique used to measure them.

Recurring fair value measurements	Input level in fair value hierarchy	Valuation technique used to measure fair value	Basis of valuation	As at 31/3/24	As at 31/3/25
Fair value through profit and Loss				£'000	£'000
Property Fund Investment	Level 2	Observable inputs for the sales value of the asset	Evaluated prices provided by Fund management services.	4,475	4,563
Total				4,475	4,563

Gains and losses included in fair value through profit and loss for the current year relate to the Property Fund Investment and are taken to the Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account.

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Opening Balance	4,657	4,475
Adjusting Transfer In/(Out)	0	0
Gain/(Loss) to Other Operating Income (reversed to Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account)	(182)	88
Closing Balance	4,475	4,563

Except for the financial asset carried at fair value described in the table above, all other financial liabilities and financial assets represented by loans and receivables and long term debtors and creditors are carried on the balance sheet at amortised cost. Their comparative fair value can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that take place over the remaining life of the instruments, using the following assumptions:

- For PWLB, and non-PWLB loans payable, new borrowing rates from the PWLB have been applied to provide the fair value
- Where an instrument has a maturity of less than 12 months or is a trade or other receivable the fair value is taken to be the carrying or billed amount;

These, and the PFI liability, are carried at amortised cost on the balance sheet, but for fair value comparison are estimated as Level 2 Inputs – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly, and the fair values calculated by third party Treasury specialist are as follows.

Balance at 31 March	2024		2025	
	Carrying Amount £'000	Fair Value £'000	Carrying Amount £'000	Fair Value £'000
PWLB long term liabilities	(347,998)	(309,378)	(306,520)	(153,253)
PWLB short term liabilities	(14,200)	(14,077)	(81,478)	(83,198)
PWLB Sub-Total	(362,198)	(323,455)	(387,998)	(236,451)
Non-PWLB long term liabilities	(2,852)	(2,852)	(6,021)	(5,997)
Non-PWLB short term liabilities	(6,148)	(8,513)	(1,458)	(1,458)
PFI liability	(37,443)	(50,785)	(43,254)	(43,254)
Investments	300	300	15,293	15,293

The fair value of Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans of £236.451m measures the economic effect of the terms agreed with the PWLB compared with estimates of the terms that would be offered for market transactions undertaken at the Balance Sheet date, which has been assumed as the new borrowing

rates available from the PWLB. The difference between the carrying amount and the fair value measures the additional interest that the authority will pay over the remaining terms of the loans under the agreements with the PWLB, against what would be paid if the loans were at prevailing market rates. However, the authority has a continuing ability to borrow at concessionary rates from the PWLB rather than from the markets, termed the PWLB Certainty interest rates.

A supplementary measure of the fair value as a result of its PWLB commitments for fixed rate loans is to compare the terms of these loans with the PWLB redemption interest rates. If a value is calculated on this basis, the carrying amount of £387.998m would be valued at £338.049m. But, if the authority were to seek to avoid the projected loss by repaying the loans to the PWLB, the PWLB would raise a penalty charge, based on the redemption interest rates, for early redemption of £101.603m for the additional interest that will not now be paid. The exit price for the PWLB loans including the penalty charge would be £489.601m.

The fair values of assets or liabilities shown above are higher or lower than the carrying amount because the Authority's portfolio includes a number of fixed rate loans where the interest rate varies over the prevailing rates at the Balance Sheet date. This shows notional future gains/losses (based on economic conditions at 31 March) arising from a commitment to pay or receive interest at market rates that differ from the current market at the balance sheet date.

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

35. Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

The Authority's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks where there is the possibility that:

- Credit risk – other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Authority
- Liquidity risk – the Authority might not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments
- Market risk – financial loss might arise for the Authority as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates and stock market movements.

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

Credit Risk

Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the authority's customers. This risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy, available via the Council website, which requires that deposits are not made with financial institutions unless they meet identified minimum credit criteria. This Council applies the creditworthiness service provided by Link Asset Services. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:

- Credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies;
- Credit Default Swap spreads to give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings;
- Sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

The instruments carried by the Authority are such that they have no lifetime expected credit loss applied as they are either held with government institutions, are highly credit-rated with non-material risk or are consolidated under the group. Short-term debtors held at amortised cost are assessed via the simplified approach and the balance of debtor impairment for the year was £8.5m.

The Authority's maximum exposure to credit risk at 31 March, in relation to its investments in banks and building societies of £10m, cannot be assessed generally as the risk of any institution failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each individual institution. Recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of not being able to recover funds applies to all of the Authority's deposits, but there was no evidence at the 31 March that this was likely to crystallise.

The Authority does not generally allow credit for customers, such that all of the balance is past its due date for payment. The past due but not impaired amount can be analysed by age as follows:

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Less than three months	5,354	4,031
Three to six months	1,025	962
Six months to one year	1,963	1,928
More than one year	5,869	5,920
Total	14,211	12,841

Liquidity Risk

The authority has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available as needed. If unexpected movements happen, the authority has ready access to borrowings from the money markets and the Public Works Loans Board. There is no significant risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments.

Instead, the risk is that the authority will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its borrowings at a time of unfavourable interest rates. The authority sets limits on the proportion of its fixed rate borrowing during specified periods. The strategy is to ensure that not more than 45% of loans are due to mature within any rolling three-year period through a combination of careful planning of new loans taken out and (where it is economic to do so) making early repayments. The maturity analysis of financial liabilities is as follows:

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Less than one year	20,347	82,936
Between one and two years	81,477	59,420
Between two and five years	51,354	61,802
More than five years	79,225	62,524
Over ten years	138,796	128,795
Total	371,199	395,477

All trade and other payables are due to be paid in less than one year.

Market Interest Rate & Price Risk

The Council is exposed to changes in interest rates as a result of its borrowings being at long-term fixed rates and investment being short-term or at variable rates of interest. Falls in interest rates will subsequently have an adverse impact on the Council's finances but other movements in interest rates can have a complex impact on the authority. For instance, a rise in interest rates would have the following effects:

- Borrowings at variable rates – interest charged to the Surplus / Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise
- Borrowings / Investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the liability/asset will fall
- Investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise

The impact of a 1% increase in interest rates on the fair values of the below liabilities would be:

Balance at 31 March	2025			2025	
	Fair Value £'000	Impact of 1% Rise £'000	Revised Fair Value £'000	Impact of 1% increase on:	
				Interest payable	Interest receivable
PWLB liabilities	(236,451)	(66,778)	(303,229)		
Non-PWLB liabilities	(7,455)	111	(7,344)		
Total	(243,905)	(66,668)	(310,573)	Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	

Balance at 31 March	2024			Impact of 1% increase on:	2024
	Fair Value £'000	Impact of 1% Rise £'000	Revised Fair Value £'000		
PWLB liabilities	(323,455)	42,121	(281,334)	Interest payable	160
Non-PWLB liabilities	(11,365)	0	(11,365)	Interest receivable	(51)
PFI liability	(50,785)	2,069	(48,716)	Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	564
Total	(385,605)	44,191	(341,415)		

The Authority holds £5m in property/multi-asset fund, and the interest / price varies, however, any movements in price will not currently impact on the General Fund Balance as regulations are in force to ameliorate the impact of fair value movements.

Disclosures Relating to the Cashflow Statement

36. Cash Flow Statement – Operating Activities

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
The cash flows for operating activities include the following items:		
Interest received	5,060	3,864
Interest paid	(15,021)	(16,466)
Total	(9,961)	(12,602)
The surplus or deficit on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following non-cash movements:		
Depreciation	33,464	37,011
Impairment and downward valuations	50,281	24,215
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	4,012	3,797
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	1,783	(9,248)
Increase/(decrease) in inventories	102	(176)
Pension Liability Movement	(2,741)	(2,052)
Carrying amount of non-current assets and non-current assets held for sale, sold or derecognised	32,050	60,625
Other non-cash items charged to the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services, mainly relating to pension adjustments	(952)	(1,158)
Total	117,999	113,014
The surplus or deficit on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following items that are investing and financing activities:		
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, intangible assets and investment assets	(4,848)	(9,268)
Any other items for which the cash effects are investing or financing cash flows, mainly relating to capital grants	(47,289)	(28,825)
Total	(52,137)	(38,093)

37. Cash Flow Statement – Investing Activities

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(77,515)	(69,831)
Purchase of short-term and long-term investments	(78,129)	(370,361)
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	4,849	9,269
Proceeds from short-term and long-term investments	88,916	354,312
Other payments / receipts from investing activities, mainly capital grants for funding capital	44,754	42,776
Net cash flow from Investing Activities	(17,125)	(33,835)

38. Cash Flow Statement – Financing Activities

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Cash receipts of short- and long-term borrowing	111,342	50,000
Cash payments for the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases and on-balance sheet PFI contracts	(2,990)	(5,731)
Repayments of short- and long-term borrowing	(101,301)	(25,721)
Collection Fund & Other receipts / (payments) for financing activities	(2,615)	(6,883)
Net cash flow from Financing Activities	4,436	11,665

General Disclosures

39. Accounting Standards That Have Been Issued but Have Not Yet Been Applied

The following accounting standards have been issued that will be applied in the Code in the following year:

- IAS 21 The Effects of Changes in Foreign Exchange Rate (Lack of Exchangeability)
- IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts

None of these standards are known to impact on the 2024/25 statements.

40. Critical Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies

There remains uncertainty about future levels of funding for individual local authorities in the absence of multi-year financial settlements.

The Authority is deemed to control the services provided under the agreement for school provision in seven PFI schools and also to control the residual value of the buildings at the end of the agreement. The accounting policies for PFI schemes and similar contracts have been applied to the arrangement and the schools are recognised as Property, Plant and Equipment on the Authority's Balance Sheet. However, with on-going transfers of schools to Academy status, the authority is left with no relevant asset, but still holds the long-term liability. Schools are charged each year for their own contribution to the PFI costs, both before and after Academy transfer where relevant. As the schools continue to contribute their share of funding, there is no indicator that this change results in an onerous contract.

The Authority transferred the operating of its leisure services to third party providers in 2014/15. Review of the status of the long-term assets connected with the transfer concluded that they should remain on the Local Authority balance sheet as operational assets. This is in line with requirements of the Code, where assets are leased for the provision of services but risks and rewards from ownership remain. By holding the leisure centres on balance sheet the revenue account is exposed to annual depreciation charges and any valuation changes that would affect surplus or deficit on provision of services. Capital expenditure will also be added to the balance sheet asset rather than adjusted for through revenue expenditure funded by capital under statute.

The Authority is party to an arrangement initially entered into with the Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), now the Integrated Care Board (ICB) from July 2022 (note 12). The agreement between the bodies has previously been reviewed and discussion had with stakeholders in agreeing that the Council does not control the commissioning activities of the CCG/ICB as each party retains responsibility for services provided within its own areas of social care/health.

The transition to IFRS16 Leases has required a number of judgements to be made in the review of leases and their subsequent treatment. The classification as either an on or off balance sheet asset

based on terms, value or whether there is a specific asset being referred to in agreements. In some cases the lease agreements may not include ideal information and a judgement is taken on the known values. Such judgements take place against each individually reviewed lease agreement/grouping. A portfolio approach has been taken with private sector landlord property where there is the judgement that all properties used for this service are of a similar standard. There is an overriding judgement that based on contract records, service feedback and knowledge of the services being provided, material leases have been considered for IFRS16 adjustment.

The overriding concept of materiality has been applied in the production of these accounts. This involves both the judgement of materiality in the application of transactions for accruals, and in the presentation of disclosures that relate to the accounting statements. Statutory notes are not affected.

41. Assumptions Made About the Future & Other Major Sources of Estimation Uncertainty

The Statement of Accounts contains figures that are based on assumptions made by the Authority 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, and current inflationary activity running high, actual results could be different from the assumptions and estimates.

The below show the potential impact of some key assumptions:

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if Results Differ from Assumptions		
		Carrying Value of Assets	Change	Est. variation
Property, Plant and Equipment	<p>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.</p> <p>Assets are valued based on estimates and assumptions at a point in time but market conditions can fluctuate.</p>		If useful lives of assets reduce, depreciation increases and the net book value falls. Assets may be under or over-valued but should be within valuation tolerances acceptable to valuers.	
Revaluation charge through the CIES from reduction in operational land and building valuation (Dwellings & OLB)		£995.4m	10% reduction	£99.5m
Depreciation charge through the CIES from reduction in life of operational land and building (Depreciable assets)		£1,273.7m	2-year reduction	£15.6m

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if Results Differ from Assumptions
Net Pensions Liability / Asset	<p>Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements, advised by actuaries, relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on fund assets.</p> <p>This includes adjustment to an initially calculated pension asset to take account of the required 'asset ceiling' of £169m, where limited future benefit can be recognised, which has resulted in a pension liability of £54m remaining on the balance sheet.</p>	<p>Changes to the pension liability can be complex with a variety of items that may cause impact on the balance sheet or revenue statement with either a positive or negative change. Sensitivity analysis on the liability assumptions is shown below.</p> <p>If the pension asset ceiling was not accounted for the balance sheet would show a net pension asset of £115m.</p>

Sensitivity Analysis / Change in Assumptions at 31 March on Pension Calculations

Adjustment to discount rate	0.50%	0.10%	0.00%	-0.10%	-0.50%
Present value of total obligation	648,632	686,571	696,637	706,950	750,839
Projected service cost	10,340	12,065	12,532	13,015	15,112
Adjustment to long term salary increase	0.50%	0.10%	0.00%	-0.10%	-0.50%
Present value of total obligation	700,317	697,360	696,637	695,920	693,113
Projected service cost	12,532	12,532	12,532	12,532	12,532
Adjustment to pension increases and deferred revaluation	0.50%	0.10%	0.00%	-0.10%	-0.50%
Present value of total obligation	748,471	706,505	696,637	687,003	650,679
Projected service cost	15,213	13,034	12,532	12,046	10,250
Adjustment to life expectancy assumptions		+1 Year	None	-1 Year	
Present value of total obligation		721,574	696,637	672,616	
Projected service cost		13,058	12,252	12,021	

42. Events after the Balance Sheet Date / Contingent Liability

There are no known events that would have material impact on the Council's position as at 31 March 2025.

43.Related Parties

The Authority 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 Authority.

Central Government

The UK government has effective control over the general operations of the Authority – it is responsible for providing the statutory framework, within which the Authority operates, provides funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Authority has with other parties (e.g. council tax bills, housing benefits). Grants received from government departments are shown elsewhere in the accounts.

Members

Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid is shown in Note 8. Members have completed an annual declaration of any possible related party situation and transactions with them. There are no significant transactions identified.

Officers

Officers of the Council have also made an annual declaration involving related parties. There are no significant transactions identified.

Controlled Companies

The Council is parent company to Public Power Solutions Limited (PPSL), Common and Chapel Solar Farms and Housing companies. Further details on these companies are contained within the group section of these accounts.

Company	Common Farm	Chapel Farm	Housing Dev. Co.	JV
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Payments	0	0	0	0
Receipts	60	58	364	0
Loan Balances	0	0	1,781	1,368
Capital Loan Balances	1,888	2,614	0	1,001

Entities Controlled or Significantly Influenced by the Authority

The Council entered into a 50/50 Joint Venture development agreement in January 2018, with Barratt Developments PLC, for the development of the Wichelstowe area of the Borough through the creation of a new company, Wichelstowe LLP.

The Council makes several grants and contributions to third party organisations each year, which follow individual process before award.

The Council is responsible as Trustee for a range of small charitable funds, totalling £818k over eighteen Funds. Internal interest is applied to the balances held by the Council's Treasury service, whilst the direction of Trust Fund support is agreed by Council.

Members of the Council also sit on boards of other groups or organisations, such as the Group Companies of the Council, and the Fire Authority. These are not necessarily material related parties but show the range of bodies that Members are involved with. A listing of outside bodies that Members are represented on can be found on the Committee and Member Information Site pages of the Council website.

44. Long Term Investments

The Council has a number of group companies which form part of the balance of the Council's long-term investments. These investments include deposits made to the companies and the Council shareholdings. They are removed as part of the consolidation process in the following group accounts section.

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Property Fund	4,475	4,563
Subsidiary Companies	2,268	1,956
Joint Venture	0	1,368
Total	6,743	7,887

The Swindon Borough Council Group Accounts

The Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

	2023/24 Restated	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25
		Gross Expenditure £000	Gross Income £000	Net Expenditure £000	Gross Expenditure £000	Gross Income £000	Net Expenditure £000
Continuing Operations							
Enabling		24,605	(3,221)	21,384	24,743	(3,765)	20,978
Resources - Finance & Audit		6,006	(34,505)	(28,499)	7,897	(36,398)	(28,501)
Stronger and Safer Communities		76,005	(71,943)	4,062	79,052	(71,689)	7,363
Children Services		79,059	(9,076)	69,983	80,943	(9,428)	71,515
Adults		137,774	(55,993)	81,781	138,709	(50,754)	87,955
Inclusive Economy & Sustainability		89,570	(30,187)	59,383	72,150	(38,639)	33,511
DSG Commissioning		109,820	(102,218)	7,602	116,969	(108,889)	8,080
HRA - Housing		56,998	(59,394)	(2,396)	54,821	(66,388)	(11,567)
HRA - Operations		14,900	(183)	14,717	16,585	(201)	16,384
Surplus / Deficit on All Services		594,737	(366,720)	228,017	591,869	(386,151)	205,718
Group taxation & share of joint venture				(2,908)			(4,529)
Other operating expenditure				40,238			64,863
Financing and investment income and expenditure				12,921			16,381
Taxation and non-specific grant income				(226,191)			(219,605)
Group (Surplus) / Deficit on Provision of Services				52,077			62,828
(Surplus) / deficit on revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment				(34,269)			(46,189)
Re-measurements on pension assets / liabilities				34,234			(812)
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure				(35)			(47,001)
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure				52,042			15,827

The Group Movement in Reserves Statement

2024/25	General Fund Balance	HRA	Earmarked GF Reserves	Earmarked HRA Reserves	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	Total Authority Reserves	Authority's Share of Group Reserves	Group Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April	(8,496)	(9,639)	(46,946)	(998)	(8,365)	(1,881)	(57,011)	(133,336)	(792,628)	(925,964)	(5,920)	(931,884)
Surplus /deficit on provision of services	50,282	12,546	0	0	0	0	0	62,828	0	62,828	0	62,828
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(47,001)	(47,001)	0	(47,001)
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	50,282	12,546	0	0	0	0	0	562,828	(47,001)	15,827	0	15,827
Adjustments between Group and Authority accounts	4,474	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,474	0	4,474	(4,474)	0
Net increase before transfers	54,756	12,546	0	0	0	0	0	67,302	(47,001)	20,301	(4,474)	15,827
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	(48,698)	(7,436)	0	0	(1,267)	1,881	10,107	(45,413)	45,413	0	0	0
Transfer of DSG deficit	(6,746)	0	0	0	0	0	0	(6,746)	6,746	0	0	0
Net Increase/Decrease before Transfers to Reserves	(688)	5,110	0	0	(1,267)	1,881	10,107	15,143	5,158	20,301	(4,474)	15,827
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	4	381	(4)	(381)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Increase/Decrease in year	(684)	5,491	(4)	(381)	(1,267)	1,881	10,107	15,143	5,158	20,301	(4,474)	15,827
Balance at 31 March	(9,180)	(4,148)	(46,950)	(1,379)	(9,632)	0	(46,904)	(118,193)	(787,470)	(905,663)	(10,394)	(916,057)

Swindon Borough Council – Statement of Accounts – 2024/25

2023/24	General Fund Balance	HRA	Earmarked GF Reserves	Earmarked HRA Reserves	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	Total Authority Reserves	Authority's Share of Group Reserves	Group Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April	(8,335)	(12,340)	(52,854)	(1,294)	(11,388)	(1,855)	(44,145)	(132,211)	(848,750)	(980,961)	(2,965)	(983,926)
Surplus /deficit on provision of services	34,022	18,055	0	0	0	0	0	52,077	0	52,077	0	52,077
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(35)	(35)	0	(35)
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	34,022	18,055	0	0	0	0	0	52,077	(35)	52,042	0	52,042
Adjustments between Group and Authority accounts	2,955	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,955	0	2,955	(2,955)	0
Net increase before transfers	36,977	18,055	0	0	0	0	0	55,032	(35)	54,997	(2,955)	52,042
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	(28,131)	(15,058)	0	0	3,023	(26)	(12,866)	(53,058)	53,058	0	0	0
Transfer of DSG deficit	(3,099)	0	0	0	0	0	0	(3,099)	3,099	0	0	0
Net Increase/Decrease before Transfers to Reserves	5,747	2,997	0	0	3,023	(26)	(12,866)	(1,125)	56,122	54,997	(2,955)	52,042
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	(5,908)	(296)	5,908	296	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Increase/Decrease in year	(161)	2,701	5,908	296	3,023	(26)	(12,866)	(1,125)	56,122	54,997	(2,955)	52,042
Balance at 31 March	(8,496)	(9,639)	(46,946)	(998)	(8,365)	(1,881)	(57,011)	(133,336)	(792,628)	(925,964)	(5,920)	(931,884)

The Group Balance Sheet

Note		31 March 2024	31 March 2025
		£000	£000
45	Property, Plant & Equipment	1,376,999	1,371,389
	Intangibles	0	2,226
	Investment property	4,750	4,580
	Heritage	29,215	29,215
	Long term investments	12,753	15,605
	Long Term debtors	1,989	5,623
	Total Non-Current Assets	1,425,706	1,428,638
	Short term investments	300	15,293
	Inventories & Work in Progress	945	1,121
	Short term debtors	44,900	45,956
	Cash & Cash equivalents	32,562	18,171
	Assets held for sale (current)	6,527	18,195
	Current Assets	85,234	98,736
	Short term borrowing	(20,482)	(82,936)
	Short term creditors	(78,596)	(76,058)
	Provisions (short term)	(1,141)	(931)
	Current Liabilities	(100,219)	(159,925)
	Long term borrowing	(350,850)	(312,541)
	Long term creditors	(39,892)	(47,339)
	Provisions (long term)	(8,812)	(7,558)
	Pension Liability	(57,410)	(54,545)
	Capital Grants receipts in advance	(21,873)	(29,409)
	Non-Current Liabilities	(478,837)	(451,392)
	Net Assets	931,884	916,057
	Usable Reserves of Group	(139,256)	(128,587)
	Unusable Reserves of authority only	(792,628)	(787,470)
	Total Reserves	(931,884)	(916,057)

The Group Cash flow Statement

Note	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Net surplus or (deficit) on the provision of services	(52,077)	(62,828)
Adjustments to net surplus or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	118,926	113,402
Adjustments for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities	(54,836)	(42,057)
Net cash flows from Operating Activities	12,013	8,517
Investing Activities	(17,967)	(34,476)
Financing Activities	3,780	11,568
Net increase or decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(2,174)	(14,391)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	34,736	32,562
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	32,562	18,171

45. Long Term Investments – Group Consolidation

For a variety of legal and regulatory reasons, organisations are often required to conduct their activities through several undertakings, each under the control of the parent company. In such circumstances the financial reports of the parent organisation do not present the full picture by themselves. To understand the full picture, and therefore the full economic benefits and risks, group accounts are required.

The authority has considered its relationship with key partners and has produced Group Accounts for line by line consolidation of Swindon Housing Development Company Ltd, Swindon Common Farm Solar Community Interest Plc (Common Farm) and Chapel Farm Solar Ltd only. As a joint venture (JV) Witchelstowe LLP is not consolidated on a line by line basis but requires the relevant share of the net assets to be accounted for, with the Council's investment being adjusted to represent the gain/loss of the Council's 50% interest.

The following tables summarise the performance of the group companies prior to their consolidation:

	Housing Dev. Co.		Common Farm Solar		Chapel Farm Solar	
	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Profit / (Loss) before taxation	(69)	341	(85)	(253)	(50)	75
Tax Adjustment	13	0	11	(85)	(16)	15
Profit / (Loss) after taxation	(56)	341	(74)	(338)	(65)	90
As at 31 March	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Net Balance Sheet Asset/(Liability)	(889)	(1,579)	(105)	153	(852)	(827)
Company Purpose	The Council became owner of the above company during 2017/18. This company is involved in the construction and selling of housing.		The Council became owner of the above company during 2016/17. This company generates electricity from a solar array, part funded from a community bond issue.		The Council became owner of the above company at the end of 2016/17. This company generates electricity from a solar array.	

Changes from Single Entity

In consolidating the group accounts transactions with the group entities are removed. Long term debtors on the balance sheet are different between the single entity and group accounts, where other group loans within the single entity accounts do not exist on consolidation.

These group statements contain the accounts for Swindon Borough Council, Swindon Common Farm Solar Community Interest Plc, Swindon Chapel Farm Solar Ltd, and Swindon Housing Development Company Limited. They have been adjusted for presentational changes to statements and for transactions between the parent and subsidiary undertakings. For example, to show lower spend paid out by the parent and lower income received by the subsidiary, or the removal of long term investments from the parent and long term creditors from the subsidiary.

The statements are also adjusted for any accruals made by the organisations. This generally results in debtors and creditors figures reducing. Disclosure notes are only included within the consolidated group accounts if they are materially different from those disclosed in the single entity accounts.

46. Group Property, Plant & Equipment

2024/25	Council Dwellings	Other Land and Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, & Equipment	Infra-structure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total PPE
Cost or Valuation	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1st April	572,409	449,619	38,806		14,431	28,943	65,659	1,169,867
Additions	28,440	26,177	3,520		1,049	171	18,175	77,532
Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	17,719	9,704	0		0	(57)	0	27,366
Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(21,360)	(2,957)	0		0	(1,505)	0	(25,822)
Derecognition – disposals	(9,066)	(48,034)	(575)		0	(313)	0	(57,988)
Reclassification	187	(16,493)	0		0	7,006	(8,412)	(17,712)
31st March	588,329	418,016	41,751		15,480	34,245	75,422	1,173,243
1st April	(2,273)	(5,344)	(18,355)		0	(42)	0	(26,014)
Depreciation charge	(9,867)	(13,881)	(3,943)		0	(14)	0	(27,705)
Depreciation w/b on Revaluation	9,297	9,526	0		0	0	0	18,823
Depreciation written to/from the CIES	0	1,671	0		0	0	0	1,671
Depreciation written to/from the CIES - Reclassifications	0	27	0		0	(27)	0	0
Derecognition – disposals	375	210	0		0	17	0	602
31st March	(2,468)	(7,791)	(22,298)		0	(66)	0	(32,623)
Net Book Value								
1st April	570,136	444,275	20,451	233,146	14,431	28,901	65,659	1,376,999
31st March	585,861	410,225	19,453	230,769	15,480	34,179	75,422	1,371,389

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2023/24	Council Dwellings	Other Land and Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, & Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total PPE
Cost or Valuation	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1st April	551,820	495,861	28,266		13,014	28,032	61,159	1,178,152
Additions	16,742	5,814	10,540		1,417	23	27,629	62,165
Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	16,099	(1,040)	0		0	(100)	0	14,959
Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(26,639)	(21,349)	0		0	(4,323)	0	(52,311)
Derecognition – disposals	(8,742)	(24,621)	0		0	265	0	(33,098)
Reclassification	23,129	(5,046)	0		0	5,046	(23,129)	0
31st March	572,409	449,619	38,806		14,431	28,943	65,659	1,169,867
1st April	(2,205)	(6,799)	(14,894)		0	(103)	0	(24,001)
Depreciation charge	(9,088)	(11,825)	(3,461)		0	(22)	0	(24,396)
Depreciation w/b on Revaluation	8,148	11,114	0		0	43	0	19,305
Depreciation written to/from the CIES	0	1,992	0		0	38	0	2,030
Depreciation written to/from the CIES - Reclassifications	0	(2)	0		0	2	0	0
Derecognition – disposals	872	176	0		0	0	0	1,048
31st March	(2,273)	(5,344)	(18,355)		0	(42)	0	(26,014)
Net Book Value								
1st April	549,615	489,062	13,372	234,098	13,014	27,929	61,159	1,388,249
31st March	570,136	444,275	20,451	233,146	14,431	28,901	65,659	1,376,999

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) General Principles

The Statement of Accounts for Swindon Borough Council are prepared and published in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the latest Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (“the Code”) issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). Any divergence from the Code is noted where applicable.

The Code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards, as adapted for the UK public sector. The Accounts are prepared under a going concern and modified historical cost basis and also apply to the group accounts consolidation.

b) Revenue recognition and Accruals of Income and Expenditure

Transactions are accrued into the period that rights and obligations are transferred, or performance obligations are met, except for immaterial items or where cyclical payments include twelve months' worth of charges, but not necessarily Apr-Mar.

c) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable within 24 hours. Cash equivalents are readily convertible investments that mature within one month of acquisition.

d) Prior Period Adjustments, Changes in Accounting Policies and Errors

Unless changes from the Code require otherwise, when a prior period adjustment is made due to a change in accounting policy, or from correcting material errors, it is applied retrospectively by adjusting opening balances and comparatives. Balances are rounded separately for the main statements and disclosure notes which may cause minor inconsistency between table balances but are not material errors.

e) Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets

Services making use of long term assets will be charged with an amount for the assets' depreciation, and revaluation and impairment losses where no accumulated gains exists.

These transactions are not charged against council tax, but reversed out to the capital adjustment account through the movement in reserves statement. The minimum revenue provision charge represents the Council's payment to reduce its borrowing.

f) Employee Benefits

Benefits Payable during Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year-end. They include such benefits as wages, salaries, and paid annual leave for current employees.

Post-Employment Benefits

Employees of the Authority are members of The Teachers' Pension Scheme or the Local Government Pension Scheme. The schemes provide defined benefits earned as employees work for the Authority.

Arrangements for the teachers' scheme, administered by the Teachers' Pensions Agency, mean that these liabilities cannot ordinarily be identified specifically to the Authority and is accounted for as if it was a defined contribution scheme, with no balance sheet liability.

The Local Government Pension Scheme

The Authority's liabilities of the Local Government scheme, administered by Wiltshire pension fund, are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis.

The change in the net pension liability is analysed into seven components of past service cost, interest cost, net interest on the defined benefit liability, gains or losses on settlements or curtailments, remeasurement and contributions paid to the pension fund.

Statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount of retirement benefits payable by the Authority to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year. The movements on accounting entries for pensions are therefore reversed through the MiRS to/from the Pension Reserve.

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 (including teachers) 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.

g) Events after the Balance Sheet Date

Events after the Balance Sheet date are events that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue. They may provide evidence of conditions that existed at the balance sheet date which require the Statements to be adjusted, or indicate conditions that arose after the balance sheet date, where only disclosure is made if material.

h) Financial Instruments

This accounting policy was amended for 2018/19 statements due to the introduction of IFRS9 Financial Instruments. The introduction has not had material impact on the statements or ongoing policy, as the material financial instruments of the Authority are with other Government institutions and recorded at cost.

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the balances sheet when the authority becomes party to contractual provisions of a financial instrument. They are initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost, meaning the balance sheet typically contains balance for the outstanding principle repayable. Interest is charged to the CIES as per loan agreements.

Financial Assets

The authority's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows, i.e. there is no speculation on the capital appreciation of an investment to sell for a profit. Financial assets are therefore classified as amortised cost, except for those whose contractual payments are not solely payment of principal and interest.

Financial Assets Measured at Amortised Cost

Financial assets measured at amortised cost are initially measured at fair value and are subsequently measured at their amortised cost. Interest receivable is charged annually based on the asset carrying amount and effective interest rate. For the authority this means the balance sheet records the outstanding principal receivable and interest credited to the CIES is the amount receivable for the year in the loan agreement.

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

Expected Credit Loss Model

The authority recognises expected credit losses on its financial assets either on a 12-month or lifetime basis. The authority uses the simplified approach for trade and lease receivables where a collective assessment is

undertaken based upon an historic and professional understanding of the risk involved with different customers.

Where risk has increased significantly since an instrument was initially recognised, losses are assessed on a lifetime basis. Where risk has not significantly changed, losses are assessed on the basis of 12-month expected losses.

Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Profit or 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 arrive in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services.

The fair value measurements of the financial assets are based on the quoted market price where instruments have one, or where none exists the relevant market or analysis of cash flows.

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.

i) Government Grants and Contributions

Grants, contributions and donations are recognised as due to the Authority when there is reasonable assurance that any conditions will be complied with and the grants will be received.

Where monies are advanced but conditions have not been satisfied a creditor or receipt in advance is carried on the balance sheet, released to services in the CIES when conditions are met.

Capital grants credited to the CIES are reversed out of the General Fund to the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve. When used in funding it is transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

j) Inventories

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

k) 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, production of goods, is a surplus asset held for sale or held for any regeneration or other community benefit.

Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value. Such properties are not depreciated but revalued according to market conditions at the year-end. Gains and losses are transferred in and out of the CIES to the capital adjustment account or capital receipts reserve, if receipts are over £10,000.

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

l) Leases

Lease contracts, or similar arrangements that convey the right of use of specific assets, are accounted for under the lease policy.

Leases that are either a) short term of 12 months or less or b) for assets of low value under £10,000 per individual asset, are treated as revenue cost.

All other leases containing right of use assets are considered to relate to on balance sheet assets with the creation of a lease liability and long term asset valued at the discounted value of payments to be made over the lease term.

The lease payments are split between writing down the lease liability and an interest charge.

Once a leased asset is on balance sheet it is treated in line with policies for Property, Plant and Equipment, using the most appropriate period that benefit of the asset is received for depreciation purposes.

The Authority as Lessor

Finance Leases

Where the Authority grants a finance lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, where the rights and rewards of ownership transfer to the lessee, the relevant asset is written out of the Balance Sheet as a disposal, matched by the creation of a lease (long-term debtor) asset.

Lease rentals receivable are subsequently apportioned between writing down the lease asset and an interest receipt.

Operating Leases

Where the Authority grants a lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, which is not considered a finance lease, the asset is retained in the Balance Sheet and rental income credited to the CIES as an operating lease.

m) Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)

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

Highways infrastructure assets include carriageways, footways and cycle tracks, structures, street lighting, street furniture, traffic management systems and land which together form a single integrated network.

Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of PPE is capitalised on an accruals basis, where probable that the associated future economic benefits or service potential will flow to the Authority and the cost of the item can be measured reliably.

Measurement

Highways infrastructure assets are generally measured at depreciated historical cost. However, this is a modified form of historical cost – opening balances for highways infrastructure assets were originally recorded in balance sheets at amounts of capital undischarged for sums borrowed as at 1 April 1994 which was deemed at that time to be historical cost.

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising the purchase price and any attributable costs of bringing the asset into use intended.

The measurement of cost for assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its fair value.

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

- Infrastructure, community assets and assets under construction – depreciated historical cost.
- Surplus assets - fair value, estimated at highest and best use to reflect their likely rather than last use.
- Dwellings – current value, determined using the basis of existing use value for social housing (EUV-SH).
- ROU assets - the discounted value of payments to be made over the lease term
- 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 that have short useful lives or low values (or both), depreciated historical cost basis is used as a proxy for current value.

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at fair value are revalued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their current value at the year-end. Valuations are carried out by internal valuers. Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains.

Where decreases in value are identified, they are initially accounted for by charging against any previously accumulated revaluation gains, or charging to services in the CIES if there are none.

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

The Authority carries out a rolling programme that ensures that all operational property is revalued at least every five years, with more frequent reviews for market valued assets. The valuers consider the impact of market changes to valuations and will revalue assets annually where evidence suggests carrying value is materially misstated. The de minimis level applied for balance sheet revaluation additions is £10,000. 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. All valuations have been carried out by the Council's internal valuers, who are RICS qualified.

Impairment

Assets categories are assessed at each year-end for 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 subsequently reversed, 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

The Council uses the straight-line method of calculating depreciation on its PPE, with the exception of non-depreciable land, community assets, investment properties and assets under construction.

Depreciation is provided on the parts of the highways network infrastructure assets that are subject to deterioration or depletion and by the systematic allocation of their depreciable amounts over their useful lives.

Depreciation is charged for a full year, in the year of addition or revaluation, no depreciation is charged in the year of disposal.

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- Dwellings, surplus assets and other buildings – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the property, generally 70 years or as estimated by the valuer
- Vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment – generally straight-line over five years (dependent on the assessed expected useful life) with specialist assets having eight to fifteen year lives (such as recycling vehicles)
- Infrastructure – generally straight-line allocation over thirty years for carriageway/path/lighting, fifteen for street furniture and 100 for structures unless other specific timeframes are appropriate as advised by Highways engineers.
- ROU Leased assets - straight-line over the most appropriate period relevant to the lease term or asset life

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.

Components

Each asset on the balance sheet is made up of possible components, some of which may have different life spans to others and which might be accounted for distinctly for depreciation purposes. Componentisation is applied to HRA Dwellings. Other assets that are valued over £5m and undergone activity in year would also be considered for componentisation where a components would form material elements of the asset.

Disposals and Non-current Assets Held for Sale

When it is probable an asset will be sold and is being actively marketed it is reclassified as an asset held for sale. Depreciation is not charged on this category of asset. If an asset no longer meets the criteria to be classed as held for sale they are transferred back to non-current assets and revalued accordingly.

When an asset is disposed of or decommissioned the carrying amount of the asset is written off to the CIES as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals are credited to the same line (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal). Associated costs of disposal are contained within the net cost of services analysis, as part of apportioned central support costs. Any associated revaluation gains held 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 receipts relating to housing disposals (75% for dwellings, 50% for other assets) is payable to the Government. The Government has granted increased flexibilities on the use of these Right to Buy Receipts for the two financial years 2024-25 and 2025-26, increasing the cap to 100% from 50% for the periods. The balance of receipts received is credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve through the MiRS, and unless a statutory override exist, can only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Authority's underlying need to borrow.

The carrying value of disposals written off to the CIES is not a charge against council tax but is reversed to the Capital Adjustment Account from the General Fund Balance in the MiRS.

Assets under Construction

These assets are in the process of being built, are not operational for use and do not have depreciation applied.

Heritage Assets

The Authority's Heritage Assets are mainly held in the Authority's Museums. The Museums contain a range of artistic, porcelain, locomotive and archaeological collections which are held for local knowledge, details of which can be found on the Council's related websites.

Heritage Assets follow the Authority's accounting policies on property, plant and equipment, however, rules for their measurement are relaxed and have been taken by reference to insurance valuations.

n) Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Similar Contracts

As the Authority is deemed to control the services that are provided under its PFI scheme, and as ownership of the property, plant and equipment will pass to the Authority at the end of the contracts for no additional charge, the Authority carries the assets used under the contracts on its Balance Sheet as part of Property, Plant and Equipment and accounts for them under relevant policies.

The original recognition of these assets at fair value (based on the cost to purchase the property, plant and equipment) was balanced by the recognition of a liability for amounts due to the scheme operator to pay for the capital investment. For the PFI schools, the liability was written down by an initial capital contribution of £10m.

The amounts payable to the PFI operators each year are analysed into elements for service charges, finance/interest costs and asset lifecycle replacement.

o) Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Authority a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires a payment to settle, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the CIES in the year that the authority becomes aware of the obligation, and are measured at the best estimate at the balance sheet date.

Related payments are charged against the provision carried in the Balance Sheet. Where it becomes less than probable that an existing provision is needed at the current carrying value, the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

Contingent Liabilities

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

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 future events.

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.

p) Reserves

The Authority sets aside specific amounts as useable reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created on the balance sheet by appropriating amounts out of the General Fund

via the MiRS. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service and the reserve is then appropriated back into the General Fund.

q) Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute

This represents expenditure incurred which ordinarily could be revenue, or which does not result in the creation of a non-current asset for the Authority. It is charged as expenditure to the relevant service in the CIES but reversed under statutory provision to the capital adjustment account via the MiRS to be funded from capital resources.

r) Agency Arrangements - Collection Fund / BCF

Following principle and agent standards, whereby only those costs/incomes that the Authority is responsible for and is not just acting as an agent of a third party, the Better Care Fund (see note) and Collection Fund are accounted for under agency arrangements.

The Collection Fund is a separate account that presents the amounts collected as income and the amounts paid out as precepts to precepting authorities. Within the balance sheet the Authority records on an agency basis the amounts that relate only to its own balances.

s) Group Accounts- Interests in Companies and Other Entities

In the Authority's own single-entity accounts, the interests in companies and other entities are recorded as financial assets at cost.

In the group accounts consolidation of Public Power Solutions Limited, Swindon Housing Development Company and Common & Chapel Solar Farms figures is by the acquisition method, on a line-by-line basis, using the companies' final accounts as the base detail for consolidation, using the accounting policies of the Authority, disclosing only material differences.

The Witchelstowe LLP joint venture company is considered a joint venture for accounting purposes, with net assets and liabilities of the company shown proportionately (50%) in the SBC statements when material.

The Authority includes maintained schools within its single entity accounts as per the Code. For such schools their material assets are contained on the single entity balance sheet, and their income and expenditure transferred onto the Council general ledger at end of year for inclusion in the CIES.

t) Accounting for schools within the Single Entity Accounts

The Code confirms that the balance of control for local authority-maintained schools (i.e. those categories of school identified in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended) lies with the local authority. The Code also stipulates that those schools' assets, liabilities, reserves and cash flows are recognised in the local authority financial statements (and not the group accounts). Therefore, schools' transactions, cash flows and balances are recognised in each of the financial statements of the authority as if they were the transactions, cash flows and balances of the authority.

There were 17 maintained Community schools within the Council's group included within the single entity accounts. Such schools account for expenditure of £41.8m, income of £44.2m and reserve balances of £2.4m. This includes income and expenditure of schools that have transferred to academy status up until the point of transfer. Academies are outside the Council's control.

The Authority has no assets and limited involvement with Voluntary Aided or Controlled schools which gives no control around school operations and are off balance sheet.

Academy schools within the borough operate under a long-term lease of their assets and are funded independently of the Council. These schools have transferred out of local authority control. Assets that form part of the academy transfer are no longer accounted for as having ownership value, effectively a nil-value finance lease, and are excluded from the statements.

Supplementary Statements

The following statements are not core statements of the authority but do constitute a significant element in understanding the wider services and position the authority holds.

The Collection Fund

Shows the Council Tax and National Non-Domestic rates income collected and paid during the year.

	2023/24			2024/25		
	Business Rates £000	Council Tax £000	Total £000	Business Rates £000	Council Tax £000	Total £000
INCOME						
Council Tax Receivable	0	(162,663)	(162,663)	0	(172,822)	(172,822)
Business Rates Receivable	(109,133)	0	(109,133)	(120,558)	0	(120,558)
	(109,133)	(162,663)	(271,796)	(120,558)	(172,822)	(293,380)
EXPENDITURE						
Apportionment of Previous Year Surplus						
Central Government	2,674	0	2,674	5,197	0	5,197
Billing Authority	2,620	0	2,620	5,093	0	5,093
Fire Authority	53	0	53	104	0	104
Police Authority	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5,347	0	5,347	10,394	0	10,394
Precepts, Demands and Shares						
Central Government	54,546	0	54,546	58,918	0	58,918
Billing Authority	53,460	135,742	189,202	57,740	142,730	200,470
Fire Authority	1,091	6,566	7,657	1,178	6,736	7,914
Police Authority	0	19,929	19,929	0	20,866	20,866
	109,097	162,237	271,334	117,836	170,332	288,168
Charges to Collection Fund						
Less write offs of uncollectable amounts	0	593	593	1	24	25
Less : Increase / (Decrease) in Bad Debt Provision	1,005	1,391	2,396	1,639	(3,794)	(2,155)
Less : Increase / (Decrease) in Provision for Appeals	(5,009)	0	(5,009)	(1,803)	0	(1,803)
Less : Renewables	838	0	838	843	0	843
Less : Cost of Collection	263	0	263	263	0	263
	(2,903)	1,984	(919)	943	(3,770)	(2,827)
(Surplus) / Deficit arising during the year	2,409	1,559	3,968	8,615	(6,260)	2,355
(Surplus) / Deficit brought forward 1st April	(11,306)	1,835	(9,471)	(8,897)	3,394	(5,503)
(Surplus) / deficit carried forward 31st March	(8,897)	3,394	(5,503)	(282)	(2,866)	(3,148)
Less Balance Attributable to Major Preceptors	4,548	(552)	3,996	144	465	609
Balance Remaining Attributable to SBC	(4,349)	2,842	(1,507)	(138)	(2,401)	(2,539)

Notes to the Collection Fund

47. Rateable Value

	31 March 2024	31 March 2025
	2023/24	2024/25
Total rateable value in the Local Rating List	£287,246,879	£285,787,853
Multiplier for most properties	51.2p	54.6p
Small Business Multiplier	49.9p	49.9p

48. Council Tax Base

The Council Tax Base for the year, i.e. the number of chargeable dwellings in each band (adjusted for dwellings where discounts apply in band A) converted to an equivalent number of Band D dwellings, was as shown in the table below.

Band	No of Taxable Properties *	Ratio to Band D	Band D Equivalents
A - Disabled	65	5/9	36
A	12,904	6/9	8,602
Total Band A	12,969		8,638
B	25,275	7/9	19,658
C	22,642	8/9	20,126
D	16,833	9/9	16,833
E	8,987	11/9	10,984
F	3,777	13/9	5,456
G	1,412	15/9	2,353
H	62	18/9	125
Total	Band D equivalents		84,173
Contributions in lieu	(MOD properties)		97
Add:	Anticipated changes in year		(4,974)
Less:	Provision for non-collection (1.20%)		(951)
	Tax Base		78,345

* After adjustment for discounts and relief.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

This statement consolidates the income and expenditure in respect of the provision of local authority housing.

HRA Income and Expenditure Statement	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Expenditure		
Repairs and maintenance	18,186	21,595
Supervision and management	7,204	8,866
Special Services	9,356	8,307
Rents, rates, taxes and other charges	521	758
Depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	36,117	31,622
Debt management costs	70	80
Movement in the allowance for bad debts	444	178
Total Expenditure	71,898	71,406
Income		
Dwelling rents	(48,417)	(55,012)
Non-dwelling rents	(425)	(370)
Charges for services and facilities	(8,046)	(7,610)
Contributions towards expenditure	(2,075)	(3,134)
Leaseholders' charges for services and facilities	(614)	(463)
Total Income	(59,577)	(66,589)
Net Cost of HRA Services as included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	12,321	4,817
HRA services' share of Corporate and Democratic Core	127	127
HRA share of other amounts included in the whole authority Cost of Services but not allocated to specific services	9	9
Net (Income)/Expense for HRA Services	12,457	4,953
HRA share of the operating income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:		
(Gain) / loss on sale of HRA non-current assets	3,207	5,364
Interest payable and similar charges	3,036	2,870
Interest and investment income	(789)	(490)
Net Pensions Interest Cost / Return on Asset	144	(151)
(Surplus) / deficit for the year on HRA services	18,055	12,546

Statement of Movement in the Housing Revenue Account

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
1 April	(12,340)	(9,639)
(Surplus) / Deficit on Service provision	18,055	12,546
Adjustments between accounting & funding basis	(15,058)	(7,436)
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves	(296)	381
(Increase)/Decrease in-year	2,701	5,491
31 March	(9,639)	(4,148)

HRA Movement in Reserves Adjustments	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Adjustments between accounting & funding basis in reconciling the HRA balance for the year		
Charges for depreciation of non-current assets	(9,478)	(10,262)
Charges for impairment of non-current assets	(26,639)	(21,360)
Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(7,870)	(8,691)
Voluntary provision for the financing of capital investment	5,000	0
Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund and HRA balances	9,597	18,524
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	4,663	3,327
HRA resources credited to the MRR	9,478	10,262
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	191	764
Total Adjustments	(15,058)	(7,436)

Notes to the HRA

49. Housing Stock

The stock of Council dwellings at 31st March was:

Type	31 st March 24	Movement	31 st March 25
Low Rise Flats:			
1 Bedroom	1808	(1)	1807
2 Bedrooms	730	(1)	729
3 or more Bedrooms	15	0	15
Medium Rise Flats:			
1 Bedroom	862	1	863
2 Bedrooms	497	(1)	496
3 or more Bedrooms	49	0	49
High Rise Flats:			
1 Bedroom	81	9	90
2 Bedrooms	249	1	250
Houses and Bungalows:			
1 Bedroom	924	0	924
2 Bedrooms	1406	(10)	1396
3 Bedrooms	3564	(18)	3546
4 or more Bedrooms	216	0	216
Total	10,401	(20)	10,381

The Balance Sheet value of land, houses and other property relating to the Housing Revenue Account as at 31 March is summarised below.

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Assets:		
Dwellings	570,136	585,861
Plant and Equipment	726	398
Total Balance Sheet Value	570,862	586,259

There is a statutory requirement for the Council's assets to be revalued at least every 5 years. The tenanted dwellings were revalued as at 31st December 2024.

50. Vacant Possession Valuation

In addition to the balance sheet valuation it is a requirement of the HRA (Accounting Practices) Direction 2007 that the vacant possession value of dwellings as at 1st April is disclosed as a note to the accounts. The inclusion of both the balance sheet valuation and the vacant possession valuation ensures that the economic cost to the Government of providing council housing at less than open market rents is shown in the accounts.

	31 March 2024	31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000
Vacant possession valuation	1,635,450	1,680,937

51. Major Repairs Reserve

	Balance at 31 March	2024 £'000	2025 £'000
Capital expenditure for HRA purposes financed by MRR Resources:			
Houses	9,452	12,143	
Total Expenditure	9,452	12,143	
Amount equivalent to total depreciation charges for all HRA assets	(9,478)	(10,262)	
Total Income	(9,478)	(10,262)	
Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year	(26)	1,881	
Deficit / (Surplus) brought forward	(1,855)	(1,881)	
Deficit / (Surplus) Carried Forward	(1,881)	0	

52. HRA Capital Expenditure

The capital expenditure and financing for the HRA was:

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Dwellings	10,197	26,832
Buildings	14,758	4,808
Other works contribution	118	1,784
Total to Finance	25,073	33,424
Major Repairs Reserve	9,452	12,143
Usable Capital Receipts	1,854	3,134
Revenue Contributions	9,598	8,088
Other contributions	68	7,302
HCA Grant for New Build	4,101	2,757
Total Finance	25,073	33,424

53. Housing Repairs Account

	Balance at 31 March	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Repairs & Maintenance	17,009	19,456	
Total Expenditure	17,009	19,456	
Contribution from HRA	(16,753)	(19,200)	
Service charges	(256)	(256)	
Total Income	(17,009)	(19,456)	
Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year	0	0	
Deficit / (Surplus) brought forward	0	0	
Deficit / (Surplus) Carried Forward	0	0	

54. HRA Capital Receipts

The following table shows how much the Council paid to the Secretary of State for pooling of capital receipts arising from the disposal of housing assets as required in the Local Government Act 2003. Notional amounts were also payable under Pooling Payment requirement, however, under relevant conditions is allowed to be retained as a receipt in advance for new acquisitions.

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Sale of Council Houses	4,570	6,692
Capital receipt retained for new property acquisitions	(2,716)	(3,134)
Total	1,854	3,558

55. HRA Cost of Capital Charge

Depreciation is the cost of capital charge on the HRA that pays for the wearing out, using up or other reduction in the remaining life of the asset through use, passage of time or obsolescence. The majority of council dwellings are being depreciated over 70 years.

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Depreciation on dwellings	9,088	9,867
Depreciation on plant & equipment	390	395
Impairment and revaluation losses of dwellings	26,639	21,360
Total	36,117	31,622

56. HRA Arrears & Provisions for Bad Debt

Arrears of rent and other housing related charges due to the Council at 31st March were:

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Current tenants	1,977	2,022
Former tenants	375	375
Total Arrears	2,352	2,397
Less: provision for bad debts	(2,352)	(2,397)
Total Arrears After Provisions	0	0

Arrears after provisions represent 0% of rent income and service charges due to the Council.

Annual Governance Statement

Introduction

Swindon Borough Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty to arrange to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having a regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness

The Council is required to produce an Annual Governance Statement each year that describes its governance arrangements not just for the Council but also for the whole group including wholly owned subsidiaries. The Council reviews its governance framework through the Audit Committee. This review identifies where the framework is working; and whether there are any significant governance issues that need to be addressed.

The Annual Governance Statement is signed off by both the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive after being reviewed by the Council's Audit Committee.

Corporate Governance

The purpose of a governance framework

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council has approved and adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE *Framework for Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016)* and was considered by the Audit committee in April 2025.

This statement explains how the Council has complied with the code and meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the publication of a statement on internal control.

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

The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not an absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The Council's framework for ensuring compliance with the core principles of effective governance:

Good corporate governance requires local authorities to carry out their functions in a way that demonstrates accountability, transparency, effectiveness, integrity and inclusion. The Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance sets out the framework by which the Council will meet that commitment.

The Code is based upon the following seven core principles:



CIPFA International framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector

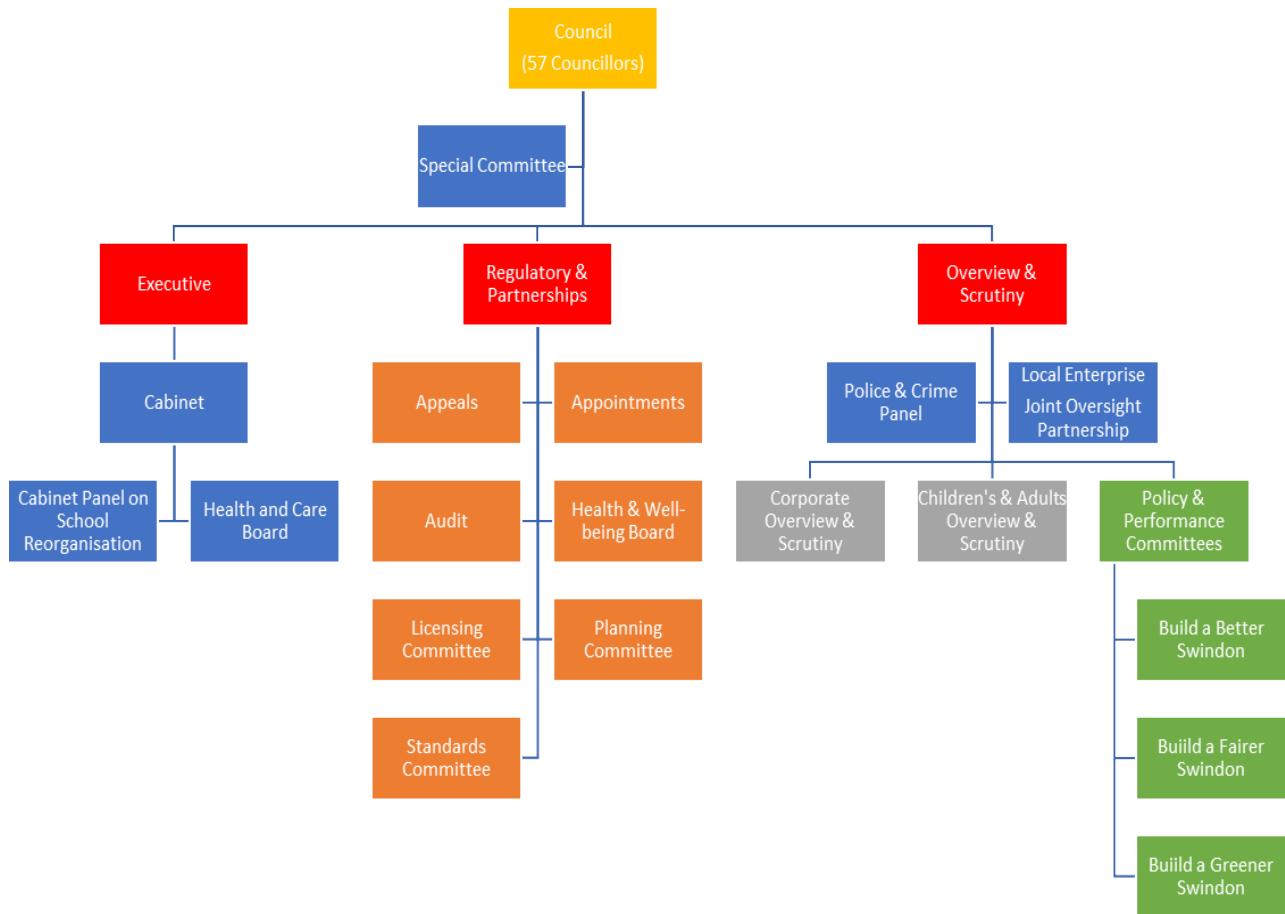
The [Local Code of Corporate Governance](#) forms part of the Council's Constitution and the full version can be found in the Council Constitution.

The Council has 57 councillors and operates a Leader and Executive model of decision-making. All councillors meet at Full Council to agree the budget and the policy framework etc. Ten councillors, including the Leader, form the Executive (Cabinet). The Executive decide on how to deliver the budget and the policy framework.

Amendments to the Council's scrutiny arrangements were undertaken within the municipal year 2023/2024 to reduce the six overview and scrutiny committees to a main Corporate Scrutiny committee and to introduce three policy committees to support the objectives of the Swindon Plan. Performance information was made available to the Committees.

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, at the request of the Chief Legal Officer, reviewed the Council's scrutiny function and provided options to further enhance the scrutiny function of the Council. Further changes to the Council's scrutiny arrangements were agreed at the Annual Council meeting in May 2024 and were implemented at the start of the municipal year, with further support and training from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. The Changes have seen the introduction of an additional Children's and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This Committee's remit also includes health and education functions. Additionally, the three policy committees' remits have been enhanced to include oversight of performance of the policies within their remit.

There are also a number of regulatory committees such as Audit, Standards, Planning and Licensing. The Council's decision-making structure is set out below:



Outcomes

The Swindon Plan

In July 2024 Cabinet and Council agreed the Swindon Plan following significant engagement with residents and communities. The Swindon Plan sets out how the Council can work collaboratively with all Swindon residents, businesses and community groups to co-create programmes of work which will improve the lives of all residents. As a result of the engagement the Council determined that its missions would be:

- Build a Fairer Swindon – Making Swindon a fairer place, reducing disadvantages and reducing big disparities in life expectancy, education levels and social justice.
- Build a Better Swindon – Creating a town ready for the challenges of the coming decades. Where possible, leading town center improvement and creating more affordable housing with the private sector.
- Build a Greener Swindon – Fully playing our part as a Council and a town in combatting climate change. Working with communities to find new ways of doing things that help, not hinder, the natural environment.

Performance of the Swindon Plan is underpinned by a performance framework and regular reporting into Cabinet with key deliverables set out for years 1 to 3 of the plan. Internal Mission Boards have also been set up which support the delivery of the Swindon Plan objectives, along with strategic performance monitoring through the Corporate Management Team Performance and Improvement Board (quarterly). Performance against the Swindon Plan is also reported to Cabinet twice a year.

Ensuring prudent use of resources

The council delivered an underspend in 2024/25, this was after the planned use of reserves built into the budget.

The Council continued with its approach to improve and transform the Council in order to reduce failure and service demand and ensure residents are given support by the most appropriate organization at the earliest point. In December 2023 Cabinet agreed a transformation fund to support the development of a Corporate Transformation Programme to support the Council's future operating model. In December 2024 Cabinet approved the Swindon 2028 Programme to deliver its transformation plan – the case for change. The Transformation Programme is supported by a Transformation Strategic Board. The main aims of the transformation ambition are for the council:

- to provide a better resident experience when interacting with the council,
- to create capacity for prevention activity that enables residents to live well, and
- to be as effective and efficient as we can be, operating within our budget.
- The Swindon 2028 transformation programme will focus on the following workstreams: At Our Best, Estates and Assets, Data and Digital, Commissioning procurement and contract management, housing, care and homelessness.

The Council has also agreed the following service improvement programmes: Children's Social Care Improvement, SEND Improvement, and the Housing Service Improvement Plan.

In February 2025 the Council agreed its budget for the 2025/26 financial year and its medium-term financial plan up to 2027/28. The 2025/26 budget is presented as balanced, relying upon approval of exceptional financial support to enable the use of capital receipts to fund revenue expenditure for a gap of £14.7 million. The Council's MTFP is not balanced in the medium term and relies upon the transformation programme to address the gap. Strict spending controls were continued in 2024/25 to manage expenditure, including a number of panels to agree expenditure decisions, including recruitment, procurement and placements. These measures along with organisation-wide improvement activity, have been successful in addressing the pressures seen in 2024/25, with the final out-turn position being an underspend.

Value for Money

The Council's External Auditor, Grant Thornton, provided a qualified opinion due to a lack of assurance relating to the rollover of the 2022/23 pension liability.

The Council's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2015). The Council has carried out a self-assessment against the requirements of the CIPFA Financial Management Code and reported the outcome to the Corporate Management Team and to Audit Committee.

Findings and recommendations from both our Internal and External Auditors are considered by senior management and at the Council's Audit Committee.

The role of Elected Members

Elected members are collectively responsible for the governance of the Council. The full Council's responsibilities include:

- Agreeing the Council's constitution, comprising the key governance documents including the executive arrangements and making major changes to reflect best practice
- Agreeing the policy framework including key strategies and agreeing the budget
- Appointing the Chief Officers
- Appointing committees responsible for overview and scrutiny functions, audit and regulatory matters and for appointing members to them.

The executive (Cabinet) is responsible for:

- Proposing the policy framework and key strategies
- Proposing the budget
- Implementing the policy framework and key strategies.

The role of management

The Chief Executive advises councillors on policy and necessary procedures to drive the aims and objectives of the authority. The Chief Executive leads the corporate management team consisting of corporate directors and other senior managers. The Chief Executive determines the structure of the authority to ensure delivery of its objectives.

The Director of Finance and Audit, Chief Legal Officer and other senior managers are responsible for advising the executive and scrutiny committees on financial, legislative and other policy considerations to achieve the aims and objectives of the authority.

The Council's Corporate Management Team has a shared responsibility for delivering the organisational strategic direction, agreeing priorities and driving their successful achievement. They are responsible for implementing councillors' decisions and for service performance.

Risk Management

Risk management is about identifying and understanding the threats to the achievement of the Swindon Plan and strategic objectives by taking reasonable and sensible action to reduce the chance of them happening. The Council is committed to managing risks within its control, to keep employees safe, protect assets, maintain and improve its services and make good use of funds, as part of sound corporate governance.

Risk is managed through the activities of the Council, including planning, monitoring, design, and decision-making. Risk is integrated within the planning and performance system and is not a separate standalone process as the management of risk and uncertainty is integral to the delivery of priorities and objectives.

Risk continues to be an intrinsic part of the discussions focusing on risk and performance in the context of the Corporate Management Team's (CMT) focus on improvement. It is on the

CMT agenda quarterly and is reported to Audit Committee twice yearly. The Council's corporate risk register is also discussed with Cabinet at least twice a year.

The new Risk Management Guidance outlines:

- The role of CMT
- Our risk appetite
- Our Risk Matrix and definitions
- Our approach to mitigations and actions
- Our approach to escalation and de-escalation

Review of the effectiveness of our governance arrangements

Swindon Borough Council annually reviews the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by Corporate Directors and their direct reports within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Head of Internal Audit and Corporate Fraud's annual report, and by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates. The Head of Internal Audit and Corporate Fraud's report stated that the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control during 2024/25 are considered satisfactory, resulting in a 'moderate' level of risk.

The Council's External Auditor has been very positive regarding the content and nature of the Internal Audit reports presented to Audit Committee stating that where issues are found they are reported upon and relevant senior managers attend Audit Committee to respond to queries raised by Members.

Corporate Directors and their direct reports have completed an assurance questionnaire reviewing the control environment within their service and the results of the questionnaire have been used to help inform our assessment of significant control issues for the Council.

Additional assurance was also provided by the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Senior Information Risk Owner and Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, Head of Internal Audit and Risk, and the Chief Executive.

Details of the review of effectiveness were presented to Audit Committee at their June 2025 meeting. Details can be found at: [review of effectiveness](#)

Opinion on the Council's governance arrangements

The review has found that the Council's governance arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

Areas of focus – looking forward

Whilst the Council's governance arrangements generally work well the review identified a number of significant issues that need to be addressed. Some of these issues are carried

forward from the previous Annual Governance Statement as they remain significant areas to be addressed.

Governance issue	Lead Officer
Ofsted ILAC inspection	Corporate Director of People
Dedicated Schools Grant: High-needs block	Corporate Director of Prevention and Communities
Highways asset management	Corporate Director of Inclusive Economy and Sustainability
Conditions of Social Housing	Corporate Director for Prevention and Communities
Financial Stability and Transformation	Director Finance & Audit; and Chief Operating Officer
Lack of Approved Mental Health Practitioners (AMHPS) – in Emergency Duty Services	Corporate Director for People
SEND services and EHCP completion timeframe	Corporate Director for Prevention and Communities
Homeline service	Corporate Director for Prevention and Communities
Systems implementation	Chief Operating Officer

- **Ofsted** – Ofsted conducted an inspection (ILAC) in July 2023, of the Council’s Children’s Services provision. On 11th September 2023, Ofsted published their final report.

The findings of the inspection were that three domain areas – the ‘impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families’, the ‘experiences and progress of children who need help and protection’, and the ‘experiences and progress of children in care’ were graded as ‘inadequate’.

An inadequate inspection triggers close Department of Education support and oversight. This includes Local Government Association support. The Local Authority has been matched with an ‘Improvement Partner’ – a high performing Local Authority, Hertfordshire County Council, to help drive the change and navigate the improvements required. An improvement plan is in place and is monitored by an Improvement Board which has good representation from key partner agencies. Improvement at pace is critical. ‘Monitoring visits’ from Ofsted inspectors occur 3 or 4 times per year. These are briefer than a full inspection and will focus on one key area of service delivery. There have been three monitoring visits so far (February 2024, May 2024 and September 2024) and these have focussed on the ‘front door’, Children in Need of Help and Protection and Care Experienced Young People. The findings and feedback from the visits have generally been positive with clear progress since July 2023 being evident.

- **Dedicated Schools Grant (High Needs block)** – Dedicated Schools Grant (High Needs block (HNB)) – The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring fenced-grant that is allocated to all top tier councils by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), an agency of the Department for Education (DfE).

The HNB is one of the four of the DSG blocks. The others are individual school budgets (ISBs), the early years block and the central block. All maintained schools and academies have ISBs, which are fully delegated to the governing bodies / academy trusts. The early years block is largely allocated to early years providers but the Council can withhold up to five per cent of the budget of its central costs. The central block is a council budget, out of which certain eligible costs can be paid. Although almost all the DSG grant goes to settings and schools, the DSG is a Council budget, which, although recommended by School's Forum, must be formally agreed by the Council with the exception of the Schools block funding which is agreed by Schools Forum.

The high needs block is controlled by the Council, and funds 'high needs' pupils in settings and schools. Any overspend of the HNB is the responsibility of the Council. In all but a few top-tier councils in England, the HNB allocation is overspent and in many, overspending has occurred in previous years.

At the end of 2022/23, Swindon Borough Council had carried forward a deficit of £5.3 million which was mainly due to overspends in the High Needs Block. There was an in-year deficit of

£3.099 million for 2023/24 of which £3.186 million related to the High Needs Block. This took the total deficit to £8.4 million by the end of 2023/24 financial year. The in-year overspend in 2024/25 was £6.746m, which has resulted in a cumulative overspend of £15.1m. Without mitigating action, this is likely to grow exponentially and is predicted to be £37m by the end of 2027/28.

The accounting treatment for deficit DSG balances was provided by the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. This requires local authority with a deficit in respect of its school budget to note the following: (a) Must not charge to a revenue account an amount in respect of that deficit; and (b) Must charge the amount of the deficit to an account established, charged and used solely for the purpose of recognising school budget deficits. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/1212/regulation/2/made>

The regulations which require the negative balance (DSG deficits) to be held in an unusable reserve (Statutory Override) has been extended to 2027/28. On the expiry of the Statutory Override, the DSG deficit may have to be transferred back to the Council's general fund leading to serious financial implications for the Council.

DSG deficits are a national issue and financial instability was recognised by the DfE in the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) green paper. This identified three key challenges facing the SEND system: poor outcomes for children and young people with SEND in AP; low parental and provider confidence and financial unsustainability.

The current government has recognised the significant financial risk to many councils of the significant cumulative deficits on High Needs Block (HNB) budgets. However, it has ceased the Safety Valve Intervention Programme (SVIP) - introduced in 20/21 for those Councils with the greatest financial challenges, as well as the Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND Programme. DBV was introduced in 21/22 as an optional programme providing dedicated support and funding to 55 Local Authorities who are chosen based on those facing the greatest financial

challenge after those in the SVIP. Swindon is in the DBV programme, with a £1m grant to provide additional resource to deliver its DBV plan.

Alongside this, a high-level DSG Management Plan has been devised, and a full HNB recovery plan, which will propose urgent and significant spending reductions, savings and cost-avoidance measures. There continue to be matters arising in relation to the High needs block and this matter should therefore continue to be a significant issue for the purpose of the AGS

- **Highways asset management** – The overall internal audit opinion was that there is significant risk to the Council as fundamental weaknesses have been identified in the current systems and procedures (this is the lowest level of audit opinion).

An agreed action plan is in place that will seek to address the recommendations made in the Internal Audit report. High priority recommendations will be monitored quarterly through CMT.

The Highways Asset Manager confirmed the Council is currently compliant with its legal responsibilities under the Highways Act 1980, the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991 and the Traffic Management Act 2004. The Council is partially compliant with Local and National Codes of Practice but further work remains in this area to fully confirm compliance and to prepare the associated action plan.

The interim Highways Asset Manager also completed initial work on identifying the strategic documents that will form a part of the SBC Highway Infrastructure Asset Management (HIAMP) Plan. These will include: Asset Management Framework, Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Strategy, Data Management Plan / Strategy, Performance Management Plan, Maintenance Manual, Highway Safety Inspection Manual, Highway Asset Management Plan, Communication Strategy and the Life Cycle Plan.

Further progression of these elements and the remaining audit recommendations will form an integral part of the planned service review and the future service model.

- **Housing** – Housemark was commissioned by Swindon Borough Council to assess compliance against the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) standards in 2023/24.

Following the desktop review, estate visits and interviews, there were a number of headline themes which arose for Swindon Borough Council to take forward in any project to improve services and compliance:

- Weakness in governance (strategies, policies, procedures, processes)
- Operational difficulties and risk presented by the structural separation between housing and repairs
- Weakness around internal and external communication
- The Capital investment programme isn't delivering as much as it could/should
- Supply of affordable/social homes in Swindon is not meeting demand
- Voids are presenting significant challenges (increase in major works voids, escalating costs etc.)
- Issues around data quality and reporting
- Technology is a key issue (internal systems, field-based technology, hardware provided to staff)

- Varying levels of knowledge and awareness of the Regulatory Framework, who the Regulator of Social Housing is and what they do (this decreases as you move lower down the staffing hierarchy in general)

The Council self-referred itself to the regulator and the Council was subsequently inspected by the regulator. Internal Audits were undertaken within the year which raised significant concerns regarding compliance. A housing improvement plan is in place supported by a Housing Improvement board. It is expected that progress on the Housing Improvement Plan and the governance arrangements will be reported regularly to Cabinet. Cabinet have agreed to significant investment in its housing to secure the necessary improvements.

The results of the inspection were delivered to the council in May 2025. The Council has been given a C3 rating. Action will continue to be taken to address these issues in 2025/26.

- **Financial Stability and Transformation** - There are significant risks to the Council regarding its financial position. The LGA Finance Peer Challenge in 2023 identified a number of financial pressures, including limited and reducing reserves and balances, an increasing Dedicated Schools Grant deficit and the continuing need to invest additional monies into children's services given the Ofsted inadequate rating. These are recognised in the Corporate risk register.

There is a regular-cycle of financial reporting to CMT and Cabinet setting out the financial position and planned response. Action is taken in response to financial reporting and there is a strong track record of managing risks and delivering savings targets. Significant spending controls were continued in 2024/25 to reduce projected in year overspends. The significant spending controls have been effective and the out-turn position shows an underspend which will be used to increase council reserves.

Full Council approved the Council's budget for 2025/26 and the MTFP to 2027/28 at its meeting in February 2025. During the budget setting process, the Council made an application for Exceptional Financial support of £14.7 million to support its budget for 2025/26. The budget is not without risks, however the Council has a good track record of managing risks in-year and 2024/25 closed with a small underspend resulting in a corresponding increase in the General Reserve. Budget risk has been reflected in the approval of a significant budget risk contingency as part of the February budget.

- In 2023/24, the Council's External Auditors recommended that '*an updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy, over a three to five-year period should be produced, detailing the extent of the budget gap and including specifics on how it will be addressed, including a planned replenishment of reserves. The cumulative funding gap will properly inform the savings required to be delivered by the Council's Transformation programme. The Council should implement its transformation programme at scale and pace and include:*
- *Embedding the emerging governance arrangements for the transformation programme*
- *Cohesive reporting to Cabinet on the planned timescales, milestones, savings and outcomes bringing together work planned and delivered by directorates*
- *Developing detailed business cases for Member and officer scrutiny and approval*
- *Fostering a culture of financial stewardship where the cost and levels of service are routinely and consistently challenged; and*
- *Clearly determining the scope and interrelationship of transformational and transitional*

savings and how they may meet the forecast non-recurrent and recurrent savings required to balance the medium-term financial plan for the next three to five years

The Council has committed to a new transformation programme called Swindon 2028 which will implement a new target operating model for the Council. There are a number of improvement programmes including the Children's social care improvement programme, SEND, and the housing service improvement plan. The workstreams are:

- Reducing the cost of Housing for Care and Homelessness
- Better value contract spending - Commissioning, procurement and contract management
- Best use of our Estates and Assets
- Making the most of Digital and Data
- At our Best
- **Approved Mental Health Practitioners – (AMHP) Emergency Duty Service**

Due to staff availability in the Emergency Duty Service (out of Office hours), the Council has been unable to provide a 24-hour service as required by MHA Code of practice para 14.35, local authorities are responsible for ensuring sufficient AMHPs are available to carry out their roles under the Act, including assessing patients to decide whether an application for detention should be made. The Council has been able to respond in line with para 14.35 during office hours. Wiltshire Council currently undertakes AMHP assessments on behalf of the Council for residents who are placed in the Wiltshire Health Based Place of Safety over a 24-hour period. Temporary arrangements have now been made to provide a response out of hours. A full review of EDS/AMHP is being undertaken to provide an improvement plan to resolve matters longer term.

- **Homeline** - Internal Audit has identified service failures within the delivery of the service which require a full review of the service to ensure it is effective and safe.
- **SEND** - Issues have been identified in relation to SEND provision, including the failure to meet the 20-week timeline for completion of EHCP's. Whilst it is noted that there are national issues relating to this, it is important that the council addresses the issues. The Council has drafted an action plan to address these issues and this forms part of the SEND Improvement plan which is reported to the SEND Improvement Board, chaired by the Chief Executive.
- **System Implementation** - There are issues across the Council with system implementation. Issues have been highlighted in both the NEC and Synergy system implementation. An Internal audit identified a number of issues regarding system implementation. In 2024/25 Cabinet approved a significant increase in budget to continue the implementation of the NEC Housing system. This has resulted in an extended timeline for implementation and significantly increased cost. Further issues have recently been identified in a draft audit report in relation to sexual health contract management and procurement. The draft report has highlighted some governance risks with an overall rating of 'of concern', with significant improvements required (limited assurance). A service improvement plan is being put in place to address this, and further actions will be agreed with Internal Audit.

As stated above, there are action plans in place to address the issues raised for the Ofsted ILAC inspection; Dedicated Schools Grant: High Needs Block, the Housing improvement plan, the transformation plan.

Last year's statement

The review has identified that the following area included in last year's statement has progressed sufficiently during 2024/25 for them not to be included in this year's statement. These areas will continue to be reviewed and relevant risks will be included and managed through the Council's corporate risk register and service area risk registers.

- Waste
- Disabled Children Team – Short breaks

Certification

To the best of our knowledge, the governance arrangements, as defined above, have been effectively operating during the year although we recognise the areas for additional focus identified in this statement. We are satisfied that these enhancements will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Jim Robbins

Councillor Jim Robbins

Leader of the Council

Sam Mowbray

Sam Mowbray

Chief Executive

Auditor's Report

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Independent auditor's report to the members of Swindon Borough Council

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Qualified opinion on financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Swindon Borough Council (the 'Authority') and its subsidiaries and joint ventures (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2025, which comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Group Movement in Reserves Statement, the Group Balance Sheet, the Group Cash Flow Statement, the Collection Fund, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Income and Expenditure Statement, and the Statement of Movement in the Housing Revenue Account, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information, notes to the group accounts, notes to the Collection Fund, and notes to the HRA. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25.

In our opinion, except for the possible effects on the corresponding figures of the matter described in the basis for qualified opinion section of our report, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the group and of the Authority as at 31 March 2025 and of the group's expenditure and income and the Authority's expenditure and income for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Basis for qualified opinion

Swindon Borough Council is a member of a multi-employer pension scheme and as at 31 March 2025, the Authority held a share of Wiltshire Pension Fund's assets (£642,092,000) and liabilities (£696,637,000), the net liability of £54,545,000 of which is included in the Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025.

Audit Guidance Notes are prepared and published by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General who has power to issue guidance to auditors under Schedule 6 paragraph 9 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The NAO issued Auditor Guidance Note 07 (AGN 07) on 5 June 2025. Paragraph 32 of AGN 07 refers to the voluntary protocol that auditors have agreed with each other and the NAO in respect of the provision of assurances concerning defined benefit pension plans.

In our auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2023, we reported that the external audit of Wiltshire Pension Fund was not concluded for 2022/23, and therefore that Pension Fund assurances under AGN 07 were not available as at 31 March 2023. As this impacts on the balances for the financial year ended 31 March 2024, the only means for us to get sufficient assurance over the Pension Fund assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2023 disclosed in those financial statements would have been to audit the Pension Fund financial statements directly and undertake alternative procedures. It was determined in 2022/23 that this would not be in the best interests of the public purse and management stated at that time that in the interests of openness and transparency, they wished to publish signed accounts for stakeholders. To limit further delays, management therefore determined it appropriate to limit the scope of our work in respect of the defined benefit pension plan net liability as disclosed in the balance sheet and associated Pension Fund asset and liability disclosures in the financial statements. Consequently, we were unable to determine whether there was any consequential effect on the Authority's share of Wiltshire Pension Fund's assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2024, or other amounts disclosed in the financial statements in respect of the share of assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2024.

Our opinion on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 was modified accordingly. Our opinion on the current period's financial statements is also modified because of the possible effect of this matter on the comparability of the current period's figures and the corresponding figures.

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law, as required by the Code of Audit Practice (2024) ("the Code of Audit Practice") approved by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report. We are independent of the group and the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We are responsible for concluding on the appropriateness of the Director of Finance and Audit's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the group and the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the auditor's opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Authority or the group to cease to continue as a going concern.

In our evaluation of the Director of Finance and Audit's conclusions, and in accordance with the expectation set out within the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25 that the Authority's and group's financial statements shall be prepared on a going concern basis, we considered the inherent risks associated with the continuation of services provided by the group and the Authority. In doing so we had regard to the guidance provided in Practice Note 10 Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (Revised 2024) on the application of ISA (UK) 570 Going Concern to public sector entities. We assessed the reasonableness of the basis of preparation used by the group and Authority and the group and Authority's disclosures over the going concern period.

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Director of Finance and Audit's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Authority's and the group's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Director of Finance and Audit with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Director of Finance and Audit is responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Other information we are required to report on by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office in November 2024 on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (the Code of Audit Practice) we are required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which

we are aware from our audit. We are not required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement addresses all risks and controls or that risks are satisfactorily addressed by internal controls.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters required by the Code of Audit Practice

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit of the financial statements, the other information published together with the financial statements in the Statement of Accounts for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make a written recommendation to the Authority under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; 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 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or;
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matters.

Responsibilities of the Authority and the Director of Finance and Audit

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts, the Authority is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this authority, that officer is the Director of Finance and Audit. The Director of Finance and Audit is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Director of Finance and Audit determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Director of Finance and Audit is responsible for assessing the Authority's and the group'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 relevant national body of the intention to dissolve the Authority and the group without the transfer of its services to another public sector entity.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the group and Authority and determined that the most significant which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements are those related to the reporting frameworks (the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Accounts and Audit [Amendment] Regulations 2024, the Local

Government and Housing Act 1989, the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the Local Governance Finance Act 2012 and the Local Government Act 2003).

- We enquired of management and the Audit Committee concerning the group's and Authority's policies and procedures relating to:
 - the identification, evaluation and compliance with laws and regulations;
 - the detection and response to the risks of fraud; and
 - the establishment of internal controls to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We enquired of management and the Audit Committee whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or whether they had any knowledge of actual, suspected or alleged fraud.
- We assessed the susceptibility of the Authority and group's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur, by evaluating management's incentives and opportunities for manipulation of the financial statements. This included the evaluation of the risk of management override of control. We determined that the principal risks were in relation to high-risk journal entries, and the significant accounting estimates in the financial statements, including those related to the valuation of property, plant and equipment, including council dwellings, the net defined benefit pension plan liability and PFI disclosures.
- Our audit procedures involved:
 - evaluation of the design effectiveness of controls that management has in place to prevent and detect fraud;
 - journal entry testing, with a focus on large and unusual entries, material post year-end journal entries, and journal entries posted by senior officers; and
 - challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates in respect of valuation of property, plant and equipment including council dwellings, net defined benefit pension liability and PFI liability.
- These audit procedures were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error and detecting irregularities that result from fraud is inherently more difficult than detecting those that result from error, as fraud may involve collusion, deliberate concealment, forgery or intentional misrepresentations. Also, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it.
- We communicated relevant laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members. We remained alert to any indications of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, throughout the audit.
- The engagement partner's assessment of the appropriateness of the collective competence and capabilities of the group and Authority engagement team included consideration of the engagement team's:
 - understanding of, and practical experience with audit engagements of a similar nature and complexity through appropriate training and participation
 - knowledge of the local government sector in which the group and Authority operates
 - understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements specific to the Authority and group including:
 - the provisions of the applicable legislation
 - guidance issued by CIPFA/LASAAC and SOLACE
 - the applicable statutory provisions.
- In assessing the potential risks of material misstatement, we obtained an understanding of:
 - the Authority and group's operations, including the nature of its income and expenditure and its services and of its objectives and strategies to understand the classes of transactions, account balances, expected financial statement disclosures and business risks that may result in risks of material misstatement.
 - the Authority and group's control environment, including the policies and procedures implemented by the Authority and group to ensure compliance with the requirements of the financial reporting framework.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements – the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Matter on which we are required to report by exception – the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if, in our opinion, we have not been able to satisfy ourselves that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2025.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matter except on 14 November 2025, we identified:

Financial Sustainability

- a significant weakness in the Authority's arrangements for Financial Sustainability. The Authority continues to have significant financial pressures in 2025/26, increasing demand and costs, requiring Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) to balance its 2025/26 revenue budget and will likely require EFS in 2026/27. We recommended that in order to reduce the Authority's reliance on EFS, the Authority should ensure its transformation programme delivers at pace, is monitored and mitigating actions taken as required. It should prepare a detailed Medium Term Financial Strategy which sets out the requirements for financial sustainability.
- a significant weakness in the Authority's arrangements for Financial Sustainability due to the continued increase in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit. Throughout 2024/25 the DSG management plan has not been effectively managed and in March 2025 Internal Audit reported that that the management plan was considered to be unrealistic and not deliverable. We recommended that the Authority should ensure it:
 - has a realistic and deliverable DSG management plan in place to ensure that the actions and escalating costs can be addressed at pace
 - has established effective governance arrangements so that progress is reported to Cabinet and mitigating actions can be taken as required.

Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

- a significant weakness in the Authority's arrangements for improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This was in relation to the Authority's Children's services which were judged as 'inadequate' in all five domains in the Ofsted inspection report of September 2023. The Authority has been on an improvement journey and is aware that there is further improvement required before reinspection. We raised a recommendation that the Authority should continue to action the requirements of the Ofsted inspection (2023) and ensure progress is regularly monitored in preparation for the reinspection in 2026. The Authority should continue to ensure that sufficient resources is in place to manage improvements against the Ofsted Improvement Plan in place.
- a significant weakness in the Authority's arrangements for improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Following a self-referral by the Authority, a housing inspection was undertaken in May 2025 by the Regulator of Social Housing, who issued findings identifying serious failings with significant improvement required. The Authority is now in the process of actioning improvements and should continue strengthening arrangements in response to the findings. We recommended that the Authority should implement its Housing Improvement Plan once agreed. Improvements should be regularly reported to Cabinet, so that it has the oversight and assurance to ensure that service improvements are made within timeframes agreed with the Regulator.

Responsibilities of the Authority

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Auditor's responsibilities for the review of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) 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 have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2024. This guidance sets out the arrangements that fall within the scope of 'proper arrangements'. When reporting on these arrangements, the Code of Audit Practice requires auditors to structure their commentary on arrangements under three specified reporting criteria:

- Financial sustainability: how the Authority plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;
- Governance: how the Authority ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks; and
- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the Authority uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

We document our understanding of the arrangements the Authority has in place for each of these three specified reporting criteria, gathering sufficient evidence to support our risk assessment and commentary in our Auditor's Annual Report. In undertaking our work, we consider whether there is evidence to suggest that there are significant weaknesses in arrangements.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements – Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate for Swindon Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2025 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice until we have received confirmation from the National Audit Office the audit of the Whole of Government Accounts is complete for the year ended 31 March 2025.

We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Use of our report

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 and as set out in paragraph 85 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Authority's members 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 Authority's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Peter Barber

Peter Barber, Key Audit Partner
for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Local Auditor
Bristol

21 January 2026

GLOSSARY

ACCRAULS - The concept that income and expenditure is recognised as earned or incurred, not as money is received or paid.

AMORTISATION - The depreciation write-out of long-term assets to revenue on a systematic basis over its economic life.

ASSET - An item having value in monetary terms. Assets are defined as current or long-term.

A current asset will be consumed or cease to have value within the next financial year, e.g. stock and debtors.

A long-current asset provides benefits to the Authority and to the services that it provides for a period of greater than one year.

BUDGET - A forecast of revenue or capital expenditure over the accounting period.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - Expenditure on the acquisition of a PPE that will be used in providing services beyond the current accounting period or expenditure that adds to an existing PPE.

CAPITAL RECEIPTS - The proceeds from the disposal of land or other long-term assets.

CASH EQUIVALENTS - Current asset investments that are readily disposable by the authority without disrupting its business and are either: readily convertible to known amounts of cash, at or close to, the carrying amount, or traded in an active market.

COMMUNITY ASSETS - Assets that the local authority intends to hold in perpetuity, that have no determinable useful life, and that may have restrictions on their disposal. Examples of community assets are parks and historic buildings.

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

CONTINGENCY - A condition that exists at the balance sheet date, where the outcome will be confirmed only on the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events.

CREDITOR - Amounts owed by the Authority for works done, goods received or services rendered before the end of the accounting period but for which payments have not been made by the end of that accounting period.

CURRENT SERVICE COST (PENSIONS) - The increase in the present value of defined benefit pension scheme liabilities expected to arise from employee service in the current period.

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

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

DEBTOR - Amounts owed to the Authority for works done, goods received or services rendered before the end of the accounting period but for which payments have not been received by the end of that accounting period.

DEFERRED ASSETS AND LIABILITIES - Expenditure or income that may properly be deferred but is recognised in the appropriate section of the balance sheet, e.g. mortgage repayments.

DEFINED BENEFIT SCHEME - A pension or other retirement benefit scheme other than a defined contribution scheme. Usually, the scheme rules define the benefits independently of the contributions payable, and the benefits are not directly related to the investments of the scheme. The scheme may be funded or unfunded (including notionally funded).

DEFINED CONTRIBUTION SCHEME - A pension or other retirement benefit scheme into which an employer pays regular contributions fixed as an amount or as a percentage of pay and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions if the scheme does not have sufficient assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

DEPRECIATION - The theoretical loss in value of an asset due to age, wear and tear, deterioration or obsolescence.

DISCRETIONARY BENEFITS - Retirement benefits which the employer has no legal, contractual or constructive obligation to award and which are awarded under the authority's discretionary powers, such as The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations 1996, the Local Government (Discretionary Payments and Injury Benefits)(Scotland) Regulations 1998, or The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001.

EXPECTED RATE OF RETURN ON PENSIONS ASSETS - For a funded defined benefit pension scheme, the average rate of return, including both income and changes in fair value but net of scheme expenses, expected over the remaining life of the related obligation on the actual assets held by the scheme.

EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS - Material items, possessing a high degree of abnormality, which derive from events or transactions that fall outside the ordinary activities of the authority and which are not expected to recur. They do not include exceptional items nor do they include prior period items merely because they relate to a prior period.

FAIR VALUE - The amount for which an asset could be exchanged or a liability settled, assuming that the transaction was negotiated between parties knowledgeable about the market in which they are dealing and willing to buy / sell at an appropriate price, with no other motive in their negotiations other than to secure a fair price.

FINANCE LEASE - A lease that transfers substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of PPE to the lessee.

FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS - Contracts that give rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. For local authorities, which do not issue equity instruments such as share capital, this means the following:

Financial asset - A right to future economic benefits controlled by the authority that is represented by:

- Cash
- An equity instrument of another entity
- A contractual right to receive cash (or another financial asset) from another entity

- A contractual right to exchange financial assets/liabilities with another entity under conditions that are potentially favourable to the authority.

Financial liability

An obligation to transfer economic benefits controlled by the authority that is represented by:

- A contractual obligation to deliver cash (or another financial asset) to another entity
- A contractual obligation to exchange financial assets/liabilities with another entity under conditions that are potentially unfavourable to the authority.

Equity instrument

A contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of an entity after deducting all of its liabilities (such as an equity share in a company) – will only apply to investments in other entities held by the authority.

GOVERNMENT GRANTS - Assistance by Government and inter-government agencies and similar bodies, whether local, national or international, in the form of cash or transfers of assets to an authority in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the activities of the authority.

GRANT CONDITIONS - Conditions are stipulations that specify that the future economic benefits or service potential embodied in the asset acquired using the grant or contribution are required to be consumed by the recipient as specified, or future economic benefits or service potential must be returned to the transferor.

IMPAIRMENT OF ASSETS - Impairment is caused by the consumption of economic benefits e.g. physical damage to be a general fall in process and requires the value of PPE to be adjusted.

INTANGIBLE NON-CURRENT ASSETS - Intangible assets are defined as non-financial assets that do not have physical substance but are identifiable and controlled by the entity through custody or legal right. Examples are: scientific or technical knowledge in order to produce new or improved materials, copyright, intellectual property rights and computer software licences. The Authority itself has no class of this asset.

INTEREST COST (PENSIONS) - For a defined benefit scheme, the expected increase during the period in the present value of the scheme liabilities because the benefits are one period closer to settlement.

INVENTORIES - The amount of unused or unconsumed stocks held in expectation of future use. When use will not arise until a later period, it is appropriate to carry forward the amount to be matched to the use of consumption when it arises. Stocks comprise the following categories:

- Goods or other assets purchased for resale;
- Consumable stores;
- Raw materials and components purchased for incorporation into products for sale;
- Products and services in intermediate stages of completion;
- Long-term contract balances; and
- Finished goods.

INVESTMENTS (NON-PENSIONS FUND) - A non-current investment is an investment that is intended to be held for use on a continuing basis in the activities of the authority. Investments should be so classified only where an intention to hold the investment for the long term can

clearly be demonstrated or where there are restrictions as to the investor's ability to dispose of the investment.

Investments, other than those in relation to the pension fund, that do not meet the above criteria, should be classified as current assets.

INVESTMENTS (PENSIONS FUND) - The investments of the Pensions Fund will be accounted for in the statements of that Fund. However authorities (other than town parish and community councils and district councils in Northern Ireland) are also required to disclose the relevant share of pension scheme assets associated with their underlying obligations.

MAJOR REPAIRS RESERVE (MRR) - A reserve to be created from HRA contributions, for investment in large-scale capital investment schemes to improve Council dwellings and estates in future years.

NET BOOK VALUE - The amount at which PPE is included in the balance sheet, i.e. their historical cost or current value less the cumulative amounts provided for depreciation.

NET CURRENT REPLACEMENT COST - The cost of replacing or recreating the particular asset in its existing condition and in its existing use, i.e. the cost of its replacement or of the nearest equivalent asset, adjusted to reflect the current condition of the existing asset.

NET REALISABLE VALUE - The open market value of the asset in its existing use (or open market value in the case of non-operational assets), less the expenses to be incurred in realising the asset.

NON-DISTRIBUTED COSTS - These are overheads for which no user now benefits and should not be apportioned to services.

NON-OPERATIONAL ASSETS - PPE held by a local authority but not directly occupied, used or consumed in the delivery of services. Examples of non-operational assets are investment properties, assets surplus to requirement awaiting disposal or redevelopment, assets in construction.

OPERATING LEASES (23/24) - A lease where the ownership of PPE remains with the lessor.

OPERATIONAL ASSETS - Non-current assets held and occupied, used or consumed by the local authority in the direct delivery of those services for which it has either a statutory or discretionary responsibility.

PAST SERVICE COST - For a defined benefit scheme, the increase in the present value of the scheme liabilities related to employee service in prior periods arising in the current period as a result of the introduction of, or improvement to, retirement benefits.

PENSIONS / IAS 19 - The requirements of the International Accounting Standard on retirement benefits is based on a simple principle – that an organisation should account for retirement benefits when it is committed to give them, even if the actual giving will be many years into the future. The important accounting distinction for pension schemes is whether they are “defined contribution” or “defined benefit”.

PFI (PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE) - PFI allows the public sector to contract with the private sector to provide quality services on a long-term basis, typically 25-30 years, so as to take advantage of private sector infrastructure delivery and service management skills, incentivised by having private finance at risk.

The private sector takes on the responsibility for providing a public service against an agreed specification of required outputs prepared by the public sector.

The private sector carries the responsibility and risks for designing, financing, enhancing or constructing, maintaining and operating the infrastructure assets to deliver the public service in accordance with the public sector's output specification.

The public sector typically pays for the project through a series of performance or throughput related payments, which cover service delivery and return on investment. Central Government may provide payment support to the public sector through grants and other financial mechanisms.

POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS - Those events, both favourable and unfavourable, which occur between the balance sheet date and the date on which the Statement of Accounts is signed by the Chair of the Audit Committee.

PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENT - A prior period adjustment is the material adjustment applicable to prior year figures arising from changes in accounting policies or from the correction of fundamental errors. A fundamental error is one that is of such significance as to destroy the validity of the financial statements. They do not include normal recurring correction or adjustments to accounting estimates made in prior years.

PROJECTED UNIT METHOD - An accrued benefits valuation method in which the scheme liabilities make allowance for projected earnings. An accrued benefits valuation method is a valuation method in which the scheme liabilities at the valuation date relate to:

- the benefits for pensioners and deferred pensioners (i.e. individuals who have ceased to be active members but are entitled to benefits payable at a later date) and their dependants, allowing where appropriate for future increases, and
- the accrued benefits for members in service on the valuation date.

The accrued benefits are the benefits for service up to a given point in time, whether vested rights or not. Guidance on the projected unit method is given in the Guidance Note GN26 issued by the Faculty and Institute of Actuaries.

PROPERT, PLANT & EQUIPMENT - The overarching classification for operational non-current assets.

PRUDENCE - The concept that revenue is not anticipated but is recognised only when realised in the form either of cash or of other assets the ultimate cash realisation of which can be assessed with reasonable certainty.

RELATED PARTIES - Two or more parties are related parties when at any time during the financial period:

- One party has direct or indirect control of the other party; or
- The parties are subject to common control from the same sources; or
- One party has influence over the financial and operational policies of the other party to an extent that the other party might be inhibited from pursuing at all times its own separate interest; or
- The parties, in entering a transaction, are subject to influence from the same source to such an extent that one of the parties to the transaction has subordinated its own separate interests.

Examples of related parties of an authority include:

- Central Government;
- Local authorities and other bodies precepting or levying demands on the Council Tax;

- Its subsidiary and associated companies;
- Its joint ventures and joint venture partners;
- Its members;
- Its chief officers; and
- Its pension fund.

Examples of related parties of a pension fund include its:

- Administering authority and its related parties;
- Scheduled bodies and their related parties; and
- Trustees and advisers.

These lists are not intended to be comprehensive.

For individuals identified as related parties, the following are also presumed to be related parties:

- Members of the close family, or the same household; and
- Partnerships, companies, trusts or other entities in which the individual, or a member of their close family or the same household, has a controlling interest.

RELATED PARTY TRANSACTION - A related party transaction is the transfer of assets or liabilities or the performance of services by, to or for a related party irrespective of whether a charge is made.

Examples of related party transactions include:

- The purchase, sale, lease, rental or hire of assets between related parties;
- The provision by a pension fund to a related party of assets or loans, irrespective of any direct economic benefit to the pension fund;
- The provision of a guarantee to a third party in relation to a liability or obligation or a related party;
- The provision of services to a related party, including the provision of pension fund administration services;
- Transactions with individuals who are related parties of an authority or a pension fund, except those applicable to other members of the community or the pension fund, such as Council Tax, rents and payments of benefits.

This list is not intended to be comprehensive.

The materiality of related party transactions should be judged not only in terms of their significance to the authority, but also in relation to its related party.

REMEASUREMENT OF THE NET DEFINED BENEFIT LIABILITY - For a defined benefit pension scheme, the changes in actuarial deficits or surpluses that arise because:

- Events have not coincided with the actuarial assumptions made for the last valuation (experience gains and losses) or
- The actuarial assumptions have changed.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS - All forms of consideration given by an employer in exchange for services rendered by employees that are payable after the completion of employment. Retirement benefits do not include termination benefits payable as a result of either (i) an employer's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date or (ii) an employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits, because these are not given in exchange for services rendered by employees.

REVENUE EXPENDITURE FUNDED FROM CAPITAL UNDER STATUTE - Expenditure which may properly be capitalised, but which does not result in, or remain matched with, tangible assets and is written out to revenue in the year it is incurred.

RIGHT OF USE ASSET (ROU) - A ROU asset signifies the lessee's right to use a leased asset (e.g., a building, vehicle, or equipment) for the duration of the lease term. It is added to the lessee's balance sheet measured at the present value of future lease payments.

SCHEME LIABILITIES - The liabilities of a defined benefit pension scheme for outgoings due after the valuation date. Scheme liabilities measured using the projected unit method reflects the benefits that the employer is committed to provide for service up to the valuation date.

SECTION 106 - Monies received from developers under section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, as a contribution towards the cost of providing facilities and infrastructure which may be required as a result of their development.

TOTAL COST - The total cost of a service or activity includes all costs which relate to the provision of the service (directly or bought in) or to the undertaking of the activity. Gross total cost includes employee costs, expenditure relating to premises and transport, supplies and services, third party payments, transfer payments, support services and capital charges. This includes an appropriate share of all support services and overheads, which need to be apportioned.

USEFUL LIFE - The period over which the local authority will derive benefits from the use of a PPE.

VESTED RIGHTS - In relation to a defined benefit pension scheme, these are:

- For active members, benefits they would unconditionally be entitled on leaving the scheme;
- For deferred pensioners, their preserved benefits;
- For pensioners, pensions to which they are entitled.

Vested rights include where appropriate the related benefits for spouses or other dependants.

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