

2015/16
Financial Report
including
Statement of
Accounts

Ste**venage**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The 2015/16 Pre Audit Statement of Accounts was certified as presenting a true and fair view of the financial position of Stevenage Borough Council by the Chief Financial Officer on 17 June 2016.

This final version of the Statement of Accounts includes amendments following consideration by Ernst Young and was approved under delegation by the Chair of Audit Committee and Resources Portfolio Holder on the 28 September 2016.

Chair Audit Committee

Resources Portfolio Holder

28th September 2016

28th September 2016



This document is part of the Council's policy of providing full information about the Council's affairs. In addition, interested members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts before the Appointed Auditor completes the annual audit. The availability of the accounts for inspection is advertised in the local press.

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Foreword by Chief Executive

Welcome to Stevenage Borough Council's Statement of Accounts for 2015/16. As a co-operative council we aim to work alongside residents and partners to improve the lives of all those people that live and work in the town. To enable this, it's important that we maintain a high degree of openness around our spending and our decision making. The timely publication of our accounts is a key part of our commitment to this transparency.

The financial environment in which the Council is operating remains challenging, and we continue to face tough economic choices. We are all working hard in Stevenage to continue to deliver effective services despite reductions in our grant funding and legislative constraints on our council house rent setting. We all have fewer resources and must find creative ways to ensure that front line service quality is not compromised. Since 2011/12 we have had £3.3Million of government grant removed with a total reduction of £4.9Million by 2019/20. In addition changes in government legislation in the Welfare Reform and Work Bill mean our account which manages our housing stock (Housing Revenue Account (HRA)) will see a reduction in income of £225Million over the next 30 years. Therefore it is now more important than ever for us to work in partnership with residents, community groups, local businesses and statutory partners.

This financial year has been difficult for all local authorities; in Stevenage we've made General Fund savings of £0.596million and £0.294million from the HRA (and a further £0.71 million in 2016/17) with an additional estimated £3.3 million of savings required between 2017/18 to 2019/20. Our focus, as always, is on delivering the most efficient services which offer the best value for money for Council Tax and rent payers across the borough. However, we need to acknowledge that we cannot make the level of savings we require without making some difficult decisions about how we spend our money and the services we continue to provide. From 2016/17 we will use our 'Future Town Future Council' priority 'Financial Security' to help us to deliver this through, efficiencies, procurement, smarter ways of working, income options and new and innovative transformation of our services, prioritising where we spend our money before reductions in key services.

As a Co-operative Council, we commit to working alongside residents to find these savings. If everybody does their bit, we can make savings in many areas.

We have attempted to prepare these accounts in a style to enable readers to understand and interpret the various financial statements. I aim to give electors, local residents, Council Members, partners, and other interested parties confidence that public money which has been received and spent, has been properly accounted for and that the financial standing of the Council is secure.

The Accounts of Stevenage Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2016 are set out on the following pages. The various statements include where relevant, comparative figures relating to the previous financial year and supporting notes. These Accounts are prepared in accordance with the 2015/16 Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.

Foreword by Chief Executive

The Council's financial plans during 2015/16 recognised that local government continues to operate in an environment of continued government grant reductions. This is due to the Government's priority of eliminating the deficit within the public finances, which will result in a removal of revenue support grant to councils by 2019/20. The Government's housing agenda also has set some significant financial challenges for the councils housing stock with the introduction of rent reductions (2016/17-2019/20), sale of high value voids and 'pay to stay', alongside a whole raft of other welfare reforms. At the same time we need to recognise that society's needs and expectations have continued to increase and change. Councils cannot deliver services and achieve objectives alone. Councils will need to change, to become much more enterprising, and responsive to their local communities, whilst retaining their role as major employers, service providers and democratically-mandated leaders. These changes will not happen overnight, but the development of future financial plans will be prepared in the context of these changes. We have already started with developing our financial plans for the period 2017/18 – 2019/20.

The Council spends over £110million each year on your behalf providing services for people in the town. Some 58% of the money used to pay for these services comes directly from you, in the Council tax you pay to us, in the rents for housing and the charges we make for some of our services.

Sound financial management is essential to the Council's wellbeing and this Statement of Accounts outlines how the Council's finances have been managed on your behalf. Up until 2010 the Council underwent various inspections, such as the Comprehensive Area Assessment and Use of Resources. The Council performed well in these inspections. Following the Government's decision to abolish the Audit Commission these inspections will now no longer take place, but are instead replaced with more local arrangements to confirm strong governance, financial management and the organisation's performance. The latest Corporate Governance Statement is presented within these pages in support of the Statement of Accounts.

The 2014/15 Annual Audit letter from our External Auditors said the key messages from the Statement of Accounts were:

- *As in previous years your draft financial statements were of a very high standard.*
- *You worked hard to improve the presentation of your financial statements to make them easier to understand.*
- *Your financial statements were supported by an excellent set of working papers and our audit was again been greatly helped by early discussions on potential financial reporting issues'.*

Our Auditors issued an unqualified Value for money conclusion for 2014/15 and said, 'we are satisfied that in all significant respects the Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2015'.

Foreword by Chief Executive

The Council's overall financial position and strategies are continually revised and updated. The inter-relationships between the Council's Revenue and Capital accounts have become increasingly complex and the Council has developed a medium-term financial strategy and HRA Business Plan, integrating the General Fund, HRA and Capital accounts, which seeks to strike a balance between limited resources and growing expenditure pressures.

The Council is committed to developing this strategy, alongside meeting the continuing demands of the Government's austerity agenda to ensure a sustainable financial position is maintained, whilst addressing a range of spend pressures and continual service improvements.

During 2015/16 the Council continued the work of the Leader's Services Priority Group through our Priority Based Budgeting Framework to prioritise the Council's services in order to determine future resource allocations and growth. Following this extensive exercise, the Council has identified over £11.3 million of General Fund savings over the nine years that has been used to solve the Council's underlying budget gap, and to ensure the Council's budget remains in balance supported by a prudent level of balances and reserves. From 2016/17 the Council will use its 'Financial Security' strand of Future Town Future Council as outlined in its Medium Term Financial Strategy to the July 2015 Executive.

While revenue balances are planned to continue to be used in a phased way to bridge the gap between net expenditure and core resources over the medium term. One of the 'Financial Security' objectives is to have set on-going balanced budget by 2021/22 by ensuring inflationary pressures are matched by increases in income or reductions in expenditure.

During 2015/16 the Council spent £16.6million on major works to improve our housing stock and £11.1million on providing new homes for Council tenants. In terms of General Fund capital investment, the Council faces a challenging period to identify sufficient funding to invest in the town's assets. The Council is working hard to be minimise the level of borrowing by using its capital allocated reserve alongside a complete review of the Councils capital investment needs over the medium term. This has meant a reduction in planned borrowing over the next few years.

Councils are governed by a rigorous structure of controls to provide stakeholders with the confidence that public money has been properly accounted for. As part of this process of accountability the Council is required to produce a set of accounts in order to inform you, as a stakeholder of the Council, that we have properly accounted for all the public money we have received and spent and that the financial standing of the Council is on a secure basis. The Council's Statement of Accounts concentrates on clear and accurate reporting of the financial position of the Council in relation to a particular year. It does not however aim to fulfil the role of an annual report of a company. This would duplicate much of the work already published in other documents produced by the Council, including:

Foreword by Chief Executive

- (a) Future Town Future Council – sets the Council's priorities over nine key strands.
- (b) The Corporate Plan – sets a clear direction for the Council, and a focus for service planning and budget setting.
- (b) An Annual Report summarises achievements against the Council's ambitions and priorities each year, and sets out results for corporate performance indicators.

Local electors and taxpayers have statutory rights to inspect the accounts before the audit is completed and to question the auditors. We advertise the inspection ("deposit") period on the Council's internet site. To make the accounts as widely available as possible we publish both the draft and final versions on the internet at

www.stevenage.gov.uk/Councilanddemocracy/Counciltaxandfinance/financialmanagement.

(Stevenage residents have free internet access at their local libraries and at the Customer Service Centre – Daneshill House). We also produce a wide range of other publications, available free from the Council offices at Daneshill House. You may also visit our website at www.stevenage.gov.uk, where specific financial publications and reports can be found at www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-the-council/plans-and-performance/financial-management

Members of the public are welcome to attend Council, Executive and Scrutiny meetings. You may also raise local issues at the various forums and consultation events held across the town. Information about meetings, agendas and copies of Council minutes are available from Council offices or by telephoning 01438 242 332.

We will promote equality and equal opportunity access and participation for everyone, whatever their personal circumstances. We will allocate and spend money on services as fairly as possible according to the needs of the community. We will set out clear standards for services so that everyone knows what to expect. If you need any help with reading or understanding this document, take it to the Council Offices at Daneshill House or telephone 01438 242 242, or textphone 01438 242 555. We will try to provide a reading service, translation or any other format you may need.

Scott Crudgington
Chief Executive

About Stevenage Borough Council

Background



Stevenage was designated Britain's first new town in 1946. The town was planned and developed by the Government-appointed Development Corporation that was responsible for a series of master plans detailing the way the town would grow. Stevenage Urban District Council became the Borough Council under local government reorganisation in 1974 and by 1980 most of the Development Corporation's functions had been transferred to the Borough Council.

General Statistics

2014/15		2015/16
	Area and Population	
2,596	Area (hectares)	2,596
87,000	Population*	87,500
33.51	Population per Hectare	33.71
	Council Tax	
27,399	Number of Chargeable Dwellings	28,110
	Council Tax per Property in Band D	
£188.52	- Stevenage Borough Council	£188.52
£1,118.83	- Hertfordshire County Council	£1,141.09
£147.82	- Hertfordshire Police Authority	£147.82
£1,455.17	Total Council Tax	£1,477.43

**published by the Office of National Statistics sub national population*

About Stevenage Borough Council

General information

Geography

Stevenage is strategically located within Hertfordshire 30 miles north of London.

Situated on A1(M) allows access to Cambridge, Peterborough, Northampton and Milton Keynes in less than 1 hour. Having a major station on the East Coast Main Line offers superb connectivity.

Journey time to London is 20 minutes making the Capital very accessible for business and potential employees. There are convenient direct routes to **Leeds, York, Cambridge** as well as regular local Hertfordshire towns.

Business

Many of the world's most innovative companies as well as numerous exciting start-up businesses have chosen Stevenage to base their operations. Whether it is discovering new ways of treating and preventing disease, creating and sending a space vehicle to Mars or building a successful technology business, **Stevenage is a place where imagination takes hold**. Our business base has a rich history and diversity that spans a wide range of sectors including aerospace, information technology, pharmaceuticals, advanced engineering and media. Our major employers include:

- Glaxo Smith Kline
- Airbus Defence & Space
- MBDA
- Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst
- Fujitsu
- Wine Society

Living

Stevenage offers a fantastic balance of life with a strong mix of urban and rural life. There is a great mix of housing in and around the town at reasonable prices. Schools and colleges provide an excellent education offer. It has a **strong culture and leisure offer** within the town centre with major retailers present within the Borough. The Old Town provides a pleasant contrast with the High Street popular for cafes, pubs and independent retailers. There are over **300 acres of public park** within the Borough that provide a wide range of recreational activity that can be accessed via an extensive, safe cycle network.

Opportunity

2015/16 saw the launch of Stevenage Central, an ambitious regeneration framework to bring forward major development over the next 15 years. It has identified **six Major Opportunity Areas** for investment that will transform Stevenage into an attractive, sustainable and thriving place within an attractive environment appropriate for 21st century living.

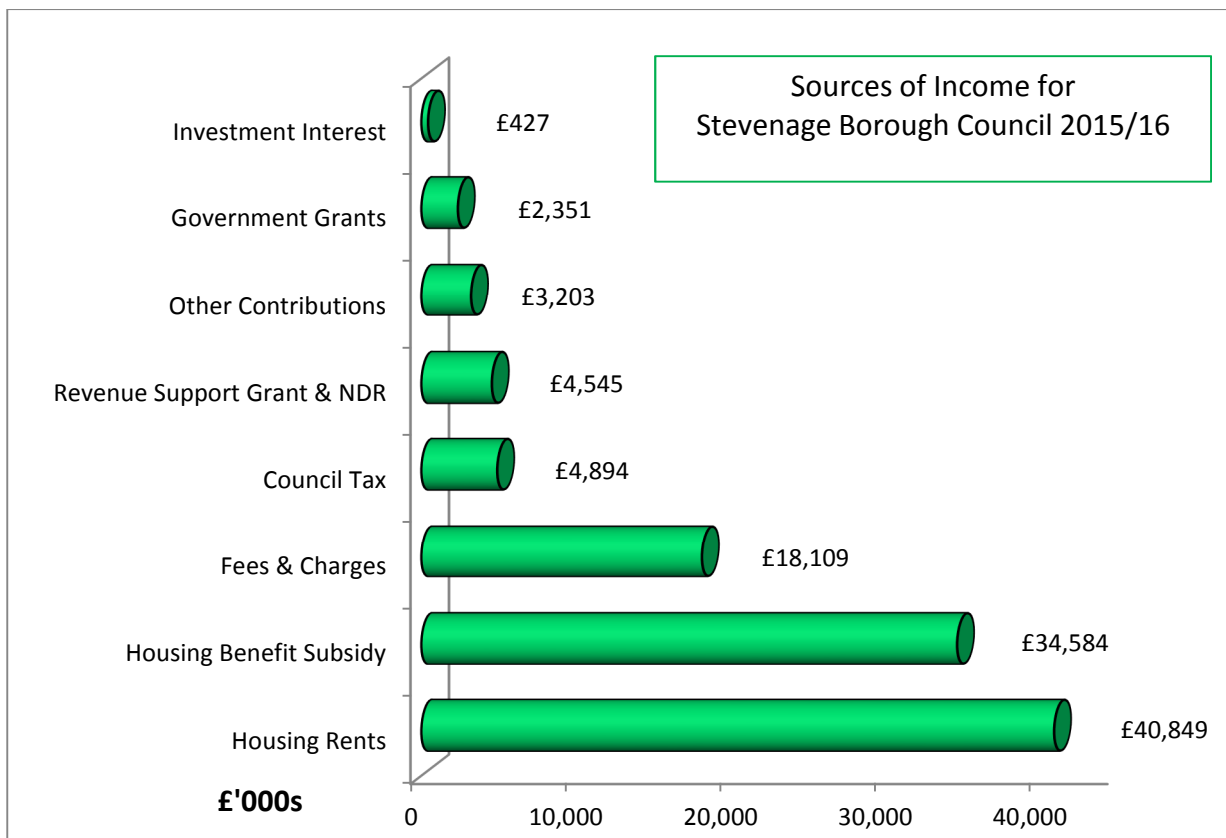
About Stevenage Borough Council



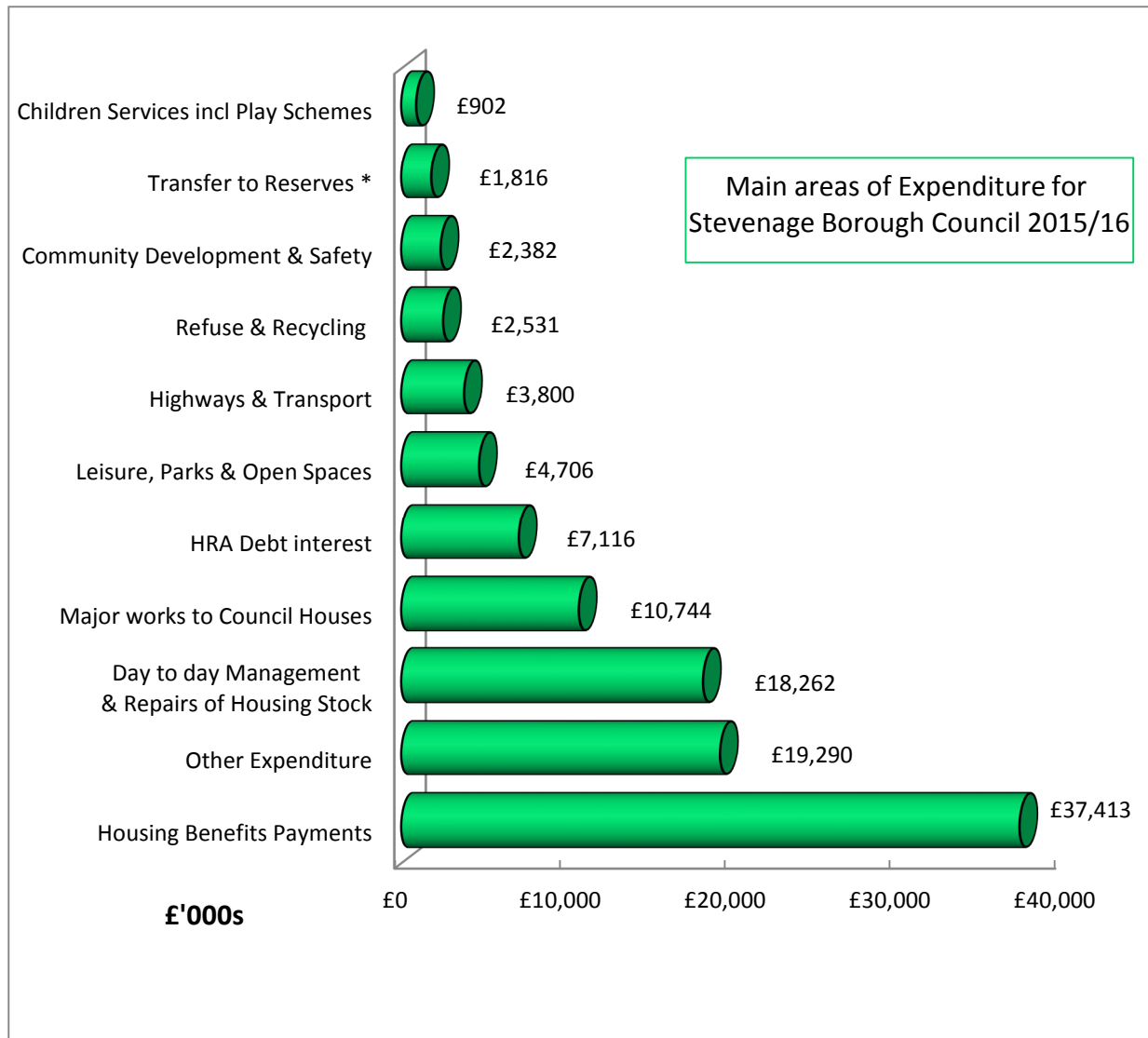
Where our money comes from and how we spend it.

The Council provides a wide range of services to the residents of Stevenage including refuse and recycling collections, leisure facilities including children's play schemes and maintenance of the public open spaces in the district. In addition the

Council helps to keep the residents safe with responsibility for environmental health issues and ensuring new buildings comply with legislation. The Council also has a responsibility to help homeless families and to administer housing benefit claims. To pay for these services the Council receives money from a number of sources. The following charts show where we receive our income and where we spend it for our residents and tenants.



About Stevenage Borough Council



* transfers to reserves will be used to fund unforeseen events or to fund known projects.

Narrative Statement

The Narrative Summary includes abbreviated versions of the Accounts. The full, detailed versions with supporting notes are shown later.

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 31 March 2016.

(full statement on page 35)

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
(23,967)	Cost of Services	(50,183)
(1,245)	Other Operating Expenditure	311
4,263	Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure	6,254
(19,563)	Taxation & Non-Specific Grant Income	(13,546)
(40,512)	Deficit on Provision of Services	(57,164)
(4,882)	Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure	(25,334)
(45,394)	Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure	(82,498)

Balance Sheet

(full statement on page 37)

31 March 2015 £'000		31 March 2016 £'000
	Assets:	
641,263	Long Term Assets	711,180
55,881	Current Assets	56,183
(26,866)	Current Liabilities	(23,334)
(265,205)	Long Term Liabilities	(257,465)
405,073	Net Assets	486,564
	Fund Balances & Reserves:	
48,315	Usable Reserves	50,046
356,758	Unusable Reserves	436,518
405,073	Total Fund Balances & Reserves	486,564

Narrative Statement

Revenue Budget and Outturn

The original General Fund budget of £10,020,080 (£10,401,200 without Section 31 grant) was set at Full Council on 25 February 2015. Subsequently, Members have approved various budget amendments to take into account service pressures and savings arising in year resulting in a revised budget of £9,296,330 approved on 8 March 2016 (third quarter budget monitoring report). The final out-turn position for the year against the revised budget is set out below:

	Original Budget 2015/16	Working Budget 2015/16	Actual 2015/16	Variance to Working Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Directorate:				
Community Services	4,707	4,955	5,316	361
Housing Services	2,076	1,737	1,868	131
Environmental Services	6,369	7,232	5,783	(1,449)
Local Community Budgets	101	101	98	(3)
Resources*	(3,287)	(5,325)	(4,174)	1,151
Resources - Support	54	596	0	(596)
Total Net General Fund Expenditure	10,020	9,296	8,891	(405)
Income:				
Council Tax	(4,752)	(4,752)	(4,752)	0
Transfers to/from collection fund	(1,322)	(1,322)	(1,322)	0
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	(1,861)	(1,861)	(1,861)	0
Retained business rates	(2,423)	(2,584)	(2,523)	61
NDR Pooling Gains	(200)	(148)	(231)	(83)
Total Income from taxation and RSG	(10,558)	(10,667)	(10,689)	(22)
Net underspend/transfer to balances	(538)	(1,371)	(1,798)	(427)
General Fund Balance Brought Forward	(4,891)	(6,090)	(6,090)	
Balance Carried forward	(5,429)	(7,461)	(7,888)	

**The majority of Resources - Support costs are recharged out to the service area in accordance with CIPFA Reporting Code of Practice*

The 2015/16 actual net spend on the General Fund was £404,533 lower than the working budget. Included in the underspend is £337,530 relating to projects which have slipped into 2016/17 and for which a carry forward of budget has been requested.

Narrative Statement

Budget – Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The original HRA budget of £2,698,930 (surplus) was approved by Full Council on the 28 January 2015. Subsequently, Members have approved various budget amendments to take into account service pressures and savings arising in the year resulting in a revised budget of £2,168,300 (surplus) approved on 8 March 2016 as part of the third quarter budget monitoring report. The final out-turn position for the year against the revised budget is set out below:

	Original Budget 2015/16	Working Budget 2015/16	Actual 2015/16	Variance to Working Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure:				
Supervision & Management	8,599	7,894	7,423	(471)
Repairs & Maintenance	5,840	7,661	7,033	(628)
Other expenditure	5,420	4,924	4,824	(100)
Total Expenditure	19,859	20,479	19,280	(1,199)
Income:				
Dwelling Rents	(41,224)	(41,115)	(41,105)	10
Other income	(4,627)	(4,827)	(4,861)	(34)
Total Income	(45,851)	(45,942)	(45,966)	(24)
Other charges to the HRA				
Depreciation	10,677	10,677	10,764	87
Interest	7,116	7,116	7,171	55
Other	5,500	5,502	5,500	(2)
Total Other charges to the HRA	23,293	23,295	23,435	140
(Surplus) / Deficit for the year	(2,699)	(2,168)	(3,251)	(1,083)
Balance brought forward	(13,704)	(13,704)	(13,704)	0
Balance Carried forward	(16,403)	(15,872)	(16,955)	(1,083)

The 2015/16 actual net surplus on the HRA was £1,083,328 more than the working budget. Included within the underspend is £287,270 relating to projects which have slipped into 2016/17 and for which a carry forward of budget has been requested.

Narrative Statement

Analysis of General Fund and HRA variances at year end

	General Fund	Housing Revenue Account
Approved working budget	£9,296,330	(£2,168,300)
Actual outturn	£8,891,797	(£3,251,538)
Underspend before carry forward requests	(£404,533)	(£1,083,238)
Carry forward requests	£337,530	£324,370
Underspend after carry forward	(£67,003)	(£758,868)
Underspend analysis		
Transfer to/from reserves	£779,863	£84,770
Transfer to/from provisions	(£242,857)	(£6,019)
Expenditure:		
Salary (Direct Services Organisation)	(£88,890)	
Salary and pensions (HRA)		(£243,250)
Other net expenditure reductions	(£164,283)	(£72,131)
Income:		
Increase in recycling grant from Hertfordshire County Council	(£123,762)	
Increase in summons costs	(£93,619)	
Increase in officer time charged to capital		(£116,818)
Other net increase in other income	(£179,152)	(£43,449)
Repairs Service (Building Maintenance Organisation)		(£275,737)
Other variances	£45,696	(£86,234)
Total Variances	(£67,004)	(£758,868)
Ongoing savings identified at year end (to be removed from 2016/17 budgets)	(£361,840)	(£203,740)

Narrative Statement

Major Variances in Net Spend in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement contd.

	2014/15 Net Expenditure £'000	2015/16 Net Expenditure £'000	Year on Year Variance £'000
Central Services to Public	(282)	562	+844
Cultural Services	4,132	5,303	+1,171
Environmental & Regulatory Services	7,037	7,299	+262
Planning Services	1,293	1,403	+110
Children's Services	90	0	(90)
Highways & Transport Services	(1,572)	(1,674)	(102)
Local Authority Housing (HRA)	(38,616)	(66,324)	(27,708)
Other Housing Services	23	(652)	(675)
Corporate & Democratic Core	3,862	3,822	(40)
Non Distributed Costs	66	78	+12
Non Distributed Costs	(23,967)	(50,183)	(26,216)

Explanations to major variances

Central Services to the Public: In 2014/15 the Council's single status project was completed. A provision had been set aside to cover expected costs following the implementation of the scheme, all these costs were paid in 2014/15 and the remaining unspent provision was returned to services (£632,915) reducing net expenditure for that year.

Cultural Services: In 2014/15 notional revaluation gains of £1,629,645 relating to the Council's community and environmental buildings were posted to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to reverse prior year notional revaluation losses. This decreased "net expenditure" reversing out prior year revaluation losses.

Children's Services: From April 2015 the four Children's Centres provided by the Council under an agency agreement transferred back to Hertfordshire County Council. Not all of the associated management costs were reimbursed by HCC.

Local Authority Housing (HRA): In 2015/16 there were revaluation gains on the housing stock. However there had been prior year's revaluation losses (as a result of changes to social housing valuations) that had been charged as an expense to the HRA and when subsequent gains arise these losses are reversed out in accordance with accounting policies. In 2015/16 the value of the reversal was £49.8million (£21.7million in 2014/15). All prior year losses have now been reversed out and any future gains will be transferred to the Revaluation Reserve.

Narrative Statement

Material Assets Acquired or Liabilities Incurred during 2015/16.

During 2015/16 the Council acquired the property 2 The Town Square building in Stevenage town centre, purchased for strategic planning reasons. In addition 15.5 equivalent residential properties were purchased from the open market to increase the council social housing stock.

Economic Significant Provisions, Contingencies and Write offs

Repairs Service – Improvement Plan: In January 2016 Members approved an improvement programme for the housing repairs service provided by the internal Repairs Service. A provision of £270,000 was set aside in 2015/16 to cover anticipated transition costs.

Council Reserves

The Council operates two main funds or accounts; a 'General Fund' for services such as refuse, grass cutting etc and a 'Housing Revenue Account' which manages the Council's housing stock. Each fund has its own reserves for capital and revenue expenditure. As at the 31 March 2016 the General Fund had total reserves of £12,687,242 and the HRA had total reserves of £37,359,226 (HRA reserves include £8.5million that can only be used on new social housing and if not spent must be returned to the Government). Although the balances may appear relatively high the medium term financial strategy (for the General Fund) and Business Plan (for the HRA) have identified the need to draw down a proportion of these balances in the future. In addition these balances include specific reserves that can only be used for capital expenditure.



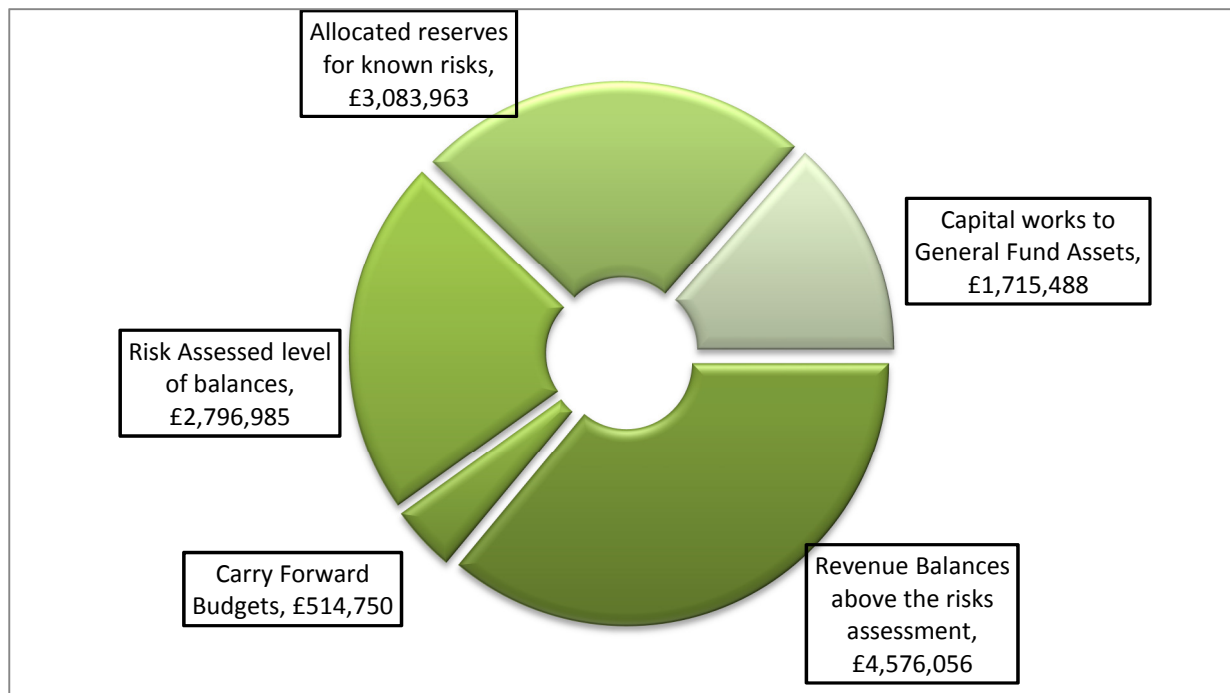
Narrative Statement

General Fund Reserves

The Reserves which can be used for “one-off” funding for day to day General Fund services total £7,888,000, however there has been £514,750 of approved carry forward spend from 2015/16 to 2016/17. In addition the General Fund also has allocated (earmarked) reserves of £3,083,963 which are ring fenced for specific purposes and for which all sums have been allocated and are due to be spent in 2016/17 and beyond. The largest reserve is the New Homes bonus reserve which is held for specific one off projects, the majority of which has been allocated to projects and will be spent in 2016/17.

The General Fund also has reserves it can use to fund major works to assets such as buildings and equipment. This money cannot be spent on revenue services. As at 31 March 2016 the General Fund had unallocated capital resources of £1,715,488.

These reserves summarised below:



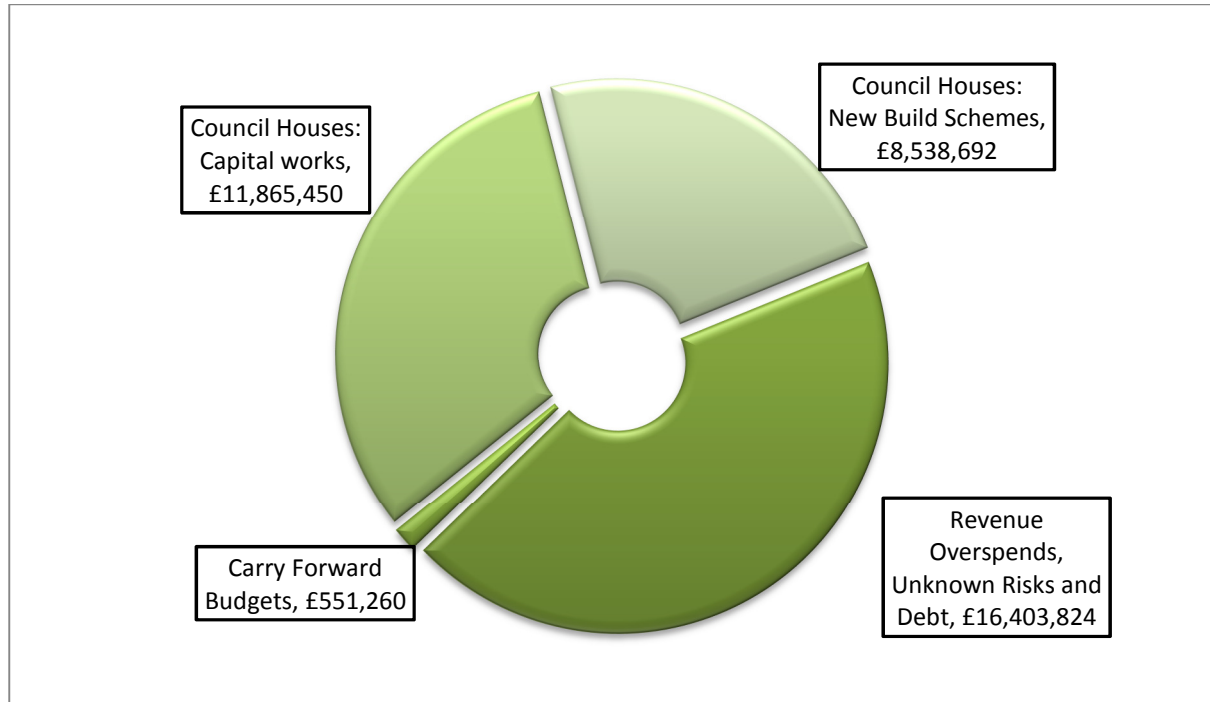
As part of the budget setting process the Council undertakes a risk assessment to determine the level of balances required in 2016/17. The risk assessment identified General Fund balances of at least £2,796,985 are required, (at the 31 March 2015, £2,231,868). In setting a minimum balance it ensures that there are reserves available to meet unforeseen expenditure and/or income losses arising in the year and to meet expenses arising before income is received.

Local Government finances are going through considerable change and the assessment of balances must not only deal with unplanned spend but also Government initiatives, including the localisation of Business Rates introduced in 2013/14 which places greater risk and reward on the Council in regard to NDR collection rates and yield.

Narrative Statement

Housing Revenue Account Reserves

HRA reserves are ring fenced and cannot be used for General Fund expenditure. The Reserves which can be used to support Housing Revenue Account (HRA) total £37,359,000 and these are summarised below:



As with the General Fund a risk assessment is undertaken on the HRA to determine the level of balances required in 2016/17. The risk assessment identified HRA balances of at least £2,784,237. As at 31 March 2016 the HRA had loans of £194.911Million, of which most related to a one off payment to the Government as a result of the self-financing settlement on the 28 March 2012.

The HRA balances as at 31 March 2016 were £16,955,084 and higher than the risk assessment of balances for 2015/16, however the HRA is subject to significant financial risks including;

- A number of legislative changes may have the effect of increasing the levels of RTB sales over and above those anticipated in the HRA Business Plan.

Pay to stay – higher earners will be required to pay higher rents (an extra 15p per week for every £1 they earn over £31,000), which has to be paid to the government.

The maximum level of discount available to tenants under RTB has been increased, whilst the minimum tenancy term to be eligible for the scheme has reduced. The combined impact of these changes could increase the level of RTB sales. The business plan currently assumes a reduction in the number of sales in later years.

Narrative Statement

Housing Revenue Account Reserves (contd)

- Higher Value voids – a new Central Government policy will require the Council to pay a “levy” to Central Government based on an assumed income from sales of higher valued void properties. Details of this policy are still to be announced, but to maintain operational efficiency the Council may not be able to sell these properties and will need to either fund the “levy” from operational income, or make sales of other social housing assets.
- Central Government rent policy has been updated so that formula rents will be reduced by 1% per annum for four financial years beginning April 2016, before reverting back to CPI+1%. The impact of this change over a 30 year planning horizon is to reduce revenue by an estimated £225 million – more than the initial debt taken on at the onset of self-financing.

The HRA also has reserves it can use to fund capital works to Council houses. As with all capital cash balances this money cannot be spent on revenue services, of the £20,404,141 available £8,538,692 must be used for the provision of new housing (up to a maximum of 30% of the build costs the remainder being matched funded by the HRA) or repaid to the Government. These receipts are generated from right to buy sales of which the government takes a proportion up to a fixed amount. Receipts from council houses are net of discount to tenants (of up to a maximum of £77,900 during 2015/16).

Borrowing and Capital

As at the 31 March 2016 the Council had external borrowing of £209,757,105 (£215,520,263 at 31 March 2015). The majority of this debt relates to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) payment to the government as a result of the introduction of Self Financing for the HRA. The HRA business plan has a timetable for the repayment of this debt and £5.5 million was repaid in 2015/16.

In 2015/16 the Council spent £26,134,268 on capital projects, of which £20,548,938 was spent on our housing stock and other housing related assets and a further £5,585,330 on General Fund assets.

The Council funded £4,094,828 of its capital programme from the sale of assets, (land and Council house sales), which equates to 15.7%, (16.0% 2014/15) of the total funding.

Usable capital receipts received in year have been reduced by the payment made to the government for ‘pooled receipts’ in relation to ‘right to buy sales’. Included in the 2015/16 accounts is also a repayment made to the government (£3,839,963 right to buy one of one receipts) repaid as a result of the restrictive use and time limited conditions imposed on their use.

Narrative Statement

The table below shows resources used to fund the 2015/16 capital programme and the available resources to fund future capital expenditure.

	Brought Forward £'000	Received in Year £'000	Used in Year £'000	One for One receipts returned £'000	Available to fund future year expenditure £'000
Usable Capital Receipts	12,921	11,967	(5,054)	(3,840)	15,994
Major Repairs Reserve	12,367	10,820*	(18,533)		4,654
Section 106 Receipts (Capital)	828	226	(742)		312
Borrowing	0		0		0
Grants and Other Contributions	799	1,147	(1,641)		305
TOTAL	26,915	24,160	(25,970)	(3,840)	21,265

**statutory contribution from the Housing Revenue Account representing depreciation charged in year*

Pensions Liability

The Council participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme. The scheme is administered by Hertfordshire County Council, and the impact of the pension liability is shown on the face of the balance sheet. The effect of the 2015/16 pension liability is to decrease the value of the Council's reserves by £7,724,000, (£4,851,000, decrease in 2014/15). (See also Note 30 Pension).

Significant Changes in Accounting Policies

There have been no significant changes in accounting policies in 2015/16. The reader should note that policies specific to a Note to the Core Statement are shown at the start of the note that they relate to (in a green text box).

Other significant events during the financial year 2015/16

The Council is the lead authority in the CCTV partnership. From 1st April 2015 a new company, Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd, started trading dealing with the commercial clients.

Stevenage Borough Council is one of four shareholders in the new company.

The Council appointed a new Chief Executive (Scott Crudgington) on 1 June 2015 on the retirement of the existing Chief Executive. The appointment was part of an approved savings option which reduced the number of Strategic Directors from three to two, with the Assistant Director (Finance) being appointed as Chief Financial Officer on 1 June 2015.

Narrative Statement

Other significant events after the reporting date

The European Union (EU) Referendum decision on 23 June 2016 to leave the EU has had implications the UK economy and consequently for the Council's treasury management position. There are no other significant events after the reporting date.

Introduction to the Statement of Accounts

The Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015 require the Council to produce a "Statement of Accounts" each financial year. Stevenage Borough Council's accounts for the year 2015/16 are set out from page 29 onwards. These accounts have been prepared on an International Financial Reporting Standards Basis and may, by necessity, contain technical terminology. To aid the reader the core statements are supported by explanatory notes and a glossary of terms has been included from page 125 onwards.

Core Financial Statements

Movement in Reserves Statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Council analysed into "usable" reserves (those that can be used to fund future expenditure) and "unusable" reserves. The surplus/deficit on the provision of services line shows the true economic cost of providing the Council's services. This is different to the statutory amounts that should be charged to the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account i.e. the amounts needed to be recovered through council tax and housing rents. The difference is reversed out on the "adjustment between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations" line. Further detail of these adjustments is given in Note 7.

Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement shows the "accounting" cost of providing services in year in accordance with International Reporting Standards. This is the accounting cost of providing services in year and differs from the amount "funded" from council tax, government grants and housing rents. The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the adjustments between funding basis and accounting basis.

Balance Sheet shows the value of the Council's assets and liabilities as at the Balance Sheet date. These are matched by the Council's usable and unusable reserves.

Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents held by the Council during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Council generates cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financial activities.

Notes to Core Financial Statements provide additional information in support of the Core Financial Statements listed above.

Introduction to the Statement of Accounts

Supplementary Statements

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Income & Expenditure Statement shows the economic cost of providing the Council's housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices rather than the amount to be funded from rents and other income. The difference in accounting and funding basis is shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Collection Fund Account & Notes shows the collection of council tax and retained non-domestic rates (NDR) and payments to Stevenage Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire and Central Government.

Further Information

Further information about the accounts is available from: Assistant Director (Finance), Stevenage Borough Council, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, SG1 1HN

Email: clare.fletcher@stevenage.gov.uk



Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts

Stevenage Borough Council's Responsibilities

Stevenage Borough Council is required:

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

The Assistant Director (Finance) (Chief Financial Officer) Responsibilities

The Assistant Director (Finance) (Chief Financial Officer) is responsible for the preparation of the Council's Statement of Accounts which, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code), and is required to present 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 2016.

In preparation of this statement of accounts, the Assistant Director (Finance) (Chief Financial Officer) has:

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

The Assistant Director (Finance) (Chief Financial Officer) has also:

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

Certificate of Chief Financial Officer

I certify that this Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015 and present true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2016 and its Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 31 March 2016.



Clare Fletcher
Assistant Director (Finance) (Chief Financial Officer)

Statement of Accounts 2015/16

Movement in Reserves Statement

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

Movement in Reserves Statement

	Note	General Fund Balance	Earmarked General Fund Reserves	Housing Revenue Account	Major Repairs Reserve Earmarked HRA Reserves	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Total Usable Reserves
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 31 March 2014 carried forward		(4,817)	(2,254)	(9,375)	(4,608)	(5,915)	(1,708)	(28,677)
Movement in reserves during 2014/15								
Surplus or (deficit) on provision of services		(2,300)	0	(38,212)	0	0	0	(40,512)
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income		(2,300)	0	(38,212)	0	0	0	(40,512)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	7	844	0	33,883	(7,758)	(7,199)	1,102	20,872
Net Increase/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves		(1,456)	0	(4,329)	(7,758)	(7,199)	1,102	(19,640)
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	8	182	(182)	0	0	0	0	0
(Increase)/Decrease in Year		(1,274)	(182)	(4,329)	(7,758)	(7,199)	1,102	(19,640)
Balance at 31 March 2015 carried forward		(6,091)	(2,436)	(13,704)	(12,366)	(13,114)	(605)	(48,316)
Movement in reserves during 2015/16								
(Surplus) or deficit on provision of services		3,687		(60,851)				(57,164)
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income								0
Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income		3,687	0	(60,851)	0	0	0	(57,164)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	7	(7,300)		57,600	7,714	(2,881)	301	55,434
Net Increase/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves		(3,613)	0	(3,251)	7,714	(2,881)	301	(1,730)
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	8	1,816	(1,816)					0
(Increase)/Decrease in Year		(1,797)	(1,816)	(3,251)	7,714	(2,881)	301	(1,730)
Balance at 31 March 2016 carried forward		(7,888)	(4,252)	(16,955)	(4,652)	(15,995)	(304)	(50,046)

Movement in Reserves Statement

	Note	Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	Total Authority Reserves
		£000	£000	£000
Balance at 31 March 2014 carried forward		(28,677)	(331,001)	(359,678)
Movement in reserves during 2014/15				
Surplus or (deficit) on provision of services		(40,512)	0	(40,512)
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income		0	(4,883)	(4,883)
Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income		(40,512)	(4,883)	(45,395)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	7	20,872	(20,872)	0
Net Increase/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves		(19,640)	(25,755)	(45,395)
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	8	0	0	0
(Increase)/Decrease in Year		(19,640)	(25,755)	(45,395)
Balance at 31 March 2015 carried forward		(48,317)	(356,756)	(405,073)
Movement in reserves during 2015/16				
(Surplus) or deficit on provision of services		(57,164)	0	(57,164)
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income		0	(25,334)	(25,334)
Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income		(57,164)	(25,334)	(82,498)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	7	55,434	(55,434)	0
Net Increase/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves		(1,730)	(80,768)	(82,498)
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	8	0	0	0
(Increase)/Decrease in Year		(1,730)	(80,768)	(82,498)
Balance at 31 March 2016 carried forward		(50,047)	(437,524)	(487,571)

Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement for the year ended 31 March 2016

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

All Council operations are continuing. The Council is a shareholder in Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd which started trading in 2015. Group accounts are not completed due to the small size of the trading company (see also note 3 – Critical Judgements in applying accounting policies).

The following revenue service expenditure analysis is compliant with the latest accounting code of practice, Service Reporting Code of Practice for Local Authorities (SERCOP).

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

2014/15			2015/16			
Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000		Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
1,933	(2,215)	(282)	Central Services to the Public	2,801	(2,239)	562
4,349	(217)	4,132	Cultural and related Services	5,690	(387)	5,303
12,204	(5,167)	7,037	Environmental & Regulatory Services	13,322	(6,023)	7,299
1,754	(461)	1,293	Planning Services	1,780	(377)	1,403
1,092	(1,002)	90	Children's and Education Services	52	(52)	0
2,421	(3,993)	(1,572)	Highways & Transport Services	2,153	(3,827)	(1,674)
27,248	(44,134)	(16,886)	Local Authority Housing (HRA)	27,604	(44,141)	(16,537)
(21,730)	0	(21,730)	Reversal of prior year revaluation losses (HRA)	(49,787)	0	(49,787)
41,273	(41,250)	23	Other Housing Services	39,571	(40,223)	(652)
3,862	0	3,862	Corporate & Democratic Core	3,822	0	3,822
66	0	66	Non Distributed Costs	78	0	78
74,472	(98,439)	(23,967)	Cost of Services	47,086	(97,269)	(50,183)
				Note		
	(1,245)		Other Operational Expenditure	10		311
	4,263		Financing & Investment Income and Expenditure	11		6,254
	(17,793)		Taxation & Non-Specific Grant Income: Retained Business rates	12		(18,827)
	15,934		Taxation & Non-Specific Grant Income: NDR expenditure (tariff to DCLG)	12		16,238
	(17,704)		Taxation & Non-Specific Grant Income: Other	12		(10,957)
	(40,512)		Deficit/(surplus) on Provision of Services			(57,164)
	(8,272)		Surplus on revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment assets		(16,065)	
	3,390		Actuarial (gains)/losses on pension assets/liabilities	30	(9,269)	
	(4,882)		Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			(25,334)
	(45,394)		Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			(82,498)

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. The net assets of the authority (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Council. Reserves are reported in two categories:

The first category of reserves are **usable reserves**, i.e. those reserves that the authority may use to provide services subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt) (see also Note 8 to the Accounts).

The second category is **unusable reserves** or those that the authority is not able to use to provide services. This category includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences in the Movement in Reserves Statement line "adjustment between accounting basis and funding under regulations".

Additional notes to aid the reader regarding the Balance Sheet

Note 1 Within the **Council dwellings** valuation of £554,271,127 there are a number of properties which are likely to be sold within the next 12 months under the Right to Buy Scheme. As at the balance sheet date these properties were not actively marketed and nor is there any certainty as to which properties will be sold. However based on the number of successful applications made last year it is estimated that 100 properties could be sold in 2016/17. This would equate to an average balance sheet valuation of £6,891,862.

Balance Sheet

31 March 2015		31 March 2016		
£'000	Note	£'000	£'000	£'000
496,940	- Council Dwellings	14	554,271	
108,178	- Other Land & Buildings	14	114,631	
2,800	- Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	14	3,855	
8,974	- Other	14	11,559	
616,892	Total Property, Plant & Equipment		684,316	
752	Heritage Assets	13	714	
19,547	Investment property	15	19,990	
412	Intangible Assets	16	493	
2,010	Long Term Investment	19	4,010	
1,650	Long Term Debtors	19	1,657	
641,263	Total Long Term Assets			711,180
18,341	Short Term Investments	19	32,986	
1,550	Assets Held for Sale	24	1,550	
188	Inventories	23	165	
7,536	Short Term Debtors	21	6,583	
28,266	Cash and Cash Equivalents	20	14,899	
55,881	Current Assets			56,183
(5,926)	Short Term Borrowing	19	(403)	
(16,937)	Short Term Creditors	22	(19,159)	
(4,003)	Provisions	25	(3,772)	
(26,866)	Current Liabilities			(23,334)
(1,007)	Long term creditors	22	(1,770)	
(209,757)	Long term borrowing	19	(209,494)	
(53,613)	Pension Liability	30	(45,889)	
(828)	Grants Receipts in Adv - Capital	12	(312)	
(265,205)	Long Term Liabilities			(257,465)
405,073	Net Assets			486,564
6,090	General Fund Balance	8	7,888	
13,704	HRA Balance	8	16,955	
28,521	Other Usable Reserves	8	25,203	
48,315	Total Usable Reserves		50,046	
356,758	Unusable Reserves	9		436,518
405,073	Total Reserves			486,564

The unaudited accounts were issued on 17 June 2016 and the audited accounts were authorised for issue on 28 September 2016.

Clare Fletcher
Assistant Director (Finance) (Chief Financial Officer)

Cash Flow Statement for the year ended 31 March 2016

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

2014/15 £'000		Note	2015/16	
			£'000	£'000
(40,512)	Net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services			(57,164)
(2,725)	Adjustments to net surplus or deficit on the provision of services for non cash movements	35		22,739
	Adjustments for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities			
7,681	Transfer of sale proceeds included in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement		11,960	
8,123	Capital Grants received or applied to meet financing		1,764	
				13,724
(27,433)	Net Cash flows from Operating Activities	34		(20,701)
	Investing Activities:			
21,145	Purchase of property, plant & equipment, investment property & intangible assets		26,511	
17,810	Purchase of short term & long term investments		30,400	
(7,703)	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant & equipment, investment property & intangible assets		(11,960)	
(1,713)	Proceeds from short-term & long-term investments		(13,800)	
(7,722)	Capital Grants received		(1,574)	
(395)	Other net receipts from investing activities		0	
21,422	Net cash flows from investing activities			29,577
	Financing Activities:			
0	Cash receipts of short & long term borrowing		0	
(499)	Other receipts from financing activities		(1,273)	
(1,024)	Repayments of short and long term borrowing		5,763	
(894)	Other payments for financing activities		0	
(2,417)	Net cash flows from financing activities			4,490
(8,428)	Net increase or decrease in cash and cash equivalents			13,366
(19,838)	Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period			(28,266)
(28,266)	Cash and Cash Equivalents at the end of the reporting period	20		(14,900)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

1. Cross Cutting Accounting Policies

Accounting policies are the specific principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by the Council in preparing and presenting the financial statements. Where accounting policies are specific to an area of the accounts they are included with the relevant disclosure note in a green shaded box. Accounting policies which apply across the whole of the accounts are disclosed below:

General Principles: *The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2015/16 financial year and its position as at the year end of 31 March 2016. The Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 which those regulations require to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. The Statement of Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16 and the Service Reporting Code of Practice 2015/16 supported by International Financial Reporting Standards and statutory guidance issued under section 12 of the 2003 Act.*

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

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

Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of the transaction, other events and conditions on the Authority's financial position or financial performance.

Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied.

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

Notes to the Core Financial Statement

1. Cross Cutting Accounting Policies (contd.)

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

- Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when the Authority transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership to the purchaser and it is probable that economic benefits of service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Authority.
- Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the Authority can measure reliably the percentage of completion of the transaction and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Authority.
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed – where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption and the value is considered material, they are carried as inventories on the balance sheet.
- Expenses in relation to the services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.
- Interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but the cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.
- Revenue relating to council tax and non-domestic rates (NDR) shall be measured at the full amount receivable (net of any impairment losses).

Value Added Tax (VAT) - Income and expenditure excludes any amounts that relate to VAT, except where the VAT element is not recoverable from HM Revenue and Customs.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

1. Cross Cutting Accounting Policies (contd.)

The Local Authority Mortgage Scheme expenditure is classified as a capital cost, and not as an investment. It is therefore excluded from the Council's non-specified investments. This is because the deposit is for the purposes of service delivery, and not for treasury management. The deposits are classified as a long term debtor, and a long term creditor is also recognised for the contribution received from Hertfordshire County Council towards the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme. The Council has an earmarked reserve set aside to help meet the cost of any future defaults in the mortgage scheme.

The costs of **overheads and support services** are charged to those that benefit from the supply or service provided in accordance with the costing principles of the CIPFA Service Reporting Code of Practice 2015/16 (SeRCOP). The total absorption costing principle is used with the basis for internal charging, wherever possible, on a unit basis appropriate for the service provided, e.g. office accommodation by floor area, Human Resources (HR) charges by number of employees etc. Other categories of internal charge are apportioned on an appropriate percentage basis based on staff time.

In this way the full cost of overheads and support services are shared between users in proportion to the benefits received, with the exception of :

- *Corporate and Democratic Core* - costs relating to the Council's status as a multi-functional democratic organisation.
- *Non-Distributed Costs* - the cost of discretionary benefits awarded to employees retiring early.

These two cost categories are defined in SeRCOP and accounted for as separate headings in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, as part of the Cost of Services.

Borrowing Costs – It is not the Council's Policy to capitalise borrowing costs.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

2. Accounting Standards issued but have not yet been adopted

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

The CIPFA code of Practice on Transport Infrastructure takes effect from 1st April 2016. As a non-highway authority this change is unlikely to impact on the 2016/17 Statement of Accounts. A number of minor amendments to International Financial Reporting Standards are anticipated however these are not expected to have any material impact on the accounts.

3. Critical judgements in applying Accounting Policies

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

There is a degree of uncertainty about the **future levels of funding** for local government. However, the Council has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the assets of the Council might be impaired as a result of a need to close facilities or materially reduce levels of service provision. The Council has identified savings targets in its General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy in anticipation of reduced central government grant funding levels in future years and a methodology to address this via the financial security work stream of the Future Town Future Council priorities.

Following a review of leases under the stricter IFRS categorisation the Council is of the judgement that **no material finance leases** are in existence.

The Council considered that the **partnership arrangements of the CCTV control room** constitute a jointly controlled operation and as such each authority accounts for its share of the liabilities and assets of the partnership. (See also Note 27 CCTV Partnership).

From 1st April 2015 the **Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd** started trading. The new company for the year ended 31st March 2016 produced a profit after tax of £63,662. The SBC share of the profit is £23,635 with the remainder belonging to the partner councils (North Hertfordshire District Council, East Herts District Council and Hertsmere Borough Council). Due to the small size of the new company group accounts have not been completed.

Within the Council dwellings valuation there are a number of properties which are likely to be sold within the next 12 months under the **Right to Buy Scheme**. **The Council does not classify these properties as "Held for Sale"** as at the balance sheet date as these properties are not actively marketed and nor is there any certainty as to which properties will be sold.

Based on the number of successful applications made last year it is estimated that 100 properties could be sold. This would equate to an average balance sheet valuation of £6,891,862.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

3. Critical judgements in applying Accounting Policies (contd)

The council considers that three commercial properties held in the town centre are not classified as “**Investment Properties**” as they are held for strategic planning purposes and not solely for rental income or capital appreciation. As such they are included under land and buildings on the balance sheet and expenditure and income on these sites is included within cost of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

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

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

The items in the Council’s Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2016 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are shown on the following pages:

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if Actual Results Differ from Assumptions
Property, Plant and Equipment	Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions regarding the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to each individual asset. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Authority will be able to sustain its current expenditure on repairs and maintenance, bringing into doubt the useful lives assigned to assets.	The average useful life of the authority’s housing stock is currently 43.24 years. It is estimated that the annual depreciation charge for Council Houses would increase by approximately £300,000 for every year that useful lives are decreased.
Provisions	The Authority has a provision of £562,249 for the settlement of insurance claim excesses, based on the estimated reserve for each claim. It is not certain that the all valid claims have yet been received by the Authority relating up to 31 March 2016 or that the estimated reserve levels will be sufficient.	An increase in the forthcoming year of 10% in either total number of claims or the estimated average settlement would each have the effect of adding £56,225 to the provision needed.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

4. Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty (contd)

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if Actual Results Differ from Assumptions
Pension Liability	Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.	The effect on the pension liability for changes in individual assumptions can be measured. For instance, a one year increase in member life expectancy would result in an increase in the pension liability of £5,249,000. (see also Note 30 Pensions – sensitivity analysis of actuarial assumptions)
Trade Debtors and Arrears	At 31 March 2016, the Authority had a balance of trade debtors of £645,000 of which £452,000 was older than 3 months. A review of significant balances suggested that an impairment of doubtful debts based on the age and repayment arrangements in place of 31% of the outstanding arrears was appropriate. However, it is not certain that such an allowance would be sufficient should the age profile of arrears increase.	If arrears were to age by a further year, the Authority would be required to set aside a further £55,631 in provision.
Benefit Overpayments	At 31 March 2016, the Authority had a balance of housing overpayment debtors of £3,283,000. A review of significant balances suggested that an impairment of doubtful debts based on the age and repayment arrangements in place of 81% of the outstanding arrears was appropriate. However, it is not certain that such an allowance would be sufficient should the age profile of arrears increase.	If collection rates were to improve across all years by 10%, an equivalent reduction in impairment of doubtful debts of £663,520 would be required, returning this money back to the General Fund.
Fair Value valuations	The Authority owns a number of garages which are rented to tenants. The carrying value of the garages is based on a risk assessed yield of 13% (i.e. the security of the income streams have been assessed and a yield rate agreed). The garages are on 50 week rentals which can be terminated by either tenant or Landlord.	If the Authority were to assess the security of the income streams less favourably, then the required yield would increase. On an asset base of £14 million a 1% increase in the required yield to 14% would reduce the asset value by approximately £1 million.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

5. Material Items of Income and Expense

Exceptional/Material Items - When items of income and expense are material, their nature and amount is disclosed separately, either on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement or in the notes to the accounts, depending on how significant the items are to the understanding of the Council's financial performance.

Material items of revenue income and expenditure are detailed in the table below:

2014/15 £000		2015/16 £000
	Material Items of Expenditure	
	Cultural, Environmental & Planning Services	
1,210	Stevenage Leisure Limited Contract Payment	1,149
	Housing Services	
20,903	Rent Rebate	20,401
15,374	Rent Allowances	14,614
	Material Items of Income	
	Highways, Roads & Transport Services	
(3,515)	Car Parks	(3,468)
	Housing Services	
(20,576)	Rent Rebate Subsidy	(20,184)
(15,078)	Rent Allowances Subsidy	(14,401)
(2,725)	Garage Rental Income	(2,819)
	Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure	
(2,007)	Commercial Property Rent	(2,030)

Material items of capital income and expenditure:

The Council spent £26.1million on its capital programme in 2015/16, this included £14.9million on housing stock, delivering the decent homes programme and major works, £3.7million on providing new homes, £0.7million on HRA disabled adaptations, £1.2million on other housing capital projects and £5.6million on General Fund assets.

6. Events after the Balance Sheet Date

Events after the Balance Sheet date, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the authorised for issue date are identified into two types:

Adjusting events – where the conditions existed at the end of the reporting period and the Statements are adjusted accordingly, and *Non adjusting events* - where conditions were not present but if material are disclosed as a note to the accounts.

Events after the authorised for issue date are not reflected in the Statement of Accounts.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

6. Events after the Balance Sheet (contd.)

Events after the Balance Sheet date are reflected up to the 'authorised for issue' date. These accounts have been authorised for issue on 28th September 2016 by the Assistant Director (Finance) (Chief Financial Officer). Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the Financial Statements or notes. Where events taking place before this date provide information about conditions existing at 31 March 2016, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

The financial statements have not been adjusted for the following event which took place after the 31 March 2016 as they provide information that is relevant to an understanding of the Council's financial position but do not relate to conditions as at 31 March 2016:

The European Union (EU) Referendum decision on 23 June 2016 to leave the EU has had implications the UK economy and consequently for the Council's treasury management position. A Treasury Management Strategy Urgency Decision was approved at Council on 20 July 2016 to address the new economic conditions and changes to the UK Sovereign Rating.

7. Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations

*The Council sets aside specific amounts as **Reserves** for future policy purposes. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate revenue service account in that year to score against the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then appropriated back through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against Council Tax for the expenditure.*

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement recognised by the Council in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Council to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

The following sets out a description of the reserves that the adjustments are made against:

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

7. Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations (contd.)

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

The **Housing Revenue Account Balance** reflects the statutory obligation to maintain a revenue account for local authority council housing provision in accordance with Part VI of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. It contains the balance of income and expenditure as defined by the 1989 Act that is available to fund future expenditure in connection with the Council's landlord function. The Localism Act 2011 (Part VII) introduced the self-financing regime with Councils now able to keep the rent they collect and use it locally to maintain their social homes. As part of the new regime depreciation is now a real cost to the HRA and is transferred to the Major Repairs Reserve to finance future capital investment.

The Council is required to maintain the **Major Repairs Reserve (MRR)**, which holds the depreciation and revenue contributions to capital (RCCO) from the HRA and is limited to being used on capital expenditure on HRA assets or the financing of historical capital expenditure by the HRA. The balance shows the capital resources that are planned to be used for future years capital programme.

The **Capital Receipts Reserve** holds the proceeds from the disposal of land or other assets, which are restricted by statute from being used other than to fund new capital expenditure or to be set aside to finance historical capital expenditure. The balance on the reserve shows the resources that have yet to be applied for these purposes at the year-end. Part of the reserve (£8,539,000) can only be used towards the provision of additional council house schemes and has further restrictions on its use in that it can only be used for 30% of scheme costs.

The **Capital Grants Unapplied** Account (Reserve) holds the grants and contributions received towards capital projects for which the Council has met the conditions that would otherwise require repayment of the monies but which have yet to be applied to capital expenditure. The balance is restricted by grant terms as to the capital expenditure to which it can be applied and/or the financial year in which this can take place.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

2015/16 Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis Under regulations	Usable Reserves						Unusable Reserves £000
	General Fund Balance	Housing Revenue Account	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Total Usable Reserves	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Adjustments involving the Capital Adjustment Account:							
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement (CI&E)							
Charges for depreciation & impairment of non current assets	(5,259)	(10,820)				(16,079)	16,079
Revaluation on Property, Plant & Equipment	(552)	49,786				49,234	(49,234)
Movements in the market value of Investment Property	663	0				663	(663)
Amortisation of intangible assets	(37)	0				(37)	37
Capital Grants & Contributions	871	383				1,254	(1,254)
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(719)	0				(719)	719
Amounts of non current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the (CI&E)	(6)	(7,590)				(7,596)	7,596
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the CI&E							
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment	653	5,500				6,153	(6,153)
Capital Expenditure charged against General Fund and HRA balances	1,331	0				1,331	(1,331)
Adjustments involving the Capital Grants Unapplied Account (CGU)							
Capital grants & contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	1,055	0			(1,055)	0	0
Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	0	0			1,355	1,355	(1,355)
Adjustments involving the Capital Receipts Reserve (CRR):							
Transfer of sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CI&E Statement	859	11,107	(11,966)			0	0
Use of the CRR to finance new capital expenditure	0	0	4,367			4,367	(4,367)
Contribution from CRR to finance the payments to the Government capital receipts pool	(4,720)	0	4,720			0	0
Transfer from Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve upon cash receipt	0	0	(2)			(2)	2
Adjustments involving the Major Repairs Reserve (MRR):							
Reversal of the MRR credited to the HRA		10,820		(10,820)		0	0
Use of the MRR to Finance new capital expenditure		0		18,534		18,534	(18,534)
Adjustments involving the Pension Reserve							
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the CI&E Statement (see also note 30)	(4,189)	(1,664)				(5,853)	5,853
Employer's pension contributions & direct payments to pensioners payable in year	4,097	0				4,097	(4,097)
Adjustments involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account							
Amount by which council tax income credited to the CI&E Statement is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(1,378)					(1,378)	1,378
Adjustments involving the Accumulated Absences Adjustment Account							
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CI&E Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in year in accordance with statutory requirement	32	78				110	(110)
TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS	(7,299)	57,600	(2,881)	7,714	300	55,434	(55,434)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

Comparator Year 2014/15 Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis Under regulations	General Fund Balance £000	Housing Revenue Account £000	Usable Reserves			Total Usable Reserves £000	Unusable Reserves £000
			Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Major Repairs Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000		
Adjustments involving the Capital Adjustment Account:							
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement (CI&E)							
Charges for depreciation & impairment of non current assets	(5,159)	(10,807)				(15,966)	15,966
Revaluation on Property, Plant & Equipment	847	21,725				22,572	(22,572)
Movements in the market value of Investment Property	3,049	0				3,049	(3,049)
Amortisation of intangible assets	(23)	0				(23)	23
Capital Grants & Contributions	1,595	6,953				8,548	(8,548)
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(468)	0				(468)	468
Amounts of non current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the (CI&E)	(355)	(7,943)				(8,298)	8,298
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the CI&E							
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment	623	0				623	(623)
Capital Expenditure charged against General Fund and HRA balances	849	4,398				5,247	(5,247)
Adjustments involving the Capital Grants Unapplied Account (CGU)							
Capital grants & contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	14	0			(14)	0	0
Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	0	0			1,116	1,116	(1,116)
Adjustments involving the Capital Receipts Reserve (CRR):							
Transfer of sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CI&E Statement	1,320	9,052	(10,372)			0	0
Use of the CRR to finance new capital expenditure	0	0	2,410			2,410	(2,410)
Contribution from CRR to finance the payments to the Government capital receipts pool	(785)	0	785			0	0
Transfer from Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve upon cash receipt	0	0	(22)			(22)	22
Adjustments involving the Major Repairs Reserve (MRA):							
Reversal of the MRA credited to the HRA		10,807		(10,807)		0	0
Use of the MRA to Finance new capital expenditure		0		3,049		3,049	(3,049)
Adjustments involving the Pension Reserve							
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the CI&E Statement (see also note 30)	(5,213)	(313)				(5,526)	5,526
Employer's pension contributions & direct payments to pensioners payable in year	3,626	0				3,626	(3,626)
Adjustments involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account							
Amount by which Council tax income credited to the CI&E Statement is different from Council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	895					895	(895)
Adjustments involving the Accumulated Absences Adjustment Account							
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CI&E Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in year in accordance with statutory requirement	29	11				40	(40)
TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS	844	33,883	(7,199)	(7,758)	1,102	20,872	(20,872)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

8. Other Usable Reserves

*The Council sets aside specific amounts as **Reserves** for future policy purposes. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate revenue service account in that year to score against the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then appropriated back through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against Council Tax for the expenditure.*

The Council maintains a General Fund Balance and Housing Revenue Account balance (as described in Note 7. In addition there are a number of earmarked (for specific purpose) reserves, which are detailed below:

- **Capacity Building Reserve**

This reserve pump primes strategic or organisational changes within the Council e.g. the delivery of the Priority Based Budget savings programme. This enables the Council to meet its corporate objectives, realising future efficiency gains and to react to external pressures. It was fully allocated in 2015/16.

- **Housing and Planning Delivery Grant Reserve**

The Council received monies from the Government designed to incentivise housing growth and the underlying planning requirement to allocate land and put development plans in place. Due to the nature of the work the expenditure is often not aligned to the pattern of grant received. The reserve will be used to fund the Local Plan Examination in public in 2016/17.

- **New Homes Bonus Reserve**

The New Homes Bonus scheme commenced in April 2011. The scheme gives Councils a financial reward for new homes and properties brought back into use. The grant may be used to fund any General Fund expenditure. This reserve has been established to mainly fund one off schemes approved by Members.

- **Regeneration Assets Reserve.**

This reserve contains the ring fenced surplus/deficit from the management and maintenance of the 3-29 Town Square (purchased in 2013) and the Plaza (purchased in 2014) and will be used to cover any future fluctuations in costs or rental stream, any balances remaining will be used to help repay any debt outstanding and/or contribute towards the regeneration costs for the Town Centre.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

8. Other Usable Reserves (contd)

- **Town Centre Reserve**

This reserve contains the ring fenced surplus/deficit from the Town Centre management service and will be used fund activities and management in the Town Centre.

- **Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) Reserve**

This reserve was set up to cover the potential for any mortgage defaults on the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme introduced in 2012. The reserve contains investment income generated from the deposits placed over and above the Council's average interest rate earned for the year. There have been no defaults on the scheme since inception.

- **Capital Reserve**

This reserve was set up in 2013/14 as part of the Council's Integrated Financial Planning Process and funds capital projects. It was set up to reduce the Council's reliance on borrowing to fund capital projects.

- **Future Town Future Council Reserve (formerly known as Commercialisation Reserve)**

The Council has identified nine strands as part of the Future Town Future Council agenda and this reserve has been allocated to support the programme 2016/17-2017/18.

- **NDR Collection Fund Reserve**

This reserve has been set up in 2013/14 to meet any adverse impact on the General Fund arising from any losses in NDR income above the government's safety net rules.

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

A more detailed breakdown showing the amounts set aside from the General Fund and HRA balances to specific earmarked reserves is shown below. This sets out amounts used to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2015/16.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

8. Other Usable Reserves (contd).

	31 March 2015	Transfer to Reserve (to fund future years expenditure)	Transfer from Reserve (to fund in year expenditure)	Net movement in year	31 March 2016
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Earmarked Reserve:					
General Fund					
Capacity Building	185	0	(185)	(185)	0
Housing & Planning Delivery Grant	170	0	0	0	170
New Homes Bonus	201	2,174	(1,010)	1,164	1,365
Regeneration Assets	633	380	(45)	335	968
Town Centre	0	30	0	30	30
LAMS (Local Authority Mortgage Scheme)	28	14	0	14	42
Capital Reserve	947	1,195	(975)	220	1,167
Commercialisation	100	0	(100)	(100)	0
Future Town Future Council	0	337	0	337	337
NDR collection Fund	172	0	0	0	172
Total Earmarked Reserves	2,436	4,130	(2,315)	1,815	4,251



Stevenage Town Centre Gardens

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

9. Unusable Reserves (contd)

The Council's has a number of **Unusable Reserves** that are required for statutory reasons, to comply with proper accounting practice. As such these reserves are unavailable to fund expenditure. They include reserves kept to manage the accounting process for non-current assets, financial instruments, retirement and employee benefits and do not represent usable resources for the Council.

31 March 2015		31 March 2016
£'000		£'000
(35,493)	Revaluation Reserve	(50,550)
(374,254)	Capital Adjustment Account	(432,497)
(191)	Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve	(194)
53,613	Pension Reserve	45,889
(826)	Collection Fund Adjustment Account	552
393	Accumulated Absences Account	283
(356,757)	Total Unusable Reserves	(436,517)

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

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

The Reserve only contains 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.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

9. Unusable Reserves (contd)

2014/15 £'000		2015/16	
		£'000	£'000
(28,032)	Balance as at 1 April		(35,493)
(8,300)	Upward revaluation of assets	(16,732)	
28	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	668	
(8,272)	Surplus or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services		(16,064)
803	Difference between fair value depreciation and historic cost depreciation	1,006	
8	Accumulated gains on assets sold or scrapped	1	
811	Amount written off to the Capital Adjustment Account		1,007
(35,493)	Balance as at 31 March		(50,550)

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

The Account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or 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 historic cost basis). The Account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Council as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and enhancement.

The Account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Property and gains recognised as donated assets that have yet to be consumed by the Council.

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

Note 7 provides further details on the source of all transactions, other than those involving the Revaluation Reserve, to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

9. Unusable Reserves (contd)

Capital Adjustment Account:

2014/15 £'000 (352,021)		£'000	2015/16 £'000	£'000 (374,254)
	Balance as at 1 April			
	Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement			
15,966	Charges for depreciation & impairment of non-current assets	16,062		
(22,573)	Revaluation gains on Property, Plant & Equipment	(49,234)		
0	Self Financing Debt repayment	(5,500)		
23	Amortisation of Intangible Assets	55		
469	Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	719		
8,298	Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	7,596		
2,183			(30,302)	
(811)	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve		(1,007)	
1,372	Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year			(31,309)
	Capital financing applied in the year			
(2,604)	Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure		(4,094)	
(3,050)	Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure		(18,534)	
(8,548)	Capital grants & contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing		(1,254)	
(484)	Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account		(404)	
(623)	Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund balances		(654)	
(5,247)	Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund and HRA balances.		(1,331)	
(20,556)				(26,271)
(3,049)	Movements in the market value of Investment Properties debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement			(663)
(374,254)	Balance as at 31 March			(432,497)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

9. Unusable Reserves (contd)

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

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
(213)	Balance as at 1 April	(191)
22	Amounts received in year & available for funding	(3)
(191)	Balance as at 31 March	(194)

9.4 The Pension Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The 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. However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the Council makes employer's contributions to the pension fund or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pension Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the Council has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid. (See also Note 30 Pension)

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
48,762	Balance as at 1 April	53,613
3,390	Re-measurements of the net defined benefit liability/(asset)	(9,384)
5,526	Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account	5,737
(4,065)	Employers' pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(4,077)
53,613	Balance as at 31 March	45,889

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

9. Unusable Reserves (contd)

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

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
69	Balance as at 1 April	(826)
(895)	Amount by which council tax-income and non-domestic rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement is different from council tax and non-domestic rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	1,378
(826)	Balance as at 31 March	552

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

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000	£'000
433	Balance as at 1 April		393
(433)	Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	(393)	
393	Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	283	
(40)	Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from the remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements		(110)
393	Balance as at 31 March		283

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

10. Other Operating Expenditure

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
785	Payments to the Government Housing Capital Receipts Pool	880
0	Payments to the Government Housing Capital Receipts Pool - return of "one for one" receipts	3,840
(2,030)	Gains/losses on the disposal of non current assets	(4,409)
(1,245)	Total	311

11. Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure

2014/15 £'000		2015/16	
		£'000	£'000
7,249	Interest payable & similar charges		7,171
1,989	Pensions interest cost & expected return on pensions assets		1,661
(262)	Interest receivable & similar income		(325)
695	Expenditure in relation to investment properties and changes in their fair value		1,338
(5,198)	Income in relation to investment properties and changes in their fair value		(3,427)
	Trading Operations - Indoor Market		
(413)	Income from stall holders	(587)	
203	Expenditure	423	
(210)	Surplus taken to General Fund		(164)
4,263	Total	0	6,254

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

12. Taxation and Non Specific and Specific Grant Income

Government Grants and Contributions

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

- The Council will comply with the conditions attached to the payments , and
- the grants or contributions will be received – without requiring any impairment for capital contributions.

Amounts recognised as due to the Council are not credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement until conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied.

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

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

2014/15 £,000		2015/16 £,000
(4,856)	Council Tax Income	(4,894)
(17,793)	Non domestic rates retained income	(18,827)
15,934	Non domestic rates expenditure (tariff payment to DCLG)	16,238
(4,285)	Non ringfenced government grants	(3,999)
(8,563)	Capital grants and contributions	(2,064)
(19,563)	Total	(13,546)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

12. Taxation and Non Specific and Specific Grant Income (contd)

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

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
	Grants, Contributions credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income	
2,620	Revenue Support Grant	1,861
1,860	NDR Receipt from Pooling	2,589
116	Council Tax Reform	165
1,029	New Homes Bonus	1,269
61	Council Tax Freeze Grant	64
271	Disabled Facilities Grant	305
113	NDR Administration Grant	112
287	s31 Grant	456
6,953	Decent Homes Grant	0
16	Unfunded Burdens Grant	0
1,339	Other Capital Contributions	1,759
42	Other Government grants	71
14,707	Total Grants, Contributions credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income	8,651
	Credited to Services	
36,747	Department of Work and Pensions Grants for rebates	35,195
183	Discretionary Housing Payments	156
36,930	Total Grants, Contributions credited to Services	35,351

The Council has not received any material donations in 2015/16.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

13. Heritage Assets

A **heritage asset** will be recognised as an asset with historical, artistic, scientific, technological, geophysical or environmental qualities that is held and maintained principally for its contribution to knowledge and culture and is not being used for operational purposes.

Heritage assets are recognised and measured (including the treatment of revaluation gains and losses) in accordance with the Council's accounting policies on property, plant and equipment. However, where information on cost or value is not available, and the cost of obtaining the information outweighs the benefits to the users of the financial statements the asset will not be recognised on the balance sheet. Where that valuation is material these assets will be recognised as a separate class of asset – heritage asset on the face of the balance sheet. Where heritage assets are not recognised in the balance sheet appropriate disclosure is made in the notes to the financial statements.

Acquisitions of heritage assets will be recognised at cost. However, where an asset is donated or acquired for less than fair value the asset will be recognised at valuation.

Disposal proceeds are disclosed separately in the notes to the financial statements and are accounted for in accordance with statutory accounting requirements relating to capital expenditure and capital receipts.

Depreciation will not be applied where a heritage assets has an indefinite life, however where there is evidence of physical deterioration or doubts arise as to the authenticity of the asset, the value of the assets will be reviewed. In addition assets held at current value will be reviewed with sufficient frequency as to ensure that the valuation is up to date.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

13. Heritage Assets (contd)

Reconciliation of the carrying value of Heritage assets held by the Council

Cost or Valuation	Town Square £'000	War Memorial £'000	Exhibits £'000	Civic Regalia £'000	Total £'000
At 1 April 2015	833	53	200	53	1,139
Additions	0	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2016	833	53	200	53	1,139
Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment					
At 1 April 2015	(380)	(7)	0	0	(387)
Depreciation charge	(33)	(6)	0	0	(39)
At 31 March 2016	(413)	(13)	0	0	(426)
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2016	420	40	200	53	713
At 31 March 2015	453	46	200	53	752

The Council's collections of heritage assets are categorised as follows:

Town Square including Clock Tower: The town square includes the water feature and clock tower, the clock tower is a Grade II listed building.

Museum Collection: The museum collections include paintings, local history archives, Roman coin hoard from Chells, clocks, a bible from 1754 and a Chalice from 1572 from St Mary's in Aston. These items are reported as at their insurance valuation. The Council maintains an inventory of this collection however there is no readily available valuation of individual items.

The Council believes that the benefits of obtaining a valuation for these items to the user of the accounts would not justify the cost given the specialised nature of this archive. Items that form the museum collection are deemed to have indeterminate lives, therefore the Council does not consider it appropriate to depreciate these assets.

Statues and Sculptures: The Council has a number of statues and sculptures around the borough which were gifted by the Commission for New Towns to the Stevenage Development Corporation which is now Stevenage Borough Council.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

13. Heritage Assets (contd)

Public Art and Cultural Artefacts: The Council has a number of public art works around the borough, however does not hold readily available valuations.

There is no readily available valuation held by the Council for statues, sculptures, public work of art or cultural artefacts as no definitive market value for these types of assets exist as they are not normally traded. The Council believes that the benefits of obtaining a valuation for these items to the user of the accounts would not justify the cost given the specialised nature of these assets, as such the Council has not recognised these assets on the balance sheet.

War memorial: The Council has a war memorial classified as a heritage asset and is valued at historic cost on the balance sheet. In 2014/15 restoration work to enhance the war memorial was completed.

Civic Regalia: The Council holds civic regalia for use by the mayor and mayoress for official ceremonial purposes. These are reported at insurance valuation. Due to the nature of these assets the Council does not deem it appropriate to depreciate these assets.

Archaeological Sites including Six Hills Burial Site: The Council does not consider that reliable cost or valuation information can be obtained for its archaeological site at Six Hills Burial site. This is because of the diverse nature of the asset held and lack of comparable market values, consequently the Council does not recognise these assets on the balance sheet.

Historical valuations and valuation method of heritage assets is shown below.

Method of valuation	Heritage Assets				Total Heritage Assets £'000
	Town Square £'000	Museum Collection £'000	War Memorial £'000	Civic Regalia £'000	
Cost or Valuation	£833	0	£52	0	£885
Valued at Insurance Valuation	0	£200	0	£52	£252
	£833	£200	£52	£52	£1,137

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

14. Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE) – Updated 2015-16

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

Recognition: *expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of tangible non current assets is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that the future economic benefits or service potential will flow to the Council and that the cost can be measured reliably. Expenditure that secures but does not extend the previously assessed standards of performance of asset (e.g. repairs and maintenance) is charged to revenue as it is incurred.*

Measurement and valuations: *Non Current Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising, in addition to the purchase price, all expenditure that is directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended.*

Valuations of the Council's freehold and leasehold properties are co-ordinated by the Council's In-House Valuer in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as applied to the United Kingdom public sector and interpreted by the current CIPFA Code of Practice for Local Authority accounting. The valuations are made in accordance with the RICS Valuation – Professional Standards, January 2014 as published by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, in so far as that is consistent with the IFRS standards and CIPFA interpretation with the exception that not all properties were inspected. This was neither practical nor considered by the Valuer to be necessary for the purpose of the valuation. A proportion of the assets are re-valued at each 1 April as part of a continuous rolling programme of valuation. The rolling programme was recently amended to include valuations on opening balance in line with common practice. Non Current Assets are then carried in the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- *Council dwellings – current value determined using the basis of existing use value for social housing (EUV-SH)*
- *All other assets – current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value – EUV)*
- *infrastructure assets, community assets and assets under construction – depreciated historical cost.*

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

14. Property, Plant and Equipment (contd)

Property, Plant and Equipment – Updated 2015-16 (contd)

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. In 2012 properties last valued in 2008 on the DRC approach were re-valued as at 1 April 2012 having regard to RICS GN 6, titled "Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) method of Valuation for Financial Reporting". RICS GN6 requires Modern Equivalent (ME) to be considered if properties are valued using the DRC method and this was applied to last year's review.

Fair Value Hierarchy - To establish the fair value of its surplus assets, the Council takes into account a market participant's ability to generate economic benefits by using the asset in its highest and best use or by selling it to another market participant that would use the asset in its highest and best use.

The Council uses appropriate valuation techniques for each circumstance, maximising the use of relevant known data and minimising the use of estimates or unknowns. This takes into account the three levels of categories for inputs to valuations for fair value assets:

- Level 1 – quoted prices.
- Level 2 – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3 – unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

In regard to property assets the total value has been apportioned between its land and non-land (i.e. building) parts, with the latter representing the depreciable amount.

Where non-property assets (e.g. vehicles plant and equipment) have short useful lives, low value or both, depreciated historical cost is used as a proxy for current value.

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at current value are revalued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their current value, but as a minimum every five years. In addition should current valuations of similar class of asset suggest material differences in valuations, the entire class to which the asset belongs would be re-valued. Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains. Exceptionally, gains might be credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement where they arise from the reversal of an impairment loss previously charged to a service.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

14. Property, Plant and Equipment (contd)

Property, Plant and Equipment – Updated 2015-16 (contd)

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

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

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

New council house properties, either constructed or acquired at market value, are re-valued downwards on completion to recognise that Council Dwellings are valued on the balance sheet at existing use value-social housing (39% of the market value).

HRA properties are re-valued at 1 April on a Beacon Basis. Beacon types being defined by the number of bedrooms, the type of property, its area and whether it is a traditional or non-traditional build. So, with the exception of the properties which were converted into maisonettes and expenditure on replacing fully depreciated components, works done after this date have not been deemed to add value to the Beacon. The Council's housing stock was valued by external valuers Savills.

The revaluation process is co-ordinated by the Council's Estates Manager J Herbert MRICS. The latest valuation certificates are dated 1 April 2015 (including Housing Dwellings) and revaluations are carried out by both the Council's in-house professional staff and private firms of Chartered Surveyors.

A review is undertaken at year end to ensure valuations undertaken on 1 April are still appropriate as at the balance sheet date.

Impairment: Assets are assessed annually for any indication of impairment. 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:

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

14. Property, Plant and Equipment (contd)

Property, Plant and Equipment – Updated 2015-16 (contd)

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

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

Depreciation: Properties classified PPE are valued on the basis of Current Value (Existing Use Value (EUV)) and the total value has been apportioned between its land and non-land (i.e. building) parts, with the latter representing the depreciable amount. Depreciation is provided for on all Property, Plant and Equipment assets by the systematic allocation of their depreciable amounts over their useful lives. Exception is made for assets without a determinable finite useful lives (i.e. freehold land and certain community assets) and assets not yet available for use (i.e. assets under construction). Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- dwellings and other buildings – straight-line allocation over the life of the property as estimated by the valuer
- vehicles, plant and equipment – a percentage of the value of each class of assets in the Balance Sheet, as advised by a suitably qualified officer
- infrastructure – straight-line allocation over 25 years.

The useful economic lives for property, plant and equipment which are depreciated, are:

Council Dwellings	up to 50 years
Operational buildings	up to 50 years
Vehicles, plant and equipment	3-7 years
Computer Equipment	3-7 years

Componentisation: Where an asset has major components with different estimated useful lives, these are depreciated separately.

The criteria applied by the Council for componentisation, is that where the cost of a component exceeds 15% of the cost of the asset, and there is a significant difference in depreciable life of a component, compared to the asset as a whole, the Council will

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

14. Property, Plant and Equipment (contd)

Property, Plant and Equipment – Updated 2015-16 (contd)

componentise the asset, to ensure no material distortions in either the value of the asset or the charge made for use of the asset.

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. The Council's housing stock has been accounted for using componentisation since April 2011.

Charges to Revenue For Non-Current Assets - *Service, support services and trading accounts are debited with the following amounts to record the cost of holding non-current assets during the year:*

- *depreciation attributable to the assets used by the relevant service*
- *revaluation and impairment losses on assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which losses can be written off.*
- *amortisation of intangible non-current assets attributable to the service.*

The Council is not required to raise council tax to cover depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisations. Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses and amortisations are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund Balance by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

Depreciation charged to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is not reversed out and is now a cost to the HRA. HRA depreciation transferred to the Major Repairs Reserve to fund future HRA capital investment

The valuations provided for non-housing stock assume that there are no encumbrances to the Council's Current Value in the use of those assets. It is however noted that there was a prohibited transfer period of five years which expired on the 26 May 2014 on the Business Technology Centre. Furthermore any disposal before 29 November 2022 will trigger a claw-back to East of England Development Agency (EEDA) in accordance with a formula. There is no intention on the part of the Council to dispose of this asset.

The inputs to inform the Council's Surplus Asset valuation have been determined at level 3 as per the fair value hierarchy (see also policy detail on page 65).

Impairment Losses

During 2015/16 (as in 2014/15) the Council did not incur any losses as a result of impairment. The table overleaf shows the movement in valuations of property, plant and equipment.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

14. Property, Plant and Equipment (contd).

Movement of Property, Plant and Equipment in 2015/16

	Council Dwellings	Other Land & Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, & Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total Property, Plant & Equipment
Cost or Valuation	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
At 1 April 2015	512,606	114,049	21,567	5,067	3,192	2,300	1,253	660,034
Additions	19,260	1,588	2,003	195	0	0	2,385	25,431
Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment written off to cost/valuation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	6,385	3,935	0	0	0	65	0	10,385
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	44,095	0	0	0	0	0	0	44,095
Derecognition - Disposals	(8,402)	(4)	(230)	0	0	0	0	(8,636)
Derecognition - Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assets reclassified (to)/from Investment Properties	0	0	0	0	0	240	0	240
Other movements in Cost or Valuation	110	(360)	78	0	0	250	(5)	73
At 31 March 2016	574,054	119,208	23,418	5,262	3,192	2,855	3,633	731,622
Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment								
At 1 April 2015	(15,666)	(5,871)	(18,767)	(2,267)	(499)	(72)	0	(43,142)
Depreciation charge	(10,618)	(3,798)	(1,021)	(457)	(91)	(38)	0	(16,023)
Depreciation written out to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	5,687	(560)	0	0	0	13	0	5,140
Depreciation written out to Revaluation Reserve	0	5,652	0	0	0	29	0	5,681
Assets reclassified (to)/from Investment Properties	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Derecognition - Disposals	814	0	225	0	0	0	0	1,039
Derecognition - Other	0	1	(1)	0	0	(1)	0	(1)
At 31 March 2016	(19,783)	(4,576)	(19,564)	(2,724)	(590)	(69)	0	(47,306)
Net Book Value								
At 31 March 2016	554,271	114,632	3,854	2,538	2,602	2,786	3,633	684,316
At 1 April 2015	496,940	108,178	2,800	2,800	2,693	2,228	1,253	616,892

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

14. Property, Plant and Equipment (contd).

Preceding movements of Property, Plant and Equipment in 2014/15.

Cost or Valuation	Council Dwellings	Other Land & Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, & Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total Property, Plant & Equipment
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
At 1 April 2014	490,036	106,490	21,087	4,685	3,192	2,295	806	628,591
Additions	15,551	3,617	480	382	0	0	447	20,477
Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment written off to cost/valuation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	0	3,937	0	0	0	0	0	3,937
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	15,969	110	0	0	0	5	0	16,084
Derecognition - Disposals	(8,950)	(105)	0	0	0	0	0	(9,055)
Derecognition - Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assets reclassified (to)/from Held for Sale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other movements in Cost or Valuation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2015	512,606	114,049	21,567	5,067	3,192	2,300	1,253	660,034
Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment								
At 1 April 2014	(11,776)	(7,470)	(17,496)	(1,873)	(408)	(34)	0	(39,057)
Depreciation charge	(10,652)	(3,472)	(1,271)	(394)	(91)	(38)	0	(15,918)
Depreciation written out to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	5,755	737	0	0	0	0	0	6,492
Depreciation written out to Revaluation Reserve	0	4,330	0	0	0	0	0	4,330
Assets reclassified (to)/from Held for Sale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Derecognition - Disposals	1,007	4	0	0	0	0	0	1,011
Assets Derecognised - Reclassified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2015	(15,666)	(5,871)	(18,767)	(2,267)	(499)	(72)	0	(43,142)
Net Book Value								
At 31 March 2015	496,940	108,178	2,800	2,800	2,693	2,228	1,253	616,892
At 31 March 2014	478,260	99,020	3,591	2,812	2,784	2,261	806	589,534

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

15. Investment Property

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

Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value, based on the amount at which the asset could be exchanged between knowledgeable parties at arms-length. Properties are not depreciated but are revalued annually according to the market conditions at the year end. Gains and losses on revaluation are posted to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The same treatment is applied to gains and losses on disposal.

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

Fair Value Hierarchy

To establish the fair value of its investment properties, the Council takes into account a market participant's ability to generate economic benefits by using the asset in its highest and best use or by selling it to another market participant that would use the asset in its highest and best use.

The Council uses appropriate valuation techniques for each circumstance, maximising the use of relevant known data and minimising the use of estimates or unknowns. This takes into account the three levels of categories for inputs to valuations for fair value assets:

- Level 1 – quoted prices.
- Level 2 – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3 – unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

15. Investment Property (contd)

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
<u>16,747</u>	Balance at start of year	19,547
	Additions:	
6	Subsequent expenditure	20
(255)	Disposals	0
<u>3,049</u>	Net gains/(losses) from fair value adjustments	663
	Transfers:	
<u>0</u>	To HRA Surplus Assets	(240)
<u>19,547</u>	Balance at end of year	19,990

The Council's investment property portfolio has been assessed as Level 3 for valuation purposes.

Valuation Techniques Used to Determine Level 3 Fair Values for Investment Properties:

The values have been derived from a desktop valuation taking into account existing lease terms and rentals, market rentals and yields, and then adjusted to reflect the nature and profile of the particular asset valued.

The Council's commercial property portfolio located within the Borough boundary are measured using the income approach, where the expected cash flows from the property are discounted at an appropriate discount rate (reflecting the nature and risk profile of the particular asset valued), to establish the present value of the net income stream.

The Council's commercial property portfolio is therefore categorised as Level 3 in the fair value hierarchy as the measurement technique uses significant unobservable inputs to determine the fair value measurements (and there is no reasonably available information that indicates that market participants would use different assumptions).

There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year for investment properties.

Highest and Best Use of Investment Properties

In estimating the fair value of the Council's investment properties, the highest and best use of the properties is deemed to be their current use.

Valuers

The investment property portfolio has been valued at 31 March 2016 in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The valuation process is co-ordinated by the Council's Estates Manager J Herbert MRICS. The revaluations are carried out by the Council's in-house professional staff, Jones Lang La Salle and DVS Property Services

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

15. Investment Property (contd)

The valuations assume that there are no restrictions on the Council's ability to realise the value inherent in its investment property or on the Council's right to the remittance on income and the proceeds of disposal. The Council has no contractual obligations to purchase, construct or develop investment property. Nor does the Council have any contractual obligations to repair, maintain or enhance the investment properties with the exception of a very small proportion of the Council's investment property portfolio where the leases are internal repairing leases and the Council is responsible for the external fabric of the building.

In 2015/16 the Council purchased 2 Town Square in Stevenage town centre. Although a commercial building this purchase was made for strategic planning reasons and not held for investment income and therefore is not classified as an investment property, but included under land and buildings on the balance sheet.

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

2014/15 £,000		2015/16 £,000
2,149	Rental Income from Investment Property	2,164
(695)	Less direct operating expenses arising from Investment Property	(738)
1,454	Net gain	1,427

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

16. Intangible Assets

Intangible Non Current Assets - Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have physical substance but are identifiable and controlled by the Council (e.g. software licences) is capitalised when it will bring benefits to the Council for more than one financial year. The balance is amortised on a straight line basis to the Information Communications Technology (ICT) service revenue account and then recharged out across the service headings in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement over the economic life of the asset to reflect the pattern of consumption of benefits. All software is given a finite useful life, based on an assessment of the period that the software is expected to be of use to the Council - usually 5 years

Amounts are only revalued where the fair value of the assets held can be determined by reference to an active market. No such assets exist for this Council.

Any losses from impairment are recognised in the ICT service revenue account and the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Any gain or loss from the disposal or abandonment of an asset is posted to the other operating expenditure line on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where expenditure qualifies as capital expenditure for statutory purposes, amortisation, impairment losses and disposal gains and losses are not permitted to have an impact on the General Fund Balance and are therefore reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement and Capital adjustment Account and (for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000) the Capital Receipts Reserve.

HRA intangible assets are depreciated in accordance with the council's policy but the charge is not reversed out but forms part of the transfer to the Major Repairs Reserve.

The intangible assets include a number of services such as 'business objects' which is a report and project modelling tool. There was a total amortisation of £55,545 for all intangible assets charged to revenue in 2015/16. There are no items of capitalised software that are individually material to the financial statements. The movement on Intangible Asset balances during the year is as follows:

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

16. Intangible Assets (contd)

2014/15 £000's		2015/16	
		£000's	£000's
	Balance as at 1 April		
370	Gross carrying amounts		607
(164)	Accumulated amortisation		(195)
206	Net carrying amount at 1 April		412
	Additions:		
237	Purchases	210	
0	Transfers to Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	(73)	
(31)	Amortisation for the period	(56)	
206			81
412	Balance at 31 March		493
	Comprising:		
607	Gross carrying amounts		744
(195)	Accumulated amortisation		(251)
412			493

17. Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing

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

No such expenditure was incurred by the HRA in 2015/16.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

17. Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing (contd)

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the following table, together with resources that have been used to finance it. No assets were acquired through finance leases or PFI/PP contracts. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets used by the Council, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Council that has yet to be financed. The CFR is analysed in the second part of this note.

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
229,397	Opening Capital Financing requirement	230,082
	<i>Capital investment :</i>	
19,779	Property, Plant & Equipment	21,970
6	Investment Property	5
41	Heritage Assets	0
377	Infrastructure Assets	195
479	Revenue expenditure funded from Capital under statute Assets under construction	1,482
560	Assets under construction	2,481
21,242		26,133
	<i>Sources of Finance :</i>	
(2,258)	Capital Receipts - general	(3,001)
(347)	Capital Receipts - New Build	(1,094)
(9,033)	Government Grants & Other Contributions	(2,175)
(3,049)	Major Repairs Reserve	(18,533)
	Sums set aside from Revenue:	
(5,247)	Direct revenue contributions	(1,331)
(623)	MRP and Loan Principal	(6,154)
(20,557)		(32,288)
230,082	Closing Capital Financing requirement	223,927
	<i>Explanation of movement in year:</i>	
0	Increase in underlying need to borrow (supported by government financial assistance)	0
(685)	Increase/(decrease) in underlying need to borrow (unsupported by government financial assistance)	(6,155)
(685)	Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing requirement	(6,155)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

17. Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing contd.

As at 31 March 2016 significant commitments for major projects already underway included:-

	£'000
Decent Homes and major repairs	11,658
Archer Road Redevelopment	2,645
Housing Regeneration	1,707
Total	16,010

(As at 31 March 2015 significant commitments for major capital projects totalled £15,439,000)



New homes at Wedgewood Way for Stevenage Borough Council tenants in 2013/14.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

18. Leases

The Council accounts for **leases** as finance leases when substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment (PPE) from the lessor to the lessee. All other leases are classified as operating leases.

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

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

The Council as Lessee

Finance Leases: PPE held under finance leases is recognised in the Balance Sheet at the commencement date of the lease at its fair value measured at the lease's inception (or the present value of the minimum lease payments if lower). The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor. Initial direct costs of the Council are added to the carrying amount of the asset. Premiums paid on entry into the lease are applied to writing down the lease liability.

Lease payments are apportioned between:

- A charge for the acquisition of the interest in the PPE applied to write down the lease liability, and
- A finance charge (debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES).

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

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

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

18. Leases (contd.)

Operating leases: Rentals paid under operating lease are charged to the CIES as an expense of the service benefitting from the use of the leased PPE. Charges are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, even if this does not match the pattern of payments.

The Council as Lessor

Finance Leases: Where the Council grants a finance lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, the relevant asset is written out of the Balance Sheet as a disposal. At the commencement of the lease the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet (whether PPE or Assets held for sale) is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the CIES as part of the gain or loss on disposal. A gain is matched by a lease (long term debtor) asset in the Balance Sheet.

Lease rentals receivable are apportioned between:

- A charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property – applied to write down the lease debtor, and
- Finance income (credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES).

The gain credited to the CIES on disposal is not permitted by statute to increase the General Fund Balance and is required to be treated as a capital receipt. Where a premium has been received, this is posted out of the General Fund Balance to the Capital Receipts Reserve in the Movement in reserves Statement. Where the amount due in relation to the lease asset is to be settled by the payment of rentals in future financial years, this is posted out of the General Fund balance to the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

When future rentals are received, the element for the capital receipt for the disposal is used to write down the lease debtor. At this point, the deferred capital receipts are transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve.

The written-off value of disposals is not charged against council tax, as the cost of non-current assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing.

Amounts are therefore appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the General Fund in the Movement on Reserves Statement.

Operating Leases: Where the Council grants an operating lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, the asset is retained on the Balance Sheet. Rental income for investment properties is credited to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the CIES.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

18. Leases (contd.)

Operating Leases

Plant and Equipment: In 2015/16 the Council had use of multi-functional printing devices and 13 vehicle leases. The annual amount charged under these arrangements in 2015/16 was £79,523 (2014/15 £157,185). Future lease payments due are shown in the table below:

31 March 2015			Lease Costs Payable	31 March 2016		
Printers £'000	Assigned Vehicles £'000	Total £'000		Printers £'000	Assigned Vehicles £'000	Total £'000
33	44	77	Not later than one year	25	37	62
25	7	32	Later than one year and not later than five years	0	0	0

Property: Council as Lessor - the authority currently leases 363 premises which include 184 shops, 35 workshops, 13 public houses, 11 surgeries and 120 miscellaneous. These leases are accounted for on an operating lease basis. The rental receivable in 2015/16 was £3,293,358, (2014/15 £3,115,444).

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

31 March 2015 £'000	Future minimum lease payments	31 March 2016 £'000
3,017	Not later than one year	3,131
12,068	Later than one year and not later than five years	12,523
45,254	Later than five years	46,961

Finance Leases : Property, Plant, and Equipment: There were no assets held under finance leases by the Council as at 1 April 2015. This is with the exception of de minimis lease arrangements in respect of Timebridge and Westgate car park. As these involve only a peppercorn rent and the assets are correctly shown within the Council's asset base, no further accounting adjustments have been made.

The Council was not a lessor in respect of any assets disclosed within the Non-current Assets, except where an operating lease arrangement has already been identified, and disclosed.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

19. Financial Instruments

Financial Assets (updated 2015-16)

Financial assets are classified into two types:

- *loans and receivables – assets that have fixed or determinable payments but are not quoted in an active market*
- *available-for-sale assets – assets that have a quoted market price and/or do not have fixed or determinable payments (the Council does not directly hold such assets)*

Loans and receivables are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. For most of the loans that the Council has made, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable (plus accrued interest) and interest credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount receivable for the year in the loan agreement.

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are based on the carrying value of the liability, multiplied by the effective interest rate for the instrument. For most of the borrowings that the Council has, this means that the amount in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable (plus accrued interest). Interest chargeable to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount payable for the year in the loan agreement.

Fair Value Hierarchy

The Council is required to classify the valuation of financial instruments into three levels, according to the quality and reliability of information used to determine fair values.

Level 1 - where fair values are derived from unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (quoted equities, quoted fixed securities, quoted index linked securities and unit trusts).

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

19. Financial Instruments

Financial Assets(updated 2015-16) contd.

Fair Value Hierarchy

Level 2 - where market prices are not available, for example, where an instrument is traded in a market that is not considered to be active or where valuation techniques are used to determine fair value and where these techniques use inputs that are based significantly on observable market data.

Level 3 – where at least one input that could have a significant effect on the instrument's valuation is not based on observable market data. Such instruments would include unquoted equity investments and hedge fund of funds, neither of which the Council currently invests in.

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

- credit risk – the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the authority
- liquidity risk – the possibility that the authority might not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments
- market risk – the possibility that financial loss might arise for the authority as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates and stock market movements

The Council's overall risk management programme focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the resources available to fund services. Risk management is carried out by the Council's treasury team, under policies approved by the Council (24 February 2016) 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.

The Annual Treasury Management Strategy is approved by the Council in the February prior to the financial year to which it relates. It includes the Prudential Indicators, the key objectives of which are

- To ensure that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
- To ensure treasury management decisions accord with good professional practice and in a manner that supports affordability, prudence and sustainability.
- To be consistent with and support local strategic planning, local asset management and optional appraisal.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

19. Financial Instruments (contd)

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy applicable from 1 April 2015 complies fully with the code of practice.

Following the banking crisis which saw credit rating downgrades to the majority of commercial and high street banks made it increasingly difficult to place the Council's surplus cash balances without compromising credit risk (exposure to the risk of the counterparty defaulting) and/or market risk (interest rate risk whereby the interest on an investment falls below market value).

Credit Risk: Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the authority's customers. Deposits are not made with banks and financial institutions unless they meet the Council's criteria as specified in the Treasury Management Strategy. The Council's counter party limits were reviewed in 2015/16 due to higher cash balances being held and a two tier limit was approved with a maximum limit of £8,000,000 to one institution or banking group, reducing to £5,000,000 when overall cash balances fall below £30,000,000. Further details on the Council's Treasury Management Strategy can be found on Stevenage Borough Council's website.

The following analysis summarises the authority's potential maximum exposure to credit risk, based on experience of default and uncollectability over previous financial years, adjusted to reflect current market conditions.

	Amount at 31 March 2016 £'000	Historical experience of default %	Historical experience adjusted for market conditions at 31 March 2016 %	Estimated maximum exposure to default & uncollectability 31 March 2016 £'000	Estimated maximum exposure to default & uncollectability 31 March 2015 £'000
Financial Institutions	A	B	C	(AxC)	
Banks & Building Societies	29,131	0	0		0
Other Local Authorities	14,166	0	0		0
Other Counter parties	7,856	0	0		0
Trade Debtors	645	20%	31%	200	200
Total	51,798			200	200

The historical experience of default for trade debtors is based on the debt provision calculated as at 31st March 2016. The calculation is based on the age of the trade debtor and debt type. The Council does not generally allow credit for customers, such that £466,000 of the £644,000 trade debtors balance has passed its due date for payment. The past due amount can be analysed by age and service in the following table;

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

19. Financial Instruments (contd)

Age of Sundry Debt	Estates Services £'000	Direct Services (incl Recycling) £'000	Planning £'000	Other £'000	Total Trade Debtors £'000	Housing Related £'000	Total Debtors £'000
less than 3 months	59	84	5	45	193	636	829
Over Term:							
3-6 months	14	1	2	9	26	295	321
6 months - 1 year	10	1	1	28	40	569	609
over 1 year	178	0	14	194	386	2,182	2,568
Total trade debtors over term	202	2	17	231	452	3,046	3,498
Total Trade Debtors 31 March 2016	261	86	22	276	645	3,682	4,327
Total Trade Debtors 31 March 2015	268	101	33	242	644	3,265	3,909

Deferred Capital Receipts are amounts derived from sales of assets that will be received in instalments over agreed periods of time. They arise principally from mortgages on sales of Council houses, which form the main element of Mortgages under Long Term Debtors. As at 31 March 2016 Deferred Capital Receipts were £194,272, (31 March 2015, £191,368).

These figures do not include debt relating to Council Tax or Non-domestic Rates as these are considered to be statutory debts. Debt relating to Council house rents is disclosed in Note HRA2 Rent and Supported Housing Arrears.

Liquidity risk: The Council's cash flow is managed so that cash is available as needed. If the unexpected happens the Council has ready access to borrowings from the money markets and the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB).

Interest rate risk: The Council is exposed to significant risk in terms of its exposure to interest rate movements on its investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Council. For instance, a rise in interest rates would have the following effects on Stevenage Borough Council: Investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise, whilst the fixed term investment/borrowing cost/income will remain constant.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

19. Financial Instruments contd.

Changes in interest receivable on variable rate investments will be posted to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and affect the General Fund Balance. Movements in the fair value of fixed rate investments will be reflected in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The Council has long term debt of £209,494,947; the 2016/17 Treasury Management Strategy (approved February 2016), allows an operational boundary for external debt of £219,086,000 (operational boundary for 205/16 was £219,740,000). The treasury management team has an active strategy for assessing interest rate exposure that feeds into the setting of the annual budget and is used to update the budget quarterly during the year. This allows any adverse changes to be accommodated. The analysis will also advise whether new borrowing taken out is fixed or variable.

According to this assessment (as at 31 March 2016), if interest rates had been 1% higher with all other variables held constant, the financial effect would be:

	£'000
Increase in interest receivable on investments	(614)
Impact on Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	(614)
Share of overall impact credited to the HRA	476
Impact on Movement in Reserves Statement	(138)

The impact of a 1% reduction in interest rates would be as above but with movements being reversed. The above represents that the cost will be less than the payment due to the HRA. The PWLB borrowings undertaken to date are all fixed rate, therefore there would be no impact from a rise in interest rates, other than the rate at which borrowing which has not yet been physically taken could be borrowed at in future.

Price risk The Council does not invest in equity shares and does not have any shareholdings. (The Municipal Bond purchased in 2014/15 (£10,000) is not held for trading purposes but to support and have access to preferential borrowing rates from the Municipal Bond Agency, set up by the Local Government Association. As such this transaction has been classed as a long term investment.)

Foreign exchange risk: The Council has no financial assets or liabilities denominated in foreign currencies and thus has no exposure to loss arising from movements in exchange rates.

Financial Instruments: Councils are required to define all financial instruments disclosed in the Balance Sheet into further categories. For this purpose the accrued interest receivable is included in this note within the principal financial asset. The items disclosed in the Balance Sheet are made up of the following categories of financial instruments:

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

19. Financial Instruments contd.

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

	Long Term		Current	
	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2016 £'000	31 March 2015 £'000	31 March 2016 £'000
Investments				
Investment (LGA Municipal Bond)	10	10	0	0
Loans and Receivables	2,000	4,000	18,341	32,986
Total Investments	2,010	4,010	18,341	32,986
Debtors (including Cash and Bank)				
<i>Loans and Receivables comprising:</i>				
Mortgages	150	157	34	30
Car Loans	0	0	1	1
Housing Rents Leaseholders	0	0	580	551
Other debtors	0	0	5,466	4,241
Cash & Bank	0	0	28,266	14,899
Local Authority Mortgage Scheme	1,500	1,500	0	0
Total Debtors	1,650	1,657	34,347	19,722
Borrowings				
Financial liabilities at amortised cost	209,757	209,494	5,926	403
Total Borrowings	209,757	209,494	5,926	403
Creditors				
Receipts in Advance	0	0	1,888	986
Sundry Creditors	0	762	7,496	7,468
Local Authority Mortgage Scheme	1,007	1,007	0	0
Total Creditors	1,007	1,769	9,384	8,454

Schedule of PWLB loan repayments

less than one year	£263,158
1-5 years	£4,662,053
6-10 years	£1,157,895
10 -20 years	£139,363,000
20-30 years	£62,811,000
Total	£208,257,105

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

19. Financial Instruments contd.

The gains and losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement in relation to financial instruments are made up as follows:

31 March 2015			31 March 2016			
Financial Liabilities Measured at Amortised Cost	Financial Assets: Loans and Receivables	Total		Financial Liabilities Measured at Amortised Cost	Financial Assets: Loans and Receivables	Total
£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000
7,245	0	7,245	Interest Expense	7,193	0	7,193
7,245	0	7,245	Total expense in Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	7,193	0	7,193
0	(263)	(263)	Interest income	0	(439)	(439)
0	(263)	(263)	Total income in Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	(439)	(439)
7,245	(263)	6,982	Net gain/(loss) for the year	7,193	(439)	6,754

Financial assets and financial liabilities are represented by loans and receivables are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. Their fair value is assessed as the amount for which an asset could be exchanged, or a liability settled, between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arms length transaction, using the following assumptions:

Transaction costs on all financial liabilities and financial assets are immaterial (transaction costs do not include internal administrative costs)

- Interest payable and receivable reflects the market rates
- No early repayment or impairment is recognised
- Where an instrument will mature in the next 12 months, carrying amount is assumed to approximate to fair value
- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced amount.

The financial liabilities, financial assets represented by loans and receivables and long term debtors and creditors are carried in the balance sheet. Their fair values are calculated as follows:

The Valuation Techniques Used to Determine Level 2 Fair Values for Investments:

The fair value of the investments have been provided by Capita Asset Services and are based on a financial model valuation which uses market information for similar instruments.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

19. Financial Instruments contd.

31 March 2015		31 March 2016	
Carrying amount £'000	Fair Value £'000	Carrying amount £'000	Fair Value £'000
Investments			
15,826	15,816	25,479	25,518
33,166	33,166	25,673	25,672
48,992	48,982	51,152	51,190
Loan Debt			
215,683	260,402	209,897	254,171
215,683	260,402	209,897	254,171

Valuation Techniques Used to Determine Level 2 Fair Values for Public Works Loan Board (PWL) Loans:

The fair value of PWLB loans of £254.171million 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 PWLB redemption interest rates. The difference between the carrying amount and the fair value measures the additional interest that the Council will pay over the remaining term of the loans under the agreements with the PWLB, against what would be paid if the loans were at prevailing market rates.

The fair value of loan debt is higher than the carrying amount because the council's portfolio of loans includes fixed rate loans where the prevailing rates at the Balance Sheet date are lower than the interest rate payable. The fair value includes the premium that would be payable should the council reschedule its debt.

However, the Council 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 commitments for fixed rate loans is to compare the terms of these loans with the new borrowing rates available from the PWLB. If a value is calculated on this basis, the carrying amount of £209.897million would be valued at £224.06million. But if the Council 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 £44.274million for the additional interest that will not now be paid. The exit price for the PWLB loans including the penalty charge would be £254.171million.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

20. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and Cash Equivalents are represented by notes and coins held by the Council and deposits available on demand. Cash Equivalents are represented by short-term, highly liquid investments that can be readily converted (within seven days) into known amounts of cash and that are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

In the Cash Flow Statement and Balance Sheet cash and cash equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts that are repayable on demand and where they form an integral part of the Council's cash management.

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

31 March 2015 £'000		31 March 2016 £'000
10	Cash held by the Authority	10
(394)	Bank Current Accounts	722
28,650	Investment Cash Equivalents	14,167
28,266	Total Cash & Cash Equivalents	14,899

21. Short Term Debtors

The Council's debtors (net of the provision for bad and doubtful debts) are as follows:

31 March 2015 £'000		31 March 2016 £'000
269	Central Government Bodies	913
296	Other Local Authorities	434
580	Housing Rents & Leaseholders	551
926	Collection Fund	444
5,465	Other Debtors	4,241
7,536	Total	6,583

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

22. Creditors and Receipts in Advance

Employee accrued benefits payable - Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year end. They include such benefits as wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave and are recognised as an expense for service in the year in which employees render service to the Council. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlement (or any form of leave e.g. flexi time) earned by employees but not taken before the year-end which employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the salary rate applicable in the following year, being the year in which the employee takes the benefit. Stevenage Borough Council policy states that no more than five days annual leave should be carried over into the next financial year unless permission is granted in exceptional circumstances. The flexi time scheme is available to the majority of employees except in services areas where, due to the nature of the work, it is not possible for employees to fully participate.

31 March 2015 £'000		31 March 2016	
	Creditors:	£'000	£'000
5,473	Central Government Bodies	8,268	
532	Other Local Authorities	522	
393	Accumulated leave	283	
7,103	Other Entities & Individuals	7,185	
13,501	Total Creditors		16,258
	Receipts in Advance:		
125	Other Local Authorities	434	
643	Housing	719	
226	Tenants (redecorating scheme)	226	
554	Collection Fund	536	
1,888	Other Entities & Individuals	986	
3,436	Total Receipts in Advance		2,901
16,937	Total		19,159

The Council has two long term creditors:

Hertfordshire County Council - this relates to the County Council's contribution to the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme of £1,000,000 plus interest due on this advance. This advance will be repayable at the end of the scheme.

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) – this relates to a grant to purchase a town centre regeneration asset (£762,488) which will be repayable in 2021/2022 on completion of the regeneration plan.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

23. Inventories

Inventories (stock) are included in the Balance Sheet. Stocks are valued at the latest purchase price paid. The Council does not comply with IFRS which requires stocks to be shown at the lower of costs or current replacement cost, however, the effect of the different treatment is not significant. Work in progress on uncompleted jobs is valued at cost price.

	Grounds Maintenance £'000	Building Maintenance £'000	Fuel £'000	Tyres £'000	Other £'000	Total £'000
Balance as at 1 April 2015	73	44	21	0	50	188
Purchases	249	40	383	72	127	871
Recognises as an expense in the year	(288)	(33)	(392)	(59)	(122)	(894)
Balance at 31 March 2016	34	51	12	13	55	165

24. Assets held for sale

Disposals and Non-Current Assets Held For Sale: Where it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than continued use, it is reclassified as an asset held for sale. The asset is revalued at that point. Any subsequent gains and losses are posted to Other Operating Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Assets held for sale are only recognised where a property is being actively marketed, and is likely to result in a probable sale within 12 months of the balance sheet date.

A reasonable assessment can be made of General Fund disposals. However, for HRA Council dwellings, at the balance sheet date, the Council can not reliably estimate specific disposals for the following 12 months. For example Right to Buy requests are received from tenants which may not result in a subsequent sale. As the numbers involved are not material, Right to Buy properties which are nearing completion of a sale are not recognised as Assets held for sale and no adjustment is made in the accounts for these. Fair value gains are only recognised up to the amount of any previously recognised losses, recognised in the revenue account.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

24. Assets held for sale (contd)

Disposals and Non-Current Assets Held For Sale (contd)

Fair value gains are only recognised up to the amount of any previously recognised losses, recognised in the revenue account.

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

Amounts in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. With the introduction of Self-financing in April 2012 a new government calculation was introduced to apportion right to buy receipts due from sales of the Council's housing stock. The Council agreed to participate in the new scheme that enabled the Council to retain a proportion of the receipts that can only be used for new build provision.

Under the new scheme a proportion of the HRA right to buy receipts go to the government. The Council then retains the remainder of the receipts to cover four elements; administration costs, allowable debt, a capped share of the receipt for the local authority, and an allowance for new build provision. There is a duty to use the element retained for new build provision within three years, funding up to a maximum of 30% of the cost of any individual new build scheme. Other housing receipts from land may be fully retained by the Council if spent on affordable housing, regeneration or repayment of HRA debt. The capital receipts retained by the Council are required to be credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve and used for capital expenditure.

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

Pre-Sale Expenses and Disposal costs: *The Council is able to offset costs incidental to disposals against the capital receipt. This is restricted for General Fund disposals to a maximum of 4% of the capital receipt. Any costs not covered by a separate agreement with the purchaser to meet the Council's revenue costs are considered for this treatment.*

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

24. Assets held for sale (contd)

31 March 2015 £'000		31 March 2016 £'000
0	Balance at start of year	1,550
1,550	Transfers from surplus assets	0
0	Assets sold	0
1,550	Balance at year end	1,550

25. Provisions

***Provisions** are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by transfer of economic benefits, but where timing of the transfer is uncertain. The Council's policy is to assume all transfers of economic benefit will be made within 12 months. The Council recognises that on rare occasions a provision is utilised after 12 months (for example an insurance provision), however these instances do not materially alter the financial statements. Provisions are charged to the appropriate service account in the year that the Council becomes aware of the obligation, based on the best estimate at the balance sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation.*

Where payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision set up in the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed and where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will not now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service revenue account.

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

Impairment for doubtful debts are separately disclosed against debtors (Note21).

As at the 31 March 2016 the Council had provisions totalling £3,772,263 of which £569,724 related to insurance claims (31 March 2015, £4,003,154, of which £715,051 related to insurance).

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

25. Provisions (contd)

The **insurance provision** provides for excesses relating to known claims as analysed in the following table:

31 March 2015 £'000	Claim Type	31 March 2016 £'000
608	Public Liability	446
39	Employers Liability	24
1	Motor	5
24	General Properties	74
43	Housing Properties	21
715	Total	570

Organisational Change Provision: This provision was established to meet the costs arising from service efficiencies (identified as part of the budget setting process and service reviews).

Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) Provision: MMI suffered substantial losses between 1990 and 1992 and these losses reduced MMI's net assets to a level below the minimum regulatory solvency requirement. In September 1992 MMI went in to "run off", and ceased to renew or take on new general insurance work. If a solvent "run off" can not be achieved the Council may have to repay part of the claims already settled. In 2015/16 an increase in the provision for the Council's historic insurance claims with MMI was made.

NDR Appeals Provision: Business Rate Payers are entitled to appeal against the rateable value allocated to it by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). From 1 April 2013 onwards, in the event that the appeal is successful, the Council is responsible for the Business Rate repayment to the business. This provision has been made based on the expected outcome of the appeals outstanding with the VOA as at 31 March 2016.

BTC Roof Provision: Following a survey of the roof structure at the Business Technology Centre major repairs were anticipated in 2015/16. However following further surveys the remedial works were covered under the management agreement and the provision was returned to services.

Other Provisions: All other provisions are individually insignificant.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

25. Provisions (contd)

	Insurance Provision £'000	Implementation of Single Status £'000	Organisation change £'000	Municipal Mutual Insurance £'000	BTC Roof Provision £'000	NDR Appeals £'000	Other Provisions £'000	Total £'000
Balance as at 31 March 2014	(856)	(1,874)	(348)	(47)	0	(1,430)	(227)	(4,782)
Additional Provisions made in 2014/15	(271)	0	(423)	0	(120)	(2,026)	2	(2,838)
Amounts Used in 2014/15	412	928	319	0	0	521	5	2,185
Unused Amounts reversed in 2014/15	0	946	0	0	0	486	0	1,432
Balance as at 31 March 2015	(715)	0	(452)	(47)	(120)	(2,449)	(220)	(4,003)
Additional Provisions made in 2015/16	(196)	0	(342)	(27)	0	(753)	(31)	(1,349)
Amounts Used in 2015/16	341	0	345	0	0	240	157	1,083
Unused Amounts reversed in 2015/16	0	0	107	0	120	238	32	497
Balance as at 31 March 2016	(570)	0	(342)	(74)	0	(2,724)	(62)	(3,772)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

26. Amounts Reported for Resource Allocation Decisions

Segmental Reporting - As part of the Council's budget monitoring process Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports are presented to the Senior Management Board and the Council's Executive.

The Council's Budget and Policy Framework empowers the Executive to approve changes up to £400,000 to the General Fund net budget, £250,000 to the Housing Revenue Account and on Capital Programme where scheme changes would require capital receipt funding or borrowing of up to £250,000. Any budget adjustment greater than these thresholds require Council approval.

Within these limits the Executive act as Chief Operating Decision Maker in approving changes to the budgets, beyond these limits Council acts as the Chief Decision Maker. The reports are structured to reflect operational teams and grouped by directorates.

The analysis of income and expenditure by service on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is that specified by the Service Reporting Code of Practice. However, decisions about resource allocation are taken by the Council's Executive on the basis of budget reports analysed across directorates. These reports are prepared on a different basis from the accounting policies used in the financial statements. In particular:

- no General Fund charges are made in relation to capital expenditure (whereas depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses in excess of the balance on the Revaluation Reserve and amortisations are charged to services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement). Depreciation charged to the HRA is a cost to the HRA and is considered in the HRA Business Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- the cost of retirement benefits is based on cash flows (payment of employer's pensions contributions) rather than current service cost of benefits accrued in the year.
- expenditure on some support services is budgeted for centrally and not charged to services.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

26. Amounts Reported for Resource Allocation Decisions contd.

Reconciliation of Directorate Income and Expenditure to Cost of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The income and expenditure of the Authority's principal services recorded in the budget reports for the year is as follows:

Service Income and Expenditure 2015/16									
	Resources	Community Services	Housing Services	Environmental Services	Support Services	Local Community Budgets	Trading Services	Housing Revenue Account	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Fees charges and other service income	(11,801)	(430)	(2,172)	(6,819)	(1,614)	0	(1,595)	(44,460)	(68,891)
Government grants	(21,370)	(8)	(35,246)	(13)	(53)	0	0	(154)	(56,844)
Total Income	(33,171)	(438)	(37,418)	(6,832)	(1,667)	0	(1,595)	(44,614)	(125,735)
Employee expense	52	1,147	411	4,618	6,811	0	4,004	9,465	26,508
Other service expenses	24,434	4,176	37,295	10,316	5,843	98	2,545	29,661	114,369
Support service recharges	4,511	432	1,580	(2,318)	(10,987)	0	(4,954)	2,235	(9,501)
Total Expenditure	28,997	5,755	39,286	12,616	1,667	98	1,595	41,361	131,376
Net Expenditure	(4,174)	5,317	1,868	5,784	0	98	0	(3,253)	5,640

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

26. Amounts Reported for Resource Allocation Decisions contd.

Service Income and Expenditure 2014/15 Comparative Figures

	Resources	Community Services	Housing Services	Environmental Services	Support Services	Neighbourhood Action Teams	Trading Services	Housing Revenue Account	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Fees charges and other service income	(7,208)	(1,208)	(2,214)	(6,591)	(1,520)	0	(1,523)	(43,847)	(64,111)
Government grants	(19,830)	(10)	(36,314)	(7)	(13)	0	0	(497)	(56,671)
Total Income	(27,038)	(1,218)	(38,528)	(6,598)	(1,533)	0	(1,523)	(44,344)	(120,782)
Employee expense	282	1,798	564	4,597	6,454	0	3,729	9,189	26,613
Other service expenses	16,320	3,002	38,622	10,397	5,586	100	(7,289)	20,368	87,106
Support service recharges	4,855	657	1,491	(2,227)	(10,415)	0	5,083	10,458	9,902
Total Expenditure	21,457	5,457	40,677	12,767	1,625	100	1,523	40,015	123,621
Net Expenditure	(5,581)	4,239	2,149	6,169	92	100	0	(4,329)	2,839

This reconciliation shows how the figures in the analysis of directorate income and expenditure relate to amounts included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2014/15 £000		2015/16 £000
2,839	Net expenditure in the Service Analysis	5,640
(40)	Net expenditure of services and support services not included in the Analysis	(110)
0	Amounts in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement not reported to management in the Analysis	0
(26,766)	Amounts included in the Analysis not included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(55,713)
(23,967)	Cost of Services in Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(50,183)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

26. Amounts Reported for Resource Allocation Decisions contd.

This reconciliation shows how the figures in the analysis of directorate income and expenditure relate to a subjective analysis of the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2015/16 Reconciliation from Subjective analysis to Deficit on Provision of Services	Service Analysis	Services and Support Services not in the Analysis	Amounts not reported to management for decision making	Cost of Services	Corporate Amounts	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Fees charges and other service income	(66,238)	40	2,203	(63,995)	0	(63,995)
Surplus or deficit on trading ventures	(164)	0	164	0	(164)	(164)
Interest and investment income	(2,490)	0	988	(1,502)	(250)	(1,752)
Council tax precept & surplus	0	0		0	(4,894)	(4,894)
NNDR retained income	0	0	18,827	18,827	(18,827)	0
Government grants and contributions	(56,844)	0	2,075	(54,769)	(6,062)	(60,831)
Total income	(125,736)	40	24,257	(101,439)	(30,197)	(131,636)
Employee expenses	26,508	(110)	45	26,443	1,661	28,104
Other service expenses	96,377	0	(11,246)	85,131	(2,204)	82,927
Support Service recharges	(9,501)	0	0	(9,501)	0	(9,501)
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	10,820	0	(44,396)	(33,576)	0	(33,576)
Interest payments	7,171	0	(7,825)	(654)	7,172	6,518
NNDR Tariff payment	0	0	(16,238)	(16,238)	16,238	0
Payments to Housing Capital Receipts Pool	0	0	(4,720)	(4,720)	4,720	0
Gain or Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	0	(40)	4,409	4,369	(4,369)	0
Total expenditure	131,375	(150)	(79,971)	51,254	23,218	74,472
Surplus or deficit on the provision of services	5,639	(110)	(55,714)	(50,185)	(6,979)	(57,164)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

26. Amounts Reported for Resource Allocation Decisions contd.

2014/15 Reconciliation from Subjective analysis to Deficit on Provision of Services	Service Analysis £000	Services and Support Services not in the Analysis £000	Amounts not reported to management for decision making £000	Cost of Services £000	Corporate Amounts £000	Total £000
Fees charges and other service income	(61,574)	0	2,349	(59,225)	0	(59,225)
Surplus or deficit on trading ventures	(210)	0	210	0	(210)	(210)
Interest and investment income	(2,329)	0	262	(2,067)	(5,460)	(7,527)
Council tax precept & surplus	0	0	0	0	(4,856)	(4,856)
NNDR retained income	0	0	18,055	18,055	(18,055)	0
Government grants and contributions	(56,670)	0	1,673	(54,997)	(12,263)	(67,260)
Total income	(120,783)	0	22,549	(98,234)	(40,844)	(139,078)
Employee expenses	26,614	(40)	(366)	26,208	1,989	28,197
Other service expenses	69,046	0	(4,567)	64,479	696	65,175
Support Service recharges	9,904	0	0	9,904	0	9,904
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	10,808	0	(22,143)	(11,335)	0	(11,335)
Interest payments	7,249	0	(7,872)	(623)	7,249	6,626
NNDR Tariff payment	0	0	(15,934)	(15,934)	15,934	0
Payments to Housing Capital Receipts Pool	0	0	(785)	(785)	785	0
Gain or Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	0	0	2,354	2,354	(2,354)	0
Total expenditure	123,621	(40)	(49,313)	74,268	24,299	98,567
Surplus or deficit on the provision of services	2,838	(40)	(26,764)	(23,966)	(16,545)	(40,511)

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

27. Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd

The Council has one jointly controlled operation for the provision and management of CCTV in the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire area. This arrangement is with Stevenage Borough Council, North Hertfordshire District Council, East Hertfordshire District Council and Hertsmere Borough Council. Each member of the arrangement accounts for their share of the asset, liabilities and cash flows of the CCTV in their own accounts.

In 2013/14 all partner authorities agreed to incorporate a new company to conduct the commercial trading affairs of the CCTV Partnership. This new company, Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd, started trading on the 1 April 2015. The new company for the year ended 31 March 2016 produced a profit after tax of £63,662. The SBC share of the profit is £23,635 with the remainder belonging to the partner councils (North Hertfordshire District Council, East Herts District Council and Hertsmere Borough Council). Due to the de minimis size of the new company group accounts have not been completed.

As at 31 March 2016 the Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership Ltd owed SBC £33,390 (no comparator for 31 March 2015 as 2015/16 was the first year of trading).

28. Members Allowances

Total expenditure on Members' allowances (including expenses), as made under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003, was £447,314 in 2015/16. (£432,563 in 2014/15). Payments made outside the scheme for Mayoral Allowances totalled £16,010 in 2015/16, (£12,638 in 2014/15).

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

29. Officers Remuneration

The remuneration paid to the Council's senior employees is as follows :-

	Salary, Fees and Allowances	Expenses Allowance	Other Emoluments	Total Remuneration (excluding pension contributions)	Pension Conts.	Total Remuneration Incl Pension Contributions
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Remuneration 2015/16						
Chief Executive (to 31/5/2015)	20,882	964	9,043	30,889	8,026	38,915
Chief Executive (from 1-6-2015) & Strategic Director (Resources) (prior to 31-5-2015)	101,600	838	2,150	104,588	28,913	133,501
Strategic Director (Environment)	87,231	956	0	88,187	24,824	113,011
Strategic Director (Community)	93,328	475	740	94,543	26,558	121,101
Borough Solicitor	66,841	191	290	67,322	19,022	86,344
Assistant Director (Finance) Section 151 Officer	74,104	172	290	74,566	21,088	95,654
Total remuneration in 2015/16	443,986	3,596	12,513	460,095	128,431	588,526
Remuneration 2014/15						
Chief Executive	114,732	806	6,699	122,237	30,195	152,432
Strategic Director (Resources) Section 151 Officer	94,543	710	1,830	97,083	23,498	120,581
Strategic Director (Environment)	85,948	481	0	86,429	21,362	107,791
Strategic Director (Community)	85,948	815	530	87,293	21,362	108,655
Borough Solicitor	65,888	0	265	66,153	16,375	82,528
Total remuneration in 2014/15	447,059	2,812	9,324	459,195	112,792	571,987

* "Other emoluments" includes election duty payments.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

29. Officers Remuneration contd.

The number of Council employees receiving more than £50,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer's pension contributions) is detailed below:

Officer remuneration includes redundancy and severance payments made to officers on termination of employment during the year.

2014/15 Number of employees	Remuneration Band *	2015/16 Number of employees
1	£50,000 - £54,999	2
1	£55,000 - £59,999	4
10	£60,000 - £64,999	6
1	£65,000 - £69,999	2
1	£70,000 - £74,999	1
0	£75,000 - £79,999	0
0	£80,000 - £84,999	0
2	£85,000 - £89,999	1
0	£90,000 - £94,999	1
1	£95,000 - £99,999	0
0	£100,000 - £104,999	1
0	£105,000 - £109,999	0
0	£110,000 - £114,999	0
0	£115,000 - £119,999	0
1	£120,000 - £124,999	0
18	Total	18

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

29. Officers Remuneration contd.

The number of exit packages with total costs per band and total costs of the compulsory and other redundancies are set out in the table below.

2015/16				
Exit package cost band (including special payments)	Number of compulsory redundancies	Number of other departures agreed	Total number of exit packages by cost band	Total Cost of exit packages in each band
£0 - £19,999	6	1	7	£44,420
£20,000 - £39,999	0	0	0	£0
£40,000 - £59,999	4		4	£190,376
Total	10	1	11	£234,796

2014/15				
Exit package cost band (including special payments)	Number of compulsory redundancies	Number of other departures agreed	Total number of exit packages by cost band	Total Cost of exit packages in each band
£0 - £19,999	8	0	8	£65,667
£20,000 - £39,999	9	0	9	£297,307
Total	17	0	17	£362,973

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

30. Pension

Pensions - Local Government Pension Scheme

The Local Government Pension Scheme is accounted for as a defined benefit scheme meaning the Council and its employees make contributions into the Pension Fund at a level calculated to balance the liabilities with the investment assets:

The liabilities of the Hertfordshire Pension Fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis by projecting forward the results of the 2013 Valuation i.e. by carrying an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, etc, and estimations of projected earnings for current employees.

Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate.

The assets of the Hertfordshire Pension Fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:

Equities – bid-market value

Property-market value

Bonds and Cash at fair value

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

Service costs comprising:

- Current service cost – the increase in liabilities, as result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the revenue accounts of services for whom the employees worked.
- Past service cost – the increase in liabilities arising from current year decisions whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years – debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CI&E) as part of Non Distributed Costs.
- Net Interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), ie net interest expense for the Council - the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability that arises from the passage of time charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the CI&ES this is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the defined benefit liability during the period as a result of contributions and benefit payments .

Remeasurements comprising:

- The return on plan assets- excluding amounts included in the net interest on the net defined benefit liability – charged to the Pension Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

30. Pension contd.

Pensions-Local Government Pension Scheme contd.

- *Actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pension liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions – charged to the Pension Reserve and Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.*

Contributions paid to the Hertfordshire Pension Fund – cash paid as employers contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are appropriations to and from the Pension Reserves to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replaces them with debits for cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year end. The negative balance that arises on the Pension Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits earned by employees.

Discretionary benefits:

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

Participation in Pension Schemes

The Council participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme administered by Hertfordshire County Council. As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its employees, the Council offers retirement benefits. Although these benefits will not be payable until the employees retire, the Council has a commitment to make payments which need to be disclosed at the time these benefits are earned.

Transactions Relating to Post-employment Benefits

The cost of retirement benefits is recognised in the reported cost of services when they are earned by the employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

30. Pension contd.

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.

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
	Cost of service	
3,472	Current service costs	3,999
66	Past service costs	77
	Financing and Investment Income & Expenditure	
6,600	Interest costs	5,613
(4,611)	Interest income on plan assets	(3,952)
5,527	Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the provision of Services	5,737
	Other Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	
(11,245)	Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)	(2,024)
0	Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions	0
15,935	Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions	9,120
(1,429)	Other Actuarial gains and losses	2,365
8,788	Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	15,198
	Movement in Reserves Statement	
(5,527)	Reversal of net changes made to the Surplus or Deficit for the provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code	(5,737)
	Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year	
4,066	Employer's contributions payable to the scheme	4,077

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

30. Pension contd.

Pension Assets & Liabilities recognised in the Balance Sheet

2014/15		2015/16
£'000		£'000
113,100	Opening fair value of Scheme assets	127,805
4,611	Interest Income	3,952
	Re-measurement gain/(loss)	
11,116	The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	(1,950)
4,066	Contributions from employer	4,077
991	Contributions from employees into the scheme	1,003
(6,079)	Benefits paid	(5,804)
127,805	Closing fair value of scheme assets	129,083
2014/15		2015/16
£'000		£'000
161,862	Opening Balance	181,418
3,472	Current Service Cost	3,997
6,600	Interest Cost	5,613
991	Contributions from Scheme participants	1,003
	Re-measurement gain/(loss)	
0	Actuarial gains/(losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	0
15,935	Actuarial gains/(losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	(9,120)
(1,429)	Other	(2,209)
66	Past service costs	74
(6,079)	Benefits paid	(5,804)
181,418	Closing balance	174,972
(53,613)	Net Pension Liability	(45,889)

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. Hymans Robertson LLP, an independent firm of actuaries, has assessed Stevenage Borough Council's fund liabilities. The estimates for the Council are based on the latest formal valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2013.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

30. Pension contd.

Fair value of Employers assets (at bid values unless otherwise stated)

Asset category	Period Ended 31 March 2015		% of Total Assets
	Quoted prices in active markets £'000	Quoted prices not in active markets £'000	
Equity Securities:			
Consumer	11,285	0	11,285 9%
Manufacturing	13,369	0	13,369 10%
Energy and Utilities	3,689	0	3,689 3%
Financial Institutions	11,487	0	11,487 9%
Health and Care	1,895	0	1,895 1%
Information Technology	7,938	0	7,938 6%
Other	942	0	942 1%
Debt Securities:			
Corporate Bonds (investment grade)	0	0	0 0%
UK Government	0	0	0 0%
Other	0	0	0 0%
Private Equity:			
All	0	5,294	5,294 4%
Real Estate:			
UK Property	0	0	0 0%
Overseas Property	0	0	0 0%
Investment Funds and Unit Trusts:			
Equities	18,364	0	18,364 14%
Bonds	34,090	0	34,090 27%
Commodities	554	0	554 1%
Infrastructure	0	114	114 0%
Other	401	15,290	15,691 12%
Derivatives:			
Interest Rate	0	0	0 0%
Foreign Exchange	0	(277)	(277) 0%
Cash and Cash Equivalents:			
All	3,370	0	3,370 3%
Totals	107,384	20,421	127,805 100%

Asset category	Period Ended 31 March 2016		Total % of Total Assets
	Quoted prices in active markets £'000	Quoted prices not in active markets £'000	
Equity Securities:			
Consumer	10,486	10,486	10,486 8%
Manufacturing	9,567	9,567	9,567 7%
Energy and Utilities	2,243	2,243	2,243 2%
Financial Institutions	9,809	9,809	9,809 8%
Health and Care	1,709	1,709	1,709 1%
Information Technology	6,105	6,105	6,105 5%
Other	298	298	298 0%
Debt Securities:			
Corporate Bonds (investment grade)	0	0	0 0%
UK Government	0	0	0 0%
Other	0	0	0 0%
Private Equity:			
All	5,541	5,541	5,541 4%
Real Estate:			
UK Property	5,765	5,765	5,765 4%
Overseas Property	3,370	3,370	3,370 3%
Investment Funds and Unit Trusts:			
Equities	26,203	26,203	26,203 20%
Bonds	35,344	35,344	35,344 27%
Commodities	610	610	610 0%
Infrastructure	166	166	166 0%
Other	527	7,711	8,238 6%
Derivatives:			
Interest Rate	0	0	0 0%
Foreign Exchange	(474)	(474)	(474) 0%
Cash and Cash Equivalents:			
All	4,103	4,103	4,103 3%
Totals	107,004	22,079	129,083 100%

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

30. Pension contd.

Principal Assumptions

The principal assumptions used by the Actuary have been:-

2014/15	2015/16
Long Term expected rate of return on assets in the scheme:	
3.1% Equity investments	3.4%
3.1% Bonds	3.4%
3.1% Property	3.4%
3.1% Cash	3.4%
Mortality Assumptions:	
Longevity at 65 for current pensioners:	
22.3 Men	22.3
24.5 Women	24.5
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners:	
24.3 Men	24.3
26.7 Women	26.7
Other Assumptions:	
2.1% Rate of inflation	2.1%
3.5% Rate of increase in salaries	3.6%
3.1% Expected return on scheme assets	3.4%
3.1% Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	3.4%
50% Take up of option to convert annual pension into retirement lump sum. (Pre-April 2008 service)	50%
75% Take up of option to convert annual pension into retirement lump sum. (Post April 2008 service)	75%

Sensitivity analysis of Actuarial assumptions

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analysis that follows has been determined based on reasonably possible changes in the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period. In calculating the impact for each change in assumption it is assumed that the other assumptions remain unchanged. In practice it is likely that changes in assumptions would be interrelated.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

30. Pension contd.

Change in assumptions at year ended 31 March 2016	Approximate % increase to Employer Liability	Approximate monetary amount increase (£'000)
0.5% decrease in Real Discount Rate	10	16,725
1 year increase in member life expectancy	3	5,249
0.5% increase in salary increase rate	2	3,565
0.5% increase in pension increase rate	7	13,017

The total contributions for current service cost expected to be made to the Pension Scheme in the year to 31 March 2017 is estimated at £4,164,000.

The triannual review is currently being undertaken with the outcomes known in the autumn of 2016. In addressing any scheme deficit the actuaries look to smooth the contributions so that over the long term any pension deficit is met. It is not anticipated that the results from the triannual review will materially change the council's pension contributions for the next three years.

Further information can be found in Hertfordshire County Council Pension Fund's Annual Report that is available upon request from: Hertfordshire County Council, Corporate Services, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DQ (email contact : pensions.team@hertscc.gov.uk)

31. Related Parties

The Council is required to disclose material transactions with related parties. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Council might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Council.

Central Government: Central Government has effective control over the general operations of the Council – it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Council operates, provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions the Council has with other parties (e.g. Council tax bills, housing benefits). Grants received from government departments are set out in the subjective analysis in Note 26 Reporting for Resource Allocation Decisions and in Note 12a Taxation and Non Specific and Specific Grant Income.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

31. Related Parties contd

Other Public Bodies: Payments between the Council and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) amounted to £646,699 (2014/15, £478,578). Further payments between the Council and Hertfordshire County Council are disclosed in the Collection Fund accounts, Note 30 Pension and Note 12 Taxation and Non Specific and Specific Grant Income.

The Council provides a verge maintenance service for Hertfordshire County Council under an agency agreement for which the Council was reimbursed £527,891 in 2015/16 (£401,427 in 2014/15).

The Council provided four Children's Centres under an agency agreement with Hertfordshire County Council, 2014/15 was the final year for which the Council was reimbursed (£941,944).

Members and Senior Officers: Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The total of Members' allowances paid in 2015/16 is shown in Note 28 Members Allowances.

A contract payment of £1,443,028 was paid to Stevenage Leisure Limited (2014/15 £1,519,698) and £1,190,807 was paid to other organisations (2014/15 £1,154,694), either as grants or services received. With reference to all of these organisations, of the 39 Members, 36 Members declared interests through either the Register of Interests or completed related party transactions' forms. As at 31 March 2016 SBC had paid SLL £335,923 (£358,250 31 March 2015) for management costs relating to 2016/17.

The relevant Members did not take part in any discussions or decision relating to the grants. The grants were made with proper consideration of the declarations which all Members completed in accordance with the statutory Code of Conduct for Members (Local Government Act 2000). During 2015/16 six meetings were held at which twenty-two expressions of interest were declared. The Register of Members' Interests shows both potential financial and other interests, including involvement with voluntary organisations, public authorities and as the local authority representative on various bodies. This is available for public inspection at the Council offices. There are no other material related party transactions other than those shown elsewhere in the accounts.

During 2015/16, the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors declared no pecuniary interests in accordance with section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Chief Executive (formerly Strategic Director Resources) did not take part in any discussion, decision or administration relating to the Stevenage Leisure Limited contract payments.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

32. Contingent Liabilities and Assets

Contingent liability arises where an event has taken place that gives the Council a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the Council's control. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either the obligation cannot be measured reliably or where it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required. Contingent liabilities will not be recognised in the balance sheet but will be disclosed separately as a note to the accounts.

A **contingent asset** arises from a past event that gives the Council a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the Council's control.

The Council does not recognise any contingent assets due to the uncertainty of economic gain of a contingent asset.

At the Balance Sheet date five contingent liabilities were identified, that related to:-

- There is a possibility that a new claim for mandatory relief from business rates on behalf of NHS Trust will be received. The application could potentially be backdated, potentially up to 6 years (as a statute of limitation). Due to the uncertainty to whether a claim for mandatory relief is made and to whether it is back dated it is not possible to quantify the financial impact to the Council.
- Business Rate payers are entitled to appeal against the rateable value allocated to it by the Valuation Office Agency. The Council has made a provision for appeals lodged including a percentage for those that may be withdrawn. However the provision does not include an allowance for future appeals not yet made.
- The Council has made no provision for any costs associated with any claims that may arise as a result of the current legal claim to included overtime in the calculation holiday entitlement. Currently no claims have been received so it is not possible to quantify this liability.
- There is one live Industrial Tribunal case which is expected to be settled at low cost .
- The 2006 Water resale order restricts the total cost to unmetered charge as cost plus 1.5%. Based on a high court judgement the London Borough of Southwark may have overcharged tenants based on the contract in place. Stevenage BC contract differs from that of LB of Southwark, however, the council have sought legal opinion and are currently working with the LGA. It is not possible to quantify this liability until the outcomes of LGA's legal considerations are known.

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

33. External Audit Costs

The Council has incurred fees in relation to the audit of the Statement of Accounts, certification of grant claims and statutory inspections. The estimated fees payable for audit work in respect of the 2015/16 financial year are shown in the table below. The appointed auditor for 2015/16 is Ernst & Young LLP.

2014/15 £'000	Fees Payable	2015/16 £'000
84	Fees payable to the External Auditor with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year.	64
12	Fees payable to External Auditor for the certification of grant claims and returns for the year.	8
(9)	Fees refunded by the Audit Commission with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year.	0
26	Fees payable in respect of other services provided by Grant Thornton	4
113		76

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

34. Cash Flow Statement – Operating Activities

The cash flow for operating activities include the following items

2014/15 £'000		2014/15 £'000
(196)	Interest received	(289)
7,251	Interest paid	7,194
<u>7,055</u>		<u>6,905</u>

35. Adjustments to net surplus or deficit on the provision of services for non cash movements

2014/15 £'000	Non Cash Items	2015/16 £'000
9,632	Removal of Depreciation and Impairment from Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	33,118
1,461	Removal of IAS Pension entries in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	(1,545)
(40)	Removal of increase/(decrease) in accumulated absences	(110)
(8,298)	Removal of carrying amount of assets disposed	(7,596)
779	Contributions to/(from) provision	231
0	Other non cash items movements	2,020
	Items on an accrual basis	
(8)	Add/(less) increase/(decrease) in stock	(23)
(2,756)	Add/(less) increase/(decrease) in debtors	(243)
(3,495)	Add/(less) increase/(decrease) in creditors & receipts in advance	(3,113)
<u>(2,725)</u>		<u>22,739</u>

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Income & Expenditure Statement

The HRA Income and Expenditure Statement shows the economic cost in year of providing housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from rents and government grants. The Council charges rents to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations; this may be different from accounting cost. The increase or decrease in the year, on the basis of which rents are raised, is shown in the Movement on the HRA Statement.

2014/15 £000	Note	2015/16 £000
Expenditure		
7,624	Repairs & Maintenance	7,500
8,477	Supervision & Management	9,355
82	Rents, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges	93
10,799	Depreciation & Impairment of Non-Current Assets	10,762
(21,730)	Revaluation (Gains) & Losses of Non-Current Assets	(49,787)
266	Movement in the allowance for bad debts	181
5,518	Total Expenditure	(21,896)
Income		
(40,265)	Dwelling rents	(40,848)
(431)	Non-dwellings rents	(377)
(2,435)	Charges for Services & Facilities	(2,464)
(1,003)	Contributions towards expenditure	(740)
(44,134)	Total Income	(44,429)
(38,616)	Net Cost of HRA Services as included in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement	(66,325)
981	HRA Services share of Corporate & Democratic Core	841
(37,635)	Net income for HRA services	(65,484)
(1,109)	Gain on sale of HRA Non-Current Assets	(3,518)
7,166	Interest payable & similar charges	7,171
(211)	Interest & Investment Income	(302)
(6,953)	Capital grants & Contributions receivable	(383)
530	Pension Interest and expected return on pension assets	1,665
(38,212)	Deficit for the year on HRA services	(60,851)

Movement on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Income & Expenditure Statement

This statement takes the outturn on the HRA Income and Expenditure Statement and reconciles it to the surplus for the year on the HRA Balance, calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

2014/15 £000	Note	2015/16 £000	
(9,375)			(13,704)
	Balance on the HRA at the end of the previous year		
(38,212)	Deficit for the year on the HRA Income & Expenditure Statement	(60,851)	
33,883	Adjustment between accounting basis and funding basis under statute	57,600	
	7		
(4,329)	(Increase)/Decrease in year on the HRA		(3,251)
(13,704)	Balance on the HRA at the end of the year		(16,955)

Notes to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

HRA 1. Gross Rent Income

Dwelling rents as shown on the HRA Income and Expenditure Statement is the total rent income due, excluding service charges and after an allowance is made for voids etc. During the year 0.54% of lettable properties were vacant (in 2014/15 figure was 0.45%). Average rents - excluding service charges - were £98.10 a week in 2015/16 (£96.01 in 2014/15).

HRA 2. Rent and Supported Housing Payment Arrears

During the year 2015/16 rent arrears as a proportion of gross rent income were 2.6% (2.5% in 2014/15).

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
1,137	Arrears at 31 March	1,163
336	Amounts written off during the year	191
0	Amounts written on during the year	(14)

The bad debts provision stood at £642,988 at 31 March 2016 (£638,275 at 31 March 2015).

Notes to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

HRA 3. Interest payable and Interest and Investment Income

The HRA will pay interest on borrowings and receive interest on revenue balances and mortgage loans given.

2014/15 £'000	Interest Receivable	2015/16 £'000
199	Interest on revenue balances	290
12	Interest on mortgages	12
211		302

2014/15 £'000	Interest Payable	2015/16 £'000
6,513	PWLB loans (Self Financing)	6,514
653	Decent Homes borrowing	602
7,166		7,116

HRA 4. Housing Stock Numbers

The stock movement can be summarised as follows:-

2014/15 No.		2015/16 No.
8,218	Stock as at 1st April	8,137
(97)	Less Right to Buy Sales	(106)
18	New Build acquisitions	15
0	Transferred from General Fund	1
(2)	Conversions/other	(5)
8,137	Stock at 31st March	8,042
5,270	Houses	5,203
2,867	Flats	2,839
8,137	Total	8,042

The stock numbers disclosed above are properties that are in management and available to let.

Notes to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

HRA 5. Non Current Asset Valuations

Housing Stock

The total balance sheet value of the dwellings within the HRA can be summarised as follows :-

As at 31 March 2015	£ 496,939,653
As at 31 March 2016	£ 554,271,127
The Vacant Possession value of the dwellings as at 31 March 2015 was	£ 1,421,208,018

The valuation of the dwellings in the Balance Sheet is on the basis of fair value, which is the market value on the assumption that the property is sold as part of the continuing enterprise in occupation. The difference between the Balance Sheet valuation and the higher valuation on the basis of Vacant Possession shows the economic cost of providing Council housing at less than open market rents.

Other non current assets held by the HRA are detailed below:

31 March 2015		31 March 2016
468,102	Assets Under construction	1,851,946
596,688	Vehicles Plant & Equipment	517,795
1,064,790	Total	2,369,741

Notes to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

HRA 6. Depreciation, Impairment and Revaluation Gains & Losses of Non-Current Assets

Depreciation and impairment of non current assets is shown here in respect of HRA dwellings & other HRA non-current assets. The calculation of the depreciation charge for dwellings separates the valuation of property between land and dwellings. Dwellings are subsequently split into their component parts and with each component being depreciated over their respective anticipated useful life.

2014/15 £000		2015/16 £000
	Depreciation	
10,654	HRA Dwellings	10,618
153	Other Assets	202
	Impairment	
0	HRA Dwellings	0
	Revaluation (gain)/loss	
(21,730)	HRA Assets	(56,181)
(10,923)	Total	(45,361)

HRA 7. Major Repairs Reserve (MRR)

2014/15		2015/16	
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	(4,607)		(12,366)
(10,654)		(10,618)	
(154)		(202)	
	(10,808)		(10,820)
	3,049		18,534
(12,366)			(4,652)

Notes to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

HRA 8. Capital Expenditure, Financing & Receipts

Capital Expenditure and Financing within the HRA in 2015/16 is summarised as follows:

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
	Capital Expenditure	
12,489	Major Repairs & Improvements	16,025
2,329	New Council Housing	2,572
733	Disabled Adaptations	663
291	Equipment	135
393	Assets under construction	1,154
16,235		20,549
	The Capital Expenditure was financed as follows:	
1,353	Capital Receipts	1,633
3,049	Major Repairs Reserve	18,533
6,953	Government Grants	0
4,878	Contributions	383
16,233		20,549

Total Capital Receipts in 2015/16 from the sale of property within the HRA can be summarised as follows :-

2014/15 £'000		2015/16 £'000
(8,973)	Right to Buy Sales	(10,880)
(22)	Right to Buy Mortgage Repayments	(4)
(204)	Other Land & Property*	(113)
(9,199)		(10,997)

*Includes repayment of Right to Buy discounts

Collection Fund Statement 2015/16

The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. Stevenage Borough Council is a billing authority. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection of council tax from taxpayers and distribution to Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Police and the collection of NDR from businesses and distribution to the Government and Hertfordshire County Council.

2014/15			2015/16		
Council Tax £000	Business Rates £000	Total £000	Council Tax £000	Business Rates £000	Total £000
(37,714)		(37,714)			
	(48,386)	(48,386)			
	247	247			
(37,714)	(48,139)	(85,853)			
27,772	4,514	32,286			
3,669		3,669			
4,680	18,054	22,734			
	22,568	22,568			
	112	112			
112	1,185	1,297			
117	(188)	(71)			
	2,547	2,547			
740	(276)	464			
98		98			
124	(1,104)	(980)			
	(1,380)	(1,380)			
37,312	46,032	83,344			
(402)	(2,107)	(2,509)			
(1,187)	557	(630)			
(1,589)	(1,550)	(3,139)			
			Income		
			Council Tax Receivable	(39,070)	(39,070)
			Business Rates Receivable		(48,815)
			Transitional Payment Protection receivable		213
			Total income	(39,070)	(48,602)
			Expenditure		
			Precepts, Demands and Shares		
			Hertfordshire County Council	28,764	4,772
			Hertfordshire Police Authority	3,726	
			Stevenage Borough Council	4,752	19,087
			Central Government		23,859
			Charges to Collection Fund		
			Costs of collection		112
			Write offs of uncollectable amounts	51	1,796
			Increase/(decrease) for impairment	182	(1,062)
			Increase/(decrease) in provision for appeals		688
			Contribution in regard to previous year deficit/surplus		
			Hertfordshire County Council	843	295
			Hertfordshire Police Authority	114	
			Stevenage Borough Council	142	1,180
			Central Government		1,475
			Total expenditure	38,574	52,202
			Movement on fund balance (deficit/(surplus))	(496)	3,600
			Balance at beginning of year	(1,589)	(1,550)
			Balance at end of year	(2,085)	2,050
					(35)

Notes to the Collection Fund Statement 2015/16

CF 1. Council Tax

Council tax income derives from charges raised according to the value of residential properties, which have been classified into 8 valuation bands estimating 1 April 1991 values for this specific purpose. Individual charges are calculated by estimating the amount of income required to be taken from the Collection Fund by Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Police Authority and the Stevenage Borough Council for the forthcoming year and dividing this by the council tax base (the total number of properties in each band adjusted by a proportion to convert the number to a Band D property equivalent and adjusted for discounts. In 2013/14 the local council tax support scheme was introduced and the band D equivalents was reduced to take into account the loss of income ; (25,207.40 for 2015/16, 24,822.90 for 2014/15). The basic amount of council tax for a band D property £1,477.43 for 2015/16 (£1,455.17 for 2014/15) is multiplied by the proportion specified for the particular band to give an individual amount due.

Band	A (Disbld.)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	TOTAL
Properties	0	1,510	6,117.55	21,051.02	3,227.04	3,068.63	877	413	14.50	36,278.74
Exemptions		(27)	(87)	(138)	(14)	(17)	(6)	(1)	(5)	(295)
Disabled Relief	0	9	67	(63)	14	(19)	(2)	(4)	(2)	0
Discounts (25%)	0	1,079	3,841	6,432	788	493	115	60	0	12,808
Discounts (50%)	0	1	6	12	4	2	6	9	4	44
Discounts (10%)	0	24	89	96	14	12	3	0	0	238
Council Tax Support Scheme	0	428.97	1,607.07	2,929.46	281.71	71.36	13.66	4.20	0	5,336.43
Effective Properties	0	790.38	3,518.33	16,296.96	2,744.93	2,835.82	823.29	384.30	5.5	27,399.51
Proportions	5/9	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9	
Band D Equivalents	0	526.92	2,736.48	14,486.19	2,744.93	3,466.00	1,189.19	640.49	11	25,801.21
Council Tax Base		Band D equivalent multiplied by collection rate of 97.70%								25,207.40

Notes to the Collection Fund Statement 2015/16

CF 1. Council Tax (cont)

The income chargeable of £49,342,005 in 2015/16 is from the following sources:

2014/15		2015/16
£37,602,367	Billed to Council Tax Payers	£39,018,158
£6,159,840	Local Council Tax Scheme	£5,755,876
£4,563,488	Exemptions, Discounts, etc.	£4,567,971
£48,325,695		£49,342,005

CF 2. Non-Domestic Rates (NDR)

The Government specified a multiplier of 49.3p in 2015/16 (48.2p in 2014/15) by which local businesses pay rates calculated by multiplying their rateable value by this amount (subject to the effects of transitional arrangements). The equivalent amount for small businesses was 48.0p in 2015/16 (47.1p in 2014/15). The rateable value for the Council's area is £112,127,530 at 31 March 2016 (£111,512,233 at 31 March 2015). The rateable value changes throughout the year due to increases and decreases in assessments.

In 2013/14 the business rate retention scheme was introduced by the Local Government Finance Act 2012. This scheme enables local authorities to retain a proportion of the business rates generated in their areas. Income generated by business rates is shared between the billing authority (Stevenage Borough Council), Central Government, and Hertfordshire County Council as shown in the Collection Fund Statement below. Liabilities and provisions arising from the NDR collection fund are also shared between the three and recognised in their accounts.

CF 3. Allocation of Collection Fund (surpluses)/deficits

The Council Tax surplus is allocated in proportion to the respective precepts, whereas the NDR surplus is allocated on fixed apportionment of Central Government 50%, Stevenage BC 40%, and Hertfordshire County Council 10%.

2014/15			2015/16			
Council Tax	Business Rates	Total	Council Tax	Business Rates	Total	
(£1,221,498)	(£155,015)	(£1,376,513)	Hertfordshire County Council	(£1,609,133)	£204,965	(£1,404,168)
(£ 161,384)		(£161,384)	Hertfordshire Police Authority	(£208,177)		(£208,177)
(£205,820)	(£620,061)	(£825,881)	Stevenage Borough Council	(£267,506)	£819,859	£552,353
	(£775,077)	(£775,077)	Central Government		£1,024,824	£1,024,824
(£1,588,702)	(£1,550,153)	(£3,138,855)		(£2,084,816)	£2,049,648	(£35,168)

Glossary of Terms

Actuarial Gains and Losses

Changes in the net pensions liability that arise because

- Events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation, or
- The actuarial assumptions have changed

Agency Services

Services which are provided by the Council for another Local Authority or public body and the principal (the authority responsible for the service) reimburses the agent (the authority doing the work) for the cost of the work carried out.

Amortisation

The measure of the cost or revalued amount of benefits of the intangible non current asset that have been consumed during the period. Consumption includes the wearing out, using up or other reduction in the useful life of a non current asset whether arising from use, effluxion of time or obsolescence through either changes in technology or demand for the goods and services produced by the asset.

Appointed Auditors

Independent external auditors that provide an audit opinion as to whether the Statement of Accounts shown are true and fair.

Area Based Grant

Area Based Grant is a general grant allocated directly to local authorities as additional revenue funding to areas. It is allocated according to specific policy criteria rather than general formulae. Local authorities are free to use all of this non-ringfenced funding as they see fit to support the delivery of local, regional and national priorities in their areas.

Balances

In general, the surplus or deficit on any account at the end of the financial year. Often used to refer to an available surplus, which has accumulated over a number of past years.

Budget

A statement defining in financial terms, the Council's policies over a specified period of time.

Original Budget the estimate for a financial year approved by the Council before the start of the financial year.

Working Budget – an updated revision of the original budget for the financial year approved at Executive Meetings and/or Council Meetings throughout the year

Capital Expenditure

Expenditure on the acquisition of assets or works which have a long term value to the Council, either directly by the Council or indirectly in the form of grants to other persons or bodies. Expenditure which does not fall within this definition must be charged to a revenue account.

Glossary of Terms

Capital Receipts

The proceeds from the disposal of land or other assets which can be used to finance new capital expenditure (but not revenue spending). The Local Government Act 2003 introduced new provisions whereby a proportion of local authority housing capital receipts must be paid into the Government's National Pool (75% for Council houses and 50% for HRA land). This was amended for HRA receipts with changed with regard to the provision for new social housing ("one for one" receipts) and debt provision in 2012 following self financing.

Capital Financing Costs

A charge to services to reflect the cost of assets used in the provision of the service.

Code of Practice

Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting sets out the arrangements required to be followed in the Statement of Accounts. It constitutes 'proper accounting practice' and is recognised as such by statute.

CIPFA

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. The principal accounting body dealing with local government finance.

Collection Fund

Every billing authority (District/Borough Council) is required to maintain a Collection Fund into which is paid the Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates collected from the tax/rate payers. Payments are made from the Fund to the precepting authorities (County Council, Police Authority and District/Borough Council) whilst National Non-Domestic Rates income is passed to the Government.

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. An example of a community asset would be parks.

Contingent Asset

A contingent asset is a possible asset arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain events not wholly within the Council's control.

Contingent Liability

A contingent liability is a possible liability arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain events not wholly within the local authority's control.

Glossary of Terms

Council Tax

The property based tax by which Local Authorities and Police Authorities, raise revenue from the local community. All domestic properties have been valued and placed within eight bandings to which is applied the local rate assessed by the relevant authorities. A discount on charges is applied where dwellings are occupied by only one adult. Rebates are available to those Council Tax payers meeting the Government's criteria.

Debt Charges

The repayment of money borrowed from a third party. These payments usually include repayment of part of the loan as well as interest. Also known as capital financing costs or loan charges.

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).

Depreciation

The measure of the cost or revalued amount of benefits of the non current asset that have been consumed during the period. Consumption includes the wearing out, using up or other reduction in the useful life of a non current asset whether arising from use, effluxion of time or obsolescence through either changes in technology or demand for the goods and services produced by the asset.

Direct Service Organisation (D.S.O.)

A DSO is a work force employed by a Local Authority to carry out such tasks as grounds maintenance.

Earmarked Reserve

These are funds that are set aside for a specific purpose, or a particular service, or type of service. Stevenage Borough Council refer to these as "allocated reserves" in budget reports.

Exceptional Items

Material items which derive from events or transactions that fall within the ordinary activities of the authority and which need to be disclosed separately by virtue of their size or incidence to give fair presentation of the accounts.

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.

Fees and Charges

Income arising from the provision of services e.g. parking facilities, planning applications.

Glossary of Terms

Formula Grant Allocation

The Central Government Grant towards the cost of services provided by Local Authorities. It is paid directly into each authority's General Fund and was previously called Revenue Support Grant.

General Fund

The main revenue fund of the Council. Day to day spending on services is met from this fund. Spending on the provision of Council housing, however, must be charged to the separate Housing Revenue Account.

Going Concern

The concept that the authority will remain in operational existence for the foreseeable future, in particular that the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and Balance Sheet assume no intention to curtail significantly the scale of operations.

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.

Heritage Assets

Assets that are held and maintained principally for their contribution to knowledge and culture and are intended to be preserved in trust for future generations because of their cultural, environmental or historical associations.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

A separate account dealing with expenditure and income arising from the letting of Council dwellings. Expenditure includes supervision and management costs, repairs and capital financing charges. Income includes rent, Government subsidies and investment interest. It is a "ring fenced" (i.e. the transfer of amounts between the HRA and the General Fund is restricted by legislation).

Impairment

A reduction in the value of a non-current asset below its carrying amount on the Balance Sheet.

Infrastructure Assets

Expenditure on assets whose value is recoverable, e.g. roads footpaths, and bridges.

Interest on Balances and from Investments

The interest earned by investing the day to day surplus on the authority's cash flow and balances in hand.

Glossary of Terms

Non Domestic Rates (NDR)

A levy on businesses based on a notional rate in the pound (multiplier) set by Central Government and multiplied by the 'rateable value' (RV) of the premises they occupy. The amount depends on the RV assigned to the property by the District Valuer and the multiplier, which is uniform across the whole country.

Increases in the multiplier are limited to no more than increases in the Retail Price Index. NDR is collected by Stevenage Borough Council who then redistributes the income to Hertfordshire District Council (10%) and Central Government (50%).

The government compensates the council through a S31 grant for additional NDR reliefs announced in recent budgets

The government is currently reviewing the scheme with an aim for 100% of business rates to be retained locally.

Net Book Value

The amount at which non-current assets are included in the balance sheet. This would be either the asset's historic cost or current value less the cumulative amount provided for depreciation.

Overheads

Administration costs e.g. finance, personnel, information technology together with other central costs which cannot be allocated direct to services such as general expenses.

Precepts

Sums levied by District/Borough, County and Parish Councils and Police Authorities on the Collection Funds of billing authorities (Districts and Boroughs) and forming part of the overall demand for Council Tax.

Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)

A government agency established to provide long-term loans to local authorities to finance part of their capital expenditure.

Rateable Value

A value on all non-domestic properties subject to Non-Domestic Rates (NDR). The value is based on a notional rent that the property could be expected to yield and revaluations take place every five years.

Related Parties

For a relationship to be treated as a related party relationship there has to be some element of control or influence by one party over another, or by a third party over the two parties.

Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay

Contributions from revenue to finance capital expenditure.

Revenue Expenditure

The day to day running costs incurred by the Council in providing its services.

Glossary of Terms

Retrospective Restatement

Retrospective restatement of the financial statements will occur where there has been a change in accounting policy (unless there are specific transitional arrangements) or where material Prior Period errors have been identified. Correcting the recognition, measurement and disclosure amounts of elements of the financial statements as if a prior period error had never occurred. This is achieved by restating the comparative amounts for prior period(s) presented in which the error occurred or if the error occurred before the earliest prior period presented, restating the opening balances of assets, liabilities and net worth for the earliest prior period presented.

Surplus

An excess of income over expenditure (or assets over liabilities).

Report of the External Auditors

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

Opinion on the Authority's financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Stevenage Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2016 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The financial statements comprise the:

- Movement in Reserves Statement,
- Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement,
- Balance Sheet,
- Cash Flow Statement,
- Housing Revenue Account Income and Expenditure Statement, the Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Statement and Collection Fund and the related notes 1 to 35 and notes 1 to 8 for the Housing Revenue Account.

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 2015/16.

This report is made solely to the members of Stevenage Borough Council, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. 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.

Respective responsibilities of the Assistant Director (Finance)(Chief Financial Officer) and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Assistant Director (Finance)(Chief Financial Officer) Responsibilities set out on page 27 the Assistant Director (Finance)(Chief Financial Officer) 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 2015/16, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Authority's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately *disclosed*; *the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Assistant Director (Finance)(Chief Financial Officer)*; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the 2015/16 Financial Report to identify material inconsistencies with

Report of the External Auditors

the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of Stevenage Borough Council as at 31 March 2016 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16.

Opinion on other matters

In our opinion, the information given in the 2015/16 Financial Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we report by exception

We report to you if:

- in our opinion the annual governance statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information forthcoming from the audit or our knowledge of the Council;
- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make written recommendations to the audited body under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- 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;
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects

Report of the External Auditors

Conclusion on Stevenage Borough Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

Authority's responsibilities

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

Auditor's responsibilities

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) requires us to report to you our conclusion relating to proper arrangements.

We report if significant matters have come to our attention which prevent us from concluding that the Authority has put in place 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.

Scope of the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) in November 2015, as to whether the Council had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people. The Comptroller and Auditor General determined this criterion as that necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether the Council put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2016.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to form a view on whether, in all significant respects, the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Report of the External Auditors

Conclusion

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance issued by the C&AG in November 2015, we are satisfied that, in all significant respects, the Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2016.

Certificate

We certify that we have completed the audit of the accounts of Stevenage Borough Council in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office.

Neil Harris
Director
for and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP, Appointed Auditor
Luton

September 2016