

Notice of Meeting

Governance and Ethics Committee

Monday, 24th August, 2015 at 5.00 pm
in Council Chamber Council Offices
Market Street Newbury

Date of despatch of Agenda: Thursday 13 August 2015

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Andy Day on (01635) 519459
e-mail: aday@westberks.gov.uk

Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at
www.westberks.gov.uk



Agenda - Governance and Ethics Committee to be held on Monday, 24 August 2015
(continued)

To: Councillors Steve Ardagh-Walter, Jeff Beck (Vice-Chairman), Chris Bridges, Graham Bridgman, James Cole, Barry Dickens, Lee Dillon, Rick Jones, Anthony Pick and Quentin Webb (Chairman)

Substitutes: Councillors Billy Drummond, Sheila Ellison, Alan Macro and Tim Metcalfe

Agenda

Part I		Page No.
1	Apologies To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).	
2	Minutes To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held on 22 June 2015 and to note the record of the Virtual meeting of the Standards Committee held on the 22 June 2015.	1 - 6
3	Declarations of Interest To remind Members of the need to record the existence and nature of any Personal, Disclosable Pecuniary or other interests in items on the agenda, in accordance with Members' Code of Conduct .	
4	Forward Plan <i>Purpose: To consider the Forward Plan for the next 9 months.</i>	7 - 12

Standards Matters

5	Monitoring Officer's Quarterly Update Report on the Governance and Ethics Committee - Quarter 1 of 2015/16 <i>Purpose: To provide an update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and to bring to the attention of the Committee any complaints or other problems within West Berkshire.</i>	13 - 26
---	---	---------



Governance Matters

- | | | |
|---|--|-----------|
| 6 | West Berkshire Council Financial Statement 2014/15 including KPMG Opinion (GE3006)
<i>Purpose: To provide Members with the final copy of the Council's Financial Statements.</i> | 27 - 106 |
| 7 | Internal Audit Annual Report 2014/15 (GE3001)
<i>Purpose: To provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control framework</i> | 107 - 124 |
| 8 | Annual Governance Statement 2014/15 (GE3002)
<i>Purpose: To allow the committee to review the Annual Governance Statement prior to signature by the Leader and Chief Executive</i> | 125 - 140 |
| a | Annual Governance Statement - Statement in Support by the Section 151 Officer
<i>Purpose: To provide evidence and independent verification of governance matters which may impact on the Annual Governance Statement from the viewpoint of the Section 151 Officer.</i> | 141 - 146 |
| b | Annual Governance Statement - Statement in Support by the Monitoring Officer (GE3004)
<i>Purpose: To provide evidence and independent verification of governance matters which may impact on the Annual Governance Statement from the viewpoint of the Monitoring Officer.</i> | 147 - 152 |

Andy Day
Head of Strategic Support

West Berkshire Council is committed to equality of opportunity. We will treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, disability, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation.

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Moira Fraser on telephone (01635) 519045.



This page is intentionally left blank

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 22 JUNE 2015

Councillors Present: Steve Ardagh-Walter, Jeff Beck (Vice-Chairman), Paul Bryant, James Cole, Lee Dillon, Sheila Ellison, Anthony Pick and Quentin Webb (Chairman)

Also Present: Councillor Adrian Edwards, Moira Fraser (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager) and Councillor Rick Jones

PART I

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 27 April 2015 and 19 May 2015 were approved as true and correct records and signed by the Chairman.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

5. Forward Plan

The Committee considered the Governance and Audit Committee Forward Plan (Agenda Item 4). Councillor Lee Dillon noted that the Forward Plan did not always include the name of the Lead Member. This would be rectified by the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the Governance and Audit Committee Forward Plan be noted.

6. Changes to Governance Arrangements (C2987)

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 5) which proposed to amalgamate the Governance and Audit Committee with the Standards Committee to create a new Governance and Ethics Committee.

The report had previously been considered by both the Standards Committee and Governance and Audit Committee, but the proposal was not supported by either Committee. However, Officers had been asked by Corporate Board to look into merging the two committees in order to streamline governance arrangements, particularly when considering that the workload of the Standards Committee had declined over the last few years.

Moira Fraser in introducing the item reported that the recent Peer Review had highlighted that the authority was bureaucratic in nature. This was borne out by the fact that during the previous Financial Year Strategic Support administered in excess of 330 meetings. This did not take into account the myriad of other meetings that Members were expected to attend including outside bodies, group meetings, parish/ town council meetings, meetings with Officers and those administered by other teams. Officers had therefore been seeking opportunities to streamline the number of meetings and this merger seemed a logical choice. The skills required by the Members of the two committees were broadly similar and their remit already overlapped in certain areas. A number of other authorities had already amalgamated the two functions.

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE - 22 JUNE 2015 - MINUTES

During 2014/15 the Standards Committee met four times, two of these meetings were held virtually. With the exception of the October meeting the only item of business on the agenda was the quarterly update report. During the past three years 34 complaints had been received and the Standards Committee would only have to have considered a maximum of five of these. Since the implementation of the revised standards arrangements around 80% of complaints were dealt with by the Independent Person and the Monitoring Officer at the Initial Assessment stage. There was no Member involvement required at this point in the process.

It was important to note that the current Standards Committee was constituted on a proportional basis. This would also be true of the proposed Governance and Ethics Committee. Officers had therefore proposed the retention of the Advisory Panel (which was not based on proportionality and was made up of two Members of the Administration, two Members of the Opposition, two parish council representatives and two Independent Members) to ensure that the perception of political neutrality was retained.

The Governance and Ethics agenda would be structured into two parts so that the Parish Councillors would not have to stay for the rest of the debate if they did not wish to do so. They would be appointed in a non-voting capacity as they were on the Standards Committee.

In the event that a hearing was required a special meeting would be convened to conduct this item of business.

The paper was discussed at the previous Standards Committee and Members raised a number of concerns. They were nervous that the newly elected District and Parish Councillors might, due to their inexperience generate additional complainants. This was not Officer's experience following the 2011 elections.

Members were also concerned about the possible impact of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on the level of complaints. If a significant number of complaints were experienced the Standards Committee could be reconstituted although training might offer a better solution. Guidance might need to be provided to Parish Councils on CIL and its use.

When this item was discussed at the previous Governance and Audit Committee Members felt that they would like more time to consider the proposals hence the item being included on this agenda.

The matter has been revisited by the Standards Committee via virtual means. The Committee were largely supportive of the proposal to merge. Councillor Adrian Edwards has raised some concerns about the proposals politicising the standards processes. Members were reminded that the current Standards Committee was proportionally constituted and that the revised Committee would not change that situation. Officers had therefore recommended the retention of the Advisory Panel to address this issue. In addition the retention of the two non-voting parish councillors would be retained on the merged Committee if Members were minded to approve it.

Although this proposal would only generate a small saving both in terms of money and meetings the motivation was to improve the efficiency of the Council's democratic process and combining these two committees would be a good starting point.

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE - 22 JUNE 2015 - MINUTES

Councillor Anthony Pick sought reassurance that the skills set of Members on the two Committees would be comparable. Officers explained that broadly they would be the same in that they required members to act impartially and have attention to detail. Members of the Governance and Audit Committee would however be required to consider financial reports.

In accordance with paragraph 7.7.1 of the Constitution Members voted to suspend Standing Orders and allow those Members of the Standards Committee present to address the Committee. Councillor Adrian Edwards stated that under the previous standards arrangements the Standards Committee was not required to be constituted on a proportional basis. He was concerned that the revised arrangements might lead to a perception of political bias. This was exacerbated by the current political make up of the Council. He queried whether the proposed merger was an administrative issue. Officers noted that the proportionality rules would have to be applied to either the Standards Committee or the Governance and Ethics Committee due to the enactment of the Localism Act 2011. Councillor Webb commented that the Committee would need to be acutely aware of the possibility of accusations of political bias.

Councillor Rick Jones commented that, as he had only recently been elected, he did not have any experience of either of the Committees but based on the report and the verbal explanation offered at the meeting he supported the merger. His only other concern was about the length of agendas. Officers explained that neither sets of agendas were currently oversubscribed and that the forward plan would assist with identifying any issues in advance of the agendas being prepared.

Councillor Sheila Ellison noted the comments in respect of perception of bias based on the political composition of the Committee. Councillor Lee Dillon commented that either Committee would be constituted on a political basis. He therefore did not see that as an issue.

Members voted to re-instate standing orders. The Chairman thanked the Members of the Standards Committee present for attending.

Councillor Paul Bryant asked for clarification around the comments about CIL. Officers explained that the Standards Committee was concerned that awarding CIL to the town and parish councils might lead to additional complaints being received were parishioners were not supportive of where funding was allocated to.

Councillor Jeff Beck proposed that the Officer's recommendation be accepted. This was seconded by Councillor Paul Bryant.

RESOLVED that to recommend to Full Council that the recommendations in the report be accepted.

(The meeting commenced at 3.00pm and closed at 3.33pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

This page is intentionally left blank

Record of Standards Committee Virtual Meeting

Item: Changes to Governance Arrangements (C2987)	
Purpose of Report:	To present the recommendation to create a Governance and Ethics Committee in place of the Governance and Audit Committee and Standards Committee.
Recommended Actions for Full Council:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider amalgamating the Governance and Audit and Standards Committees to form the Governance and Ethics Committee. 2. To delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to amend the Constitution (including the terms of reference) to reflect any merging of the Standards Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee if Members are minded to approve it. 3. To delegate authority to the Head of Strategic Support to amend the Timetable of Meetings for 2015/16 if Members are minded to approve the merging of the two Committees.
Comments: Councillor Peter Argyle (12/06) Councillor Rick Jones (14/06) Parish Councillor Barry Dickens (15/06) Councillor Mollie Lock (22/06)	<p>I have no problems with this merger taking place.</p> <p>I am not against this idea. The resulting committee will have a large and active remit, and would be very interesting to be a part of. If it would also be easier to support and administer then there is a bonus.</p> <p>I support this committee amalgamation plan. If I understand correctly such an amalgamation would have little impact on me as a Parish Council Member in that I would continue to just be involved with Standards issues.</p> <p>I thought that at the last meeting of Standards Committee, Members had voted that the Committee should function for possibly a further year to allow new District and Parish Councillors to fully</p>

Governance and Audit Committee Forward Plan August 2015 –May 2016

No.	Ref No	Item	Purpose	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Governance/ Audit
24 August 2015						
1.	GE3001	Annual Internal Audit Report 2014/15	To provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control framework	Ian Priestley	Deputy Leader, Finance, Insurance, Health & Safety, HR, Pensions, ICT & Corporate Support	Audit
	GE3002	Annual Governance Statement 2014-15	To review the Annual Governance Statement	Ian Priestley	Deputy Leader, Finance, Insurance, Health & Safety, HR, Pensions, ICT & Corporate Support	Audit
2.	GE3003	Annual Governance Statement - Statement in Support by the Section 151 Officer	To provide evidence and independent verification of governance matters which may impact on the Annual Governance Statement from the viewpoint of the Section 151 Officer.	Andy Walker	Deputy Leader, Finance, Insurance, Health & Safety, HR, Pensions, ICT &	Audit

No.	Ref No	Item	Purpose	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Governance/ Audit
3.	GE3004	Annual Governance Statement - Statement in Support by the Monitoring Officer	To provide evidence and independent verification of governance matters which may impact on the Annual Governance Statement from the viewpoint of the Monitoring Officer.	David Holling	Corporate Support Deputy Leader, Finance, Insurance, Health & Safety, HR, Pensions, ICT & Corporate Support	Audit
4.	GE3006	West Berkshire Council Financial Statements 2014/15 including KPMG Opinion		Andy Walker	Deputy Leader, Finance, Insurance, Health & Safety, HR, Pensions, ICT & Corporate Support	Audit
5.	GE3031	Monitoring Officer's Quarterly Update Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – Quarter 1 of 2015/16	To provide an update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and to bring to the attention of the Committee any complaints or other problems within West Berkshire.	David Holling	Chairman of Governance and Ethics	Standards

No.	Ref No	Item	Purpose	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Governance/ Audit
23 November 2015						
6.	C3011	Changes to the Constitution	To review and amend parts of the Constitution if required following discussion at the Finance and Governance Group	David Holling	Leader of the Council, Strategy & Performance, Legal & Strategic Support	Governance
7.	GE3032	Monitoring Officer's Quarterly Update Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – Quarter 2 of 2015/16	To provide an update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and to bring to the attention of the Committee any complaints or other problems within West Berkshire.	David Holling	Chairman of Governance and Ethics	Standards
08 February 2016						
8.	C3012	Changes to the Constitution	To review and amend parts of the Constitution if required following discussion at the Finance and Governance Group	David Holling	Leader of the Council, Strategy & Performance, Legal & Strategic Support	Governance
9.	C2981	Amendments to the Constitution - Scheme of Delegation	To review and amend sections of the Scheme of Delegation in light of legislative changes and current practice.	David Holling	Leader of the Council, Strategy & Performance, Legal &	Governance

No.	Ref No	Item	Purpose	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Governance/ Audit
10.	GE3007	Internal Audit - Interim Report 2015-16	To update the Committee on the outcome of internal audit work.	Ian Priestley	Strategic Support Deputy Leader, Finance, Insurance, Health & Safety, HR, Pensions, ICT & Corporate Support	Audit
11.	GE3033	Monitoring Officer's Quarterly Update Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – Quarter 3 of 2015/16	To provide an update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and to bring to the attention of the Committee any complaints or other problems within West Berkshire.	David Holling	Chairman of Governance and Ethics	Standards
25 April 2016						
12.	GE3008	Internal Audit Plan 2016/17	To outline the proposed internal audit work programme for the next three years	Ian Priestley	Deputy Leader, Finance, Insurance, Health & Safety, HR, Pensions, ICT & Corporate	Audit

No.	Ref No	Item	Purpose	Lead Officer	Lead Member	Governance/ Audit
13.	GA3008 (a)	External Audit Plan 2015-16	To provide Members with a copy of the External Audit Plan for 2015-16.	Ian Priestley	Support Deputy Leader, Finance, Insurance, Health & Safety, HR, Pensions, ICT & Corporate Support	Audit
14.	C3013	Changes to the Constitution	To review and amend parts of the Constitution if required following discussion at the Finance and Governance Group	David Holling	Leader of the Council, Strategy & Performance, Legal & Strategic Support	Governance
15.	C3034	Monitoring Officer's Quarterly Update Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee –2015/16 Year End	To provide an update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and to bring to the attention of the Committee any complaints or other problems within West Berkshire.	David Holling	Chairman of Governance and Ethics	Standards

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 5

Title of Report:	Update on Ethical matters – Quarter 1 of 2015/16
Report to be considered by:	Governance and Ethics Committee
Date of Meeting:	24 August 2015
Forward Plan Ref:	GE3031

Purpose of Report: To provide an update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and to bring to the attention of the Committee any complaints or other problems within West Berkshire.

Recommended Action: To note the report.

Reason for decision to be taken: The Governance and Ethics Committee is responsible for ensuring that District and Town/Parish Councillors in West Berkshire are aware of the standards of conduct expected of them and that they observe those standards.

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation:

- Localism Act 2011
- Reports to Council 10 May 2012 and Special Council on the 16 July 2012
- Terms of Reference for the Governance and Ethics Committee and Advisory Panel;
- A new Code of Conduct for West Berkshire District Councillors.

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim:

CSA5 – Become an even more effective Council

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy aims and priorities by:
Ensuring that high ethical standards are maintained by District, Town and Parish Councillors

Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Quentin Webb
E-mail Address:	qwebb@westberks.gov.uk
Date Member agreed report:	13 July 2015

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	David Holling
Job Title:	Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)
Tel. No.:	01635 519422
E-mail Address:	dholling@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

- Policy:** Revised policy and changes to processes adopted at Council in December 2013
- Financial:** There are no financial issues arising from this report. All costs associated with the investigation of complaints are met from within existing budgets.
- Personnel:** There are no personnel issues associated with this report
- Legal/Procurement:** There are no legal issues arising from this report, The matters covered by this report are generally requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and regulations made under it.
- Property:** None
- Risk Management:** The benefits of this process are the maintenance of the Council's credibility and good governance by a high standard of ethical behaviour. The threats are the loss of credibility of the Council if standards fall.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Not relevant to equality			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 it was agreed that quarterly reports would be provided to the Governance and Ethics Committee. This report sets out the number and nature of standards complaints received, progress made with complaints submitted and highlights any areas where training or other action might avoid further complaints in the future.

2. Key Issues Identified in the report:

- 2.1 Following the 02 July 2015 Council meeting the Standards Committee and Governance and Audit Committee were merged and a Governance and Ethics Committee was formed. Revised Membership of the Committee has now been agreed with the political groups.
- 2.2 Three Independent Persons have been appointed to support the standards regime. They are: Lindsey Appleton, James Rees and Mike Wall.
- 2.3 The following Parish Councillors have also been re-appointed: Chris Bridges and Barrie Dickens (Non-voting Parish Council representatives on the Governance and Ethics Committee) and Tony Renouf and Darren Peace (Parish Council Representatives on the Advisory Panel).
- 2.4 During Quarter 1 of 2015/16 one formal complaint (NPC3/15) was received by the Monitoring Officer. This complaint was later withdrawn by the complainant.
- 2.5 The investigation into complaints NPC4/14, NPC5/14 and NPC1/15, which are all related, has concluded. The independent investigator's report will be submitted to the Advisory Panel on the 13th August 2015 who will make a recommendation to the Governance and Ethics Committee (special meeting on the 03rd September 2015).
- 2.6 No dispensations were granted during Quarter 1 of 2015/16.
- 2.7 No declarations of gifts and hospitality have been made by District Councillors during Quarter 1 of 2015/16.
- 2.8 Training on the Code of Conduct for District, Town and Parish Councillors was undertaken in June 2015 and a further session has been arranged for October 2015.
- 2.9 The number of complaints remains low.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 There is no decision to be made and therefore no Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 was enacted on 15th November 2011 and it made fundamental changes to the system of regulation of the standards of conduct for elected and co-opted members of Councils and Parish/Town Councils.
- 1.2 As part of this process the Council set up a Standards Committee to ensure that high standards of conduct were promoted. The workload of the Standards Committee has declined over the last few years and Members therefore agreed to the merger of the Governance and Audit and Standards Committees of the Council in order to streamline governance arrangements. This decision was made at the 02 July 2015 Council meeting.
- 1.3 As part of the process of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted Members it was agreed that the Monitoring Officer would make quarterly reports to the Standards Committee. This function will now be undertaken by the Governance and Ethics Committee. The reports set out the number and nature of complaints received and highlights areas where training or other action might avoid further complaints in the future. It also provides a means of updating the Committee on the progress of investigations together with any costs incurred.

2. Standards Regime

- 2.1 The Council has adopted a Standards Regime to meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and the Regulations made under that Act including:
 - Terms of Reference for the Governance and Ethics Committee and Advisory Panel;
 - Code of Conduct for West Berkshire District Councillors;
 - complaints procedures for breaches of that code;
 - dispensations procedure.

Membership

Independent Persons

- 2.2 Under Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has to ensure it has appointed at least one Independent Person who is consulted before any decision is made to investigate an allegation against any Member of the Council or any Parish/Town Councillor. It was agreed at the Full Council meeting on the 27 September 2012 that the Independent Person may be consulted directly either by the person who has made the complaint or the person the complaint has been made about. Following the 02 July 2015 meeting three Independent Persons have been appointed and they will be used on a rotational basis to assess complaints and support the Advisory Panel.
- 2.3 The Independent Persons for 2015/16 are:
 - Lindsey Appleton
 - James Rees
 - Mike Wall

- 2.4 The role of the Independent Person has recently been expanded to include a requirement to sit on a panel where the potential dismissal or disciplining of the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer or S151 Officer is discussed. This amendment was introduced to meet the requirements of The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015. That panel would make a recommendation to Full Council.
- 2.5 For the avoidance of doubt a person is not considered to be "independent" if:-
- a) They are or have been, within the last five years, an elected or co-opted Member or officer of the Council or of any Parish Council's within this area. This also applies to committees or sub-committees of the various Councils.
 - b) They are a relative or close friend of a current elected, or co-opted, Member or officer of the Council or any Parish Council within its area, or any elected or co-opted member of any committee or sub-committee.
 - c) The definition of relative includes the candidate's spouse, civil partner, grandparent, child etc.

Governance and Ethics Committee

2.6 The Governance and Ethics Committee consists of ten members, eight District Councillors, reflecting the political balance of the Council and two co-opted non voting Parish/Town Councillors. The membership for 2015/16 is as follows:

- Steve Ardagh-Walter,
- Jeff Beck,
- Graham Bridgman,
- James Cole,
- Lee Dillon,
- Rick Jones,
- Anthony Pick,
- Quentin Webb,
- Chris Bridges, (Non-voting Parish Council representative)
- Barrie Dickens (Non-voting Parish Council representative)

- Billy Drummond (substitute)
- Sheila Ellison (substitute)
- Tim Metcalfe (substitute)

Advisory Panel

2.7 The Advisory Panel comprises the following Members:

- Adrian Edwards
- Richard Crumly
- Mollie Lock,
- Alan Macro
- Tony Renouf,
- Darren Peace

- 2.8 Two Independent Persons will also be included on each Advisory Panel and they will be used on a rotational basis. The Independent Person consulted as part of the Initial Assessment should not sit on the associated Advisory Panel if one is required. The Advisory Panel meetings will be chaired by an Independent Person.

3. Parish/ Town Councils

- 3.1 Parishes and Town Councils have been asked to provide the Monitoring Officer with their Parish Councillor's Registers of Interest forms post the May 2015 election. This information will be posted on the relevant websites or where the Parish Council does not have a website it will be published on West Berkshire Council's website. Work on collecting this information is ongoing.

4. Council's Constitution

- 4.1 Since April 2015 Part 2 (Articles of the Constitution), Part 4 (Council Rules of Procedure), Part 11 (Contract Rules of Procedure), Part 12 (Personnel Rules of Procedure) Appendices F (Protocol for Use of ICT Equipment Supplied to Members) and J (Protocol for Council Representation on Outside Bodies) to Part 13 (Codes and Protocols) and Part 14 (Member Allowances Scheme) have been amended by Full Council.
- 4.2 The Monitoring Officer under his delegated authority has authorised the following changes to the Constitution since April 2015: Appendix A to Parts 5 (Executive Rules of Procedure), 6 (Overview and Scrutiny Rules of Procedure) and 7 (Regulatory and Other Committees Rules of Procedure).

5. Complaints Against Councillors

- 5.1 During Quarter 1 of 2015/16 (April –June 2015) one formal complaint was received by the Monitoring Officer. The complaint (NPC3/15) was later withdrawn by the complainant.
- 5.2 In terms of existing complaints the Deputy Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person, had concluded during quarter 2 of 2014/15 that a potential breach of the Code of Conduct might have occurred in relation to NPC4/14 and the matter was referred to an independent investigator to investigate. The initial findings of the investigator were reported to the Advisory Panel on the 23 March 2015. New information came to light after the agenda was published and as a result of this the Panel agreed to defer consideration of that item until the matter could be more fully investigated.
- 5.3 During Quarters 3 and 4 of 2014/15 two further, but related complaints, were received by the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Person concluded that in respect of both NPC5/14 and NPC1/15 the matters should also be referred for investigation. It was later agreed that all three complaints should be subject to a single investigation. This work has now concluded and will be referred back to the Advisory Panel (13th August 2015) who will make a recommendation to the Governance and Ethics Committee for determination (Special meeting on the 03rd September 2015).

6. Dispensations

6.1 No dispensations to West Berkshire Councillors were granted during Quarter 1 of 2015/16.

7. Gifts and Hospitality

7.1 Appendix D (Gifts and Hospitality: A Code of Conduct for Councillors) to Part 13 of the Constitution (Codes and Protocols) states that 'Regular updates of declarations will be reported to the Governance and Ethics Committee as part of the quarterly performance monitoring reports'.

7.2 Appendix D to Part 13 of the Constitution (Codes and Protocols) requires Members to:

- Register every individual gift or item of hospitality received, in their capacity as a Councillor, that is over £25 in value;
- Prior to accepting any hospitality with a value of £25 or more, a Councillor must seek authorisation from the Monitoring Officer;
- Members should be aware of serial givers or repeat offers of hospitality;
- registration of the gift or hospitality must be made *within 28 days of the date of receipt* ;
- Failure to comply with the rules is a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct and could lead to a complaint being reported to the Monitoring Officer or the Governance and Ethics Committee;
- The press and public have the right to inspect your gift and hospitality declaration forms;
- Where the spouse/partner of a Councillor is also a recipient of any gifts or hospitality the Councillor must ensure that the combined value is also recorded by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the procedures.

7.3 No declarations of gifts and hospitality have been made by District Councillors during Quarter 1 of 2015/16. The only exception to this being the hospitality received by the Chairman whilst undertaking his civic duties.

8. Training or Other Action Identified to avoid Further Complaints

8.1 Training on the Code of Conduct was included in the Member Induction Programme which was arranged post the May 2015 election. The training, which was well received, was reasonably well attended. In total 18 Members attended the training. The four new Members, for whom the session was mandatory, and who were unable to attend would be invited to attend additional training being arranged for October 2015.

8.2 Parish and Town Councillors and their clerks were also invited to attend Code of Conduct Training in June 2015. An additional training session has also been arranged the 13th October 2015.

9. Conclusion

The number of complaints at this stage remains low. Any issues identified will be included in the training being arranged for October 2015.

Appendices

Appendix A – Advisory Panel Terms of Reference

Appendix B – Governance and Ethics Terms of Reference

Appendix C – Role of the Monitoring Officer

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/A

Officers Consulted: Moira Fraser, Andy Day, Sarah Clarke

Trade Union: Not consulted

Appendix A

Advisory Panel Terms of Reference

- The Governance and Ethics Committee shall be supported by an Advisory Panel of eight members comprising 2 members of the administration, 2 members of the opposition, 2 parish council representatives and 2 independent persons
- The Advisory Panel shall be responsible for dealing with complaints where evidence of breach of the Code has been identified and shall report its findings to Governance and Ethics Committee for a formal decision.
- The Advisory Panel shall be chaired by an Independent Person

This page is intentionally left blank

Terms of Reference of the Governance and Ethics Committee

The roles and functions of the Governance and Ethics Committee are to:

1. Consider and make recommendations to the Council on proposed changes to the Constitution.
2. Consider any governance issues emanating from the Government and determine their effect on the Council's business and governance processes.
3. Review the effectiveness of the Council's Risk Management arrangements, the control environment and associated Anti Fraud and Corruption arrangements.
4. Seek assurance that action is being taken on risk related issues identified by auditors and inspectors.
5. Be satisfied that the Council's assurance statements (currently produced annually by all Heads of Service) and the Annual Governance Statement properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it.
6. Be satisfied that any Partnership that the Council enters into has robust Governance and Risk Management arrangements and that any risk to the Council from the Partnership is minimised.
7. Approve the Internal Audit Strategy and Plan (to ensure that there is adequate coverage) and monitor performance (assessing whether adequate skills and resources are available to provide an effective function).
8. Receive an interim and annual report from the Head of Internal Audit on work undertaken during the year.
9. To consider any issues brought to the attention of the Committee, or Chair and Vice-Chair, by the Chief Internal Auditor at any time during the year.
10. Consider reports of external audit and inspection agencies.
11. Ensure that there are effective relationships between external and internal audit and inspection agencies and other relevant bodies and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.
12. Review the financial statements, including the suitability of accounting policies and treatments, provisions or adjustments.
13. Review the external auditors annual audit letter, any other reports and opinion and monitor management action in response to issues raised. (Also comment on the external auditors planned work programme.)
14. Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted Members;
15. Assist the Councillors and co-opted Members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
16. Advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;

17. Monitor the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;
18. Advise, train or arrange to train Councillors and co-opted Members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
19. Grant dispensations to Councillors and co-opted Members on requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct;
20. Ensure arrangements are in place under which allegations of misconduct in respect of the Members' Code of Conduct can be investigated and to review such arrangements where appropriate;
21. Exercise (15) to (21) above in relation to the Parish / Town Councils wholly or mainly in its area and the Members of those Parish / Town Councils;

Advisory Panel

1. The Governance and Ethics Committee shall be supported by an Advisory Panel of eight members comprising 2 members of the administration, 2 members of the opposition, 2 parish council representatives and 2 independent members (who shall not be Independent Persons)
2. The Advisory Panel shall be responsible for dealing with complaints where evidence of breach of the Code has been identified and shall report its findings to Standards Committee for formal decision.
3. The Advisory Panel shall be chaired by an Independent Member
4. The Advisory Panel will report its findings to the (name) Committee for formal decision.

Appendix C

The Monitoring Officer carries out the following functions:

- reporting on contraventions or likely contraventions of any enactment or rule of law and reporting on any maladministration or injustice where the Ombudsman has carried out an investigation;
- establishing and maintaining registers of Members' interests and gifts and hospitality;
- maintaining, reviewing and monitoring the Constitution;
- advising Members and Parish Councillors on interpretation of the Code of Conduct;
- supporting the Standards Committee and Advisory Panel;
- conducting or appointing an external investigator to look into allegations of misconduct;
- performing ethical framework functions in relation to Parish Councils;
- acting as the proper officer for access to information;
- undertaking an initial assessment , in consultation with the Independent Person, when complaints relating to alleged breach of the Code of Conduct are received;
- making arrangements for relevant matters to be considered by the Standards Committee and Advisory Panel;
- advising whether Executive decisions are within the policy framework; and
- advising on vires issue and maladministration, and in consultation with the Section 151 Officer financial impropriety, probity, and budget and policy issues to all Members.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6

Title of Report:	West Berkshire Council Financial Statements 2014/15
Report to be considered by:	Corporate Board on 21 July 2015 Management Board for information in July 2015 Governance and Ethics Committee on 24 August 2015
Forward Plan Ref:	GE3006

Purpose of Report: To provide Members with the final copy of the Council's Financial Statements.

Recommended Action: To approve the Financial Statements and consider KPMG's Governance Report.

Reason for decision to be taken: Accounting and Audit Regulations

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: Supporting working papers to the Financial Statements

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim(s):

CSA5 – Become an even more effective Council

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Roger Croft - Tel 07765 224249
E-mail Address:	rcroft@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	23 July 2015

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Andy Walker
Job Title:	Head of Finance and s151 Officer
Tel. No.:	01635 519433
E-mail Address:	awalker@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy: N/A
Financial: N/A
Personnel: N/A
Legal/Procurement: N/A
Property: N/A
Risk Management: N/A

Is this item relevant to equality?	Yes	No
Please tick relevant boxes		
Not relevant to equality		
Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box: Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The following document is the final, post external audit, copy of the Council's Financial Statements. Members are required to approve, or not, these Financial Statements for the audit to be finalised and the accounts to be closed for the 2014-15 financial year.
- 1.2 The s151 officer approved the draft Financial Statements in June 2015 and these have been published online. KPMG have completed their audit over the Summer, and have issued an unqualified opinion of the Financial Statements.
- 1.3 The Council, delegated to the Governance and Ethics Committee, is required to approve the Financial Statements by the 30th September. The Council is bringing this report to members of the committee earlier than the statutory deadline due to giving KPMG sufficient working papers on time, and because KPMG have managed to finalise the audit in good time.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the Financial Statements.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 There is no impact.

4. Conclusion

The audit of the Financial Statements has progressed well, and the Council has been able to bring a final, and audited, copy of the Financial Statements to Governance and Ethics Committee five weeks in advance of the statutory deadline of 30th September

Appendices

Appendix A – Financial Statement of Accounts 2014/15

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/A
Officers Consulted: Corporate Board
Trade Union: N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

Annual Accounts 2014/15



**Fourth draft v4.05
25.06.15**



West Berkshire
C O U N C I L

Contents

Introduction to West Berkshire	2
Explanatory Foreword	3 - 6
Annual Governance Statement	7 – 9
Auditor’s Report	10 – 12
Statement of Responsibilities	13
CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	
• Income and Expenditure Statement	14
• Balance Sheet	15
• Movement in Reserves Statement	16
• Cash Flow Statement	17
Index of policies and notes	18
Statement of Accounting Policies	19 - 29
Other notes to the Core Financial Statements	29 - 66
Collection Fund Income and Expenditure Account	67
Notes to the Collection Fund	68 - 70
Glossary	71 - 74
Abbreviations	74

Introduction to West Berkshire

West Berkshire is an administrative area of 704 square kilometres containing extensive rural areas; 74% of the land area lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). There are two main urban areas, the towns of Newbury and Thatcham and the urban areas of Tilehurst and Calcot to the west of Reading.

Rural West Berkshire is a large and diverse area which contains a number of larger towns and villages, including Hungerford, Lambourn and Kintbury in the west and Pangbourne, Burghfield Common and Mortimer to the east. There are a large number of smaller village communities throughout the area.

The District occupies a strategic position where the east-west M4 corridor intersects the north-south route of the A34. There are mainline railway services to London and good connections to nearby larger centres such as Reading, Oxford, Swindon and Basingstoke. These factors, combined with the high quality urban and rural environment within the district, have contributed to a thriving economy, making the area a popular place to live and work. People in West Berkshire enjoy better health and lower crime rates than the national average.

Levels of educational attainment are good. House prices in West Berkshire are among the highest in the UK and the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs, particularly for young people and key workers, is one of the Council's priorities.



West Berkshire has a strong industrial base, characterised by new technology industries such as Vodafone along with a strong service sector and several manufacturing and distribution firms. West Berkshire is home to a number of national and international companies, as well as defence establishments.

Explanatory Foreword

Introduction

This foreword provides a guide to the most significant matters reported in the financial statements and an explanation of West Berkshire Council's financial position.

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 require the Council to produce a Statement of Accounts for each financial year giving certain specified information. The foreword accompanies the accounts and sets out to explain the financial details contained within them.

To assist readers, a glossary of accounting terms is included on pages 71 to 74.

This foreword is followed by:

- **The Annual Governance Statement** which explains the arrangements the Council has for the governance of its affairs and for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control;
- **The Independent Auditor's Report** which gives the auditor's opinion on the financial statements and gives a conclusion on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.
- **The Statement of Responsibilities** which sets out the respective responsibilities of the Council and the Head of Finance.

The Statement of Accounts incorporates the following:

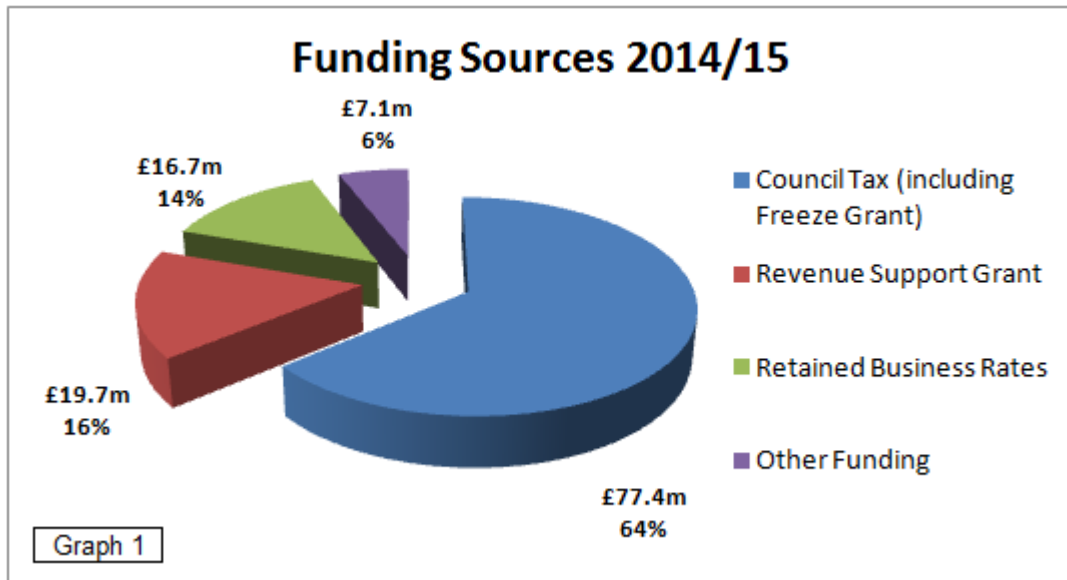
- **The Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Account** which shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from Council Tax. Councils raise Council Tax to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. The Council Tax position is shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement.
- **The Balance Sheet** which shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. The net assets of the Council (total 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 Council may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt). The second category of reserves is those that the Council is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves 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 shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement section 'Adjustments required due to statutory accounting policy'.
- **The Movement in Reserves Statement** which shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Council, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and 'unusable' reserves.
- **The Cash Flow Statement** which 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 of the extent to which the operations of the Council are funded by way of Council Tax and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the Council. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Council's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (i.e. borrowing) to the Council.

- **The Collection Fund Income and Expenditure Account**, which records the Council Tax and Business Rates transactions for the financial year and how they are subsequently distributed.

Revenue Expenditure 2014/15

The Council set a net revenue budget for the 2014/15 financial year of £120.9m. The expenditure was funded by Government Grant (Revenue Support Grant), Retained Business Rates, Council Tax and other amounts including various smaller grants, as shown in the following chart.



After planned use of reserves of £280k, the approved budget was £121.2m. The following table compares the approved budget for the year with the actual outturn for 2014/15. This table reflects the Council's structure during 2014/15 which is the basis for internal management of performance against budgets.

2014/15 - Budget outturn Table 2	Approved Budget	Final Budget after agreed carry forwards	Outturn	Variance to Final Budget
Financial year ending 31 March 2015	£000	£000	£000	£000
Communities Directorate	67,318	68,114	68,719	605
Environment Directorate	33,643	32,848	32,524	(324)
Resources Directorate	12,751	12,878	12,619	(259)
Levies and Interest	7,446	7,318	7,339	21
TOTALS	121,158	121,158	121,201	43

The overall outturn was an over spend of £43k, which represents 0.035% of the net revenue budget. Overall movement on the General Fund was therefore a decrease of £43k.

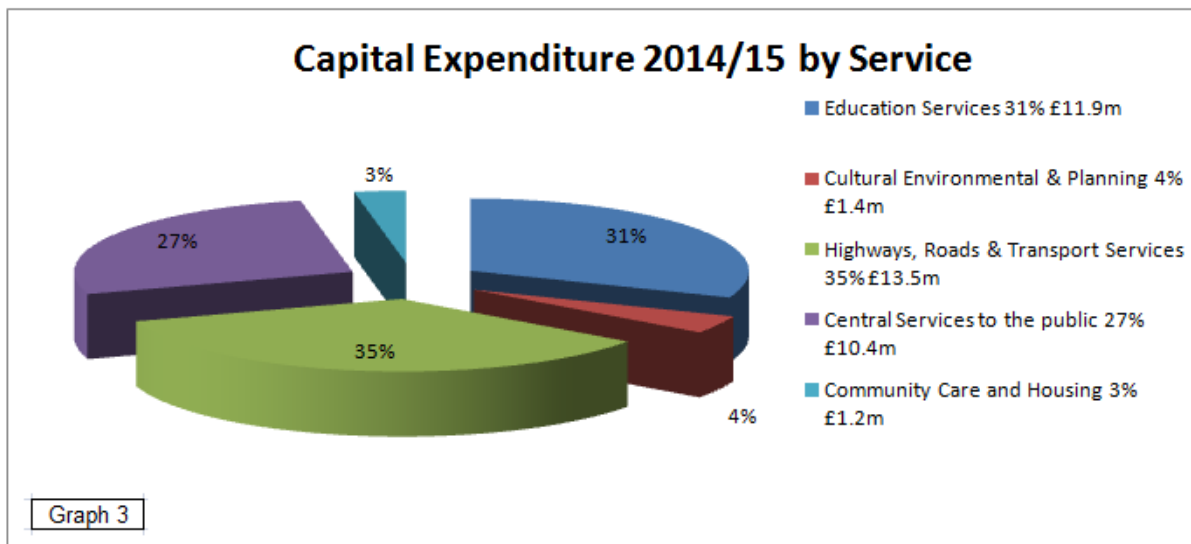
In contrast to the table above, the information presented in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, reflects the categories of expenditure specified in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Service Reporting Code of Practice for Local Authorities (SeRCOP). A reconciliation between the two presentation formats is shown in Table 60 on page 65.

The Collection Fund deficit was over £3,595k for the 2014/15 financial year (Council Tax £227k and Non Domestic Rates £3,368k). The deficit is recovered as part of the Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates setting process during the following financial year.

The pension fund deficit is currently £250m. This amount is written out through the accounts so has no meaningful impact on the Council's current operation, though it clearly reduces the Council's 'net worth' on the Balance Sheet.

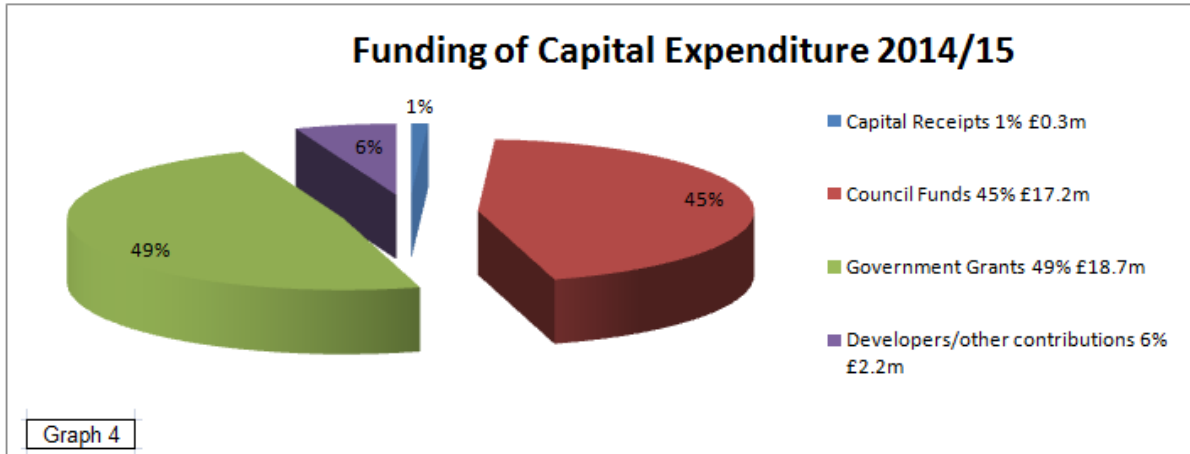
Capital Expenditure 2014/15

The Council needs to invest a certain amount of capital each year to make sure that its assets (e.g. school buildings, roads, leisure centres) remain fit for purpose and in a good state of repair. The chart below shows the areas on which £38.4m capital was spent in 2014/15.



Wherever possible the investment in capital is funded from government grants, developers' contributions or through the sale of assets which the Council no longer needs. However, when there is not enough funding from these sources the Council needs to take out long term loans to help fund its capital investment.

The chart below shows how the Council's gross capital expenditure of £38.4m was funded. This shows that the majority of the Council's capital investment was funded from central government grants and the Council's own funds.



In 2014/15 the Council took out new long term loans of £17.7m to fund capital expenditure and made principal repayments of £4.6m, bringing its long term loans balance to £127.1m. The Council also needs to take out short terms loans to cover its cash flow needs. Short term loans are normally taken out for periods of less than one month and the cost of this borrowing is more than offset by the interest earned by investment of the Council's surplus cash. The Council had short term loans of £8.0m outstanding at the 31 March 2015. Together with £4.6m principal repayments due to be made in the financial year 2014/15 on longer term loans, this makes a total short term borrowing balance of £12.6m.

The Council has a revenue budget of approximately £9m for repayment of borrowing to fund the current and previous capital programmes. This amount will grow as a percentage of the Council's budget in the coming years, though at a relatively slow level, as the amount of capital spend planned to be funded from borrowing will decrease over the next five years.

One outcome of the national economic position is low rates of borrowing from the PWLB. This has enabled the Council to borrow monies for the capital strategy at a very low rate; the other side of this is that return on short term investments is also comparatively low. As this Council does not hold any long term investments, this is not a great significance compared to other Councils which hold larger investments and cash balances.

Conclusion

The Council has managed to achieve a comparatively low under spend and maintain levels of reserves to help reduce known pressures for the 2015/16 financial year. This has been achieved through the effective management of its finances over the past twelve months against a backdrop of continued local and national financial volatility.

Further information

If you have any questions or require further information on these accounts please contact:

Andy Walker, Head of Finance
 West Berkshire Council
 Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD
AWalker@westberks.gov.uk
 (01635) 519 433

Annual Governance Statement

1 Scope of responsibility

- 1.1 West Berkshire Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. West Berkshire Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, West Berkshire Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3 West Berkshire Council has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.
- 1.4 This statement explains how West Berkshire Council has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

2 The purpose of the governance framework

- 2.1 The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which West Berkshire Council is directed and controlled and its activities through which it engages with, leads and accounts to the community. It enables West Berkshire Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services.
- 2.2 The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of West Berkshire Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
- 2.3 The governance framework has been in place at West Berkshire Council for the year ended 31 March 2014 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and statement of accounts.

3 The governance framework

- 3.1 The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise West Berkshire Council's governance arrangements are set out below and include arrangements for:
 - Identifying and communicating West Berkshire Council's Strategy that sets out its purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users;
 - Reviewing West Berkshire Council's Strategy and its implications for West Berkshire Council's governance arrangements;

- Measuring the quality of services for users, ensuring they are delivered in accordance with West Berkshire Council's objectives and ensuring that they represent the best use of resources;
- Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication;
- Developing, communicating and embedding codes of conduct, defining the standards of behaviour for members and staff;
- Reviewing and updating the Constitution including Contracts Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules of Procedure, The Scheme of Delegation, which clearly define how decisions are taken and the processes and controls required to manage risks;
- Ensuring the authority's financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on "The Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010)";
- The Governance and Audit Committee which performs the core functions of an audit committee, as identified in CIPFA's "Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities";
- The Finance and Governance Group which helps to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful;
- Conducting a regular review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit;
- Whistle-blowing and for receiving and investigating complaints from the public;
- Identifying the development needs of Members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training;
- Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation.

4 Review of effectiveness

- 4.1 West Berkshire Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of all managers within West Berkshire Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment.
- 4.2 The following processes have been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance framework, and includes:
- The work of the Finance and Governance Group;
 - The work of the Risk Strategy Group and the Risk Management framework;
 - The annual assurance statements produced by all Heads of Service;
 - The work of the Governance and Audit Committee;
 - The work of the Standards Committee;
 - The work of Internal Audit; and
 - The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.

- 4.3 We have been advised of the implications of the result of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework by the Governance and Audit committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

5 Significant governance issues identified in the AGS for 2012/13

- 5.1 The following is an outline of the significant governance issues that have been identified in preparing the 2012/13 AGS.

- Judicial Review remains a risk.

- 5.2 The following measures were implemented during 2013/14:

- The Head of Strategic Support reviewed the revised arrangements for conducting equalities impact assessments in relation to proposed changes in service delivery, to ensure they are effective.

6 Significant Governance Issues identified in 2013/14

- 6.1 The following is an outline of the significant governance issues identified in 2013/14.

- Recruitment and retention - The lack of flexibility in the Council's recruitment and retention policies and procedures is putting at risk the ability of Children's Service to attract and retain social workers.

- 6.2 The following measures were implemented during 2014/15:

- The Council reviewed the recruitment and retention procedures and agreed to allow variation that is enabling the Children's Service to enhance the recruitment and retention package for key staff.

Signed:

Nick Carter – Chief Executive

Gordon Lundie – Leader of the Council

Independent auditor's report to the members of West Berkshire Council

We have audited the financial statements of West Berkshire Council for the year ended 31 March 2015 on pages 14 to 17 and 67. 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 2014/15.

This report is made solely to the members of the Authority, as a body, in accordance with Part II of the Audit Commission Act 1998. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Authority, as a body, those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the members of the Authority, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Head of Finance and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Head of Finance Responsibilities, the Head of Finance 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, 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 Head of Finance and the overall presentation of the financial statements.

In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Explanatory Forward to identify material inconsistencies with 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 the Authority as at 31 March 2015 and of the Authority's expenditure and income for the year then ended;
- have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2014/15.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

The Code of Audit Practice 2010 for Local Government Bodies requires us to report to you if:

- the annual governance statement set out on pages 7 to 9 does not reflect compliance with 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: a Framework' published by CIPFA/SOLACE in June 2007; or
- the information given in the explanatory foreword for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is not consistent with the financial statements; or
- any matters have been reported in the public interest under section 8 of Audit Commission Act 1998 in the course of, or at the conclusion of, the audit; or
- any recommendations have been made under section 11 of the Audit Commission Act 1998; or
- any other special powers of the auditor have been exercised under the Audit Commission Act 1998.

We have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

Conclusion on West Berkshire 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 5 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 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 Audit Commission requires us to report to you our conclusion relating to proper arrangements, having regard to relevant criteria specified by the Audit Commission.

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 audit in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance on the specified criteria, published by the Audit Commission in October 2013, as to whether the Authority has proper arrangements for:

- securing financial resilience; and
- challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Audit Commission has determined these two criteria as those necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether the Authority put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2015.

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 Authority had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Conclusion

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance on the specified criteria published by the Audit Commission in October 2013, we are satisfied that, in all significant respects, West Berkshire Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2015.

Certificate

We certify that we have completed the audit of the financial statements of West Berkshire Council in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Code of Audit Practice 2010 for Local Government Bodies issued by the Audit Commission.

Chartered Accountants
3 Assembly Square
Britannia Quay
Cardiff Bay
CF10 4AX

Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts

The Council's Responsibilities

The Council is required:

- To make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Authority, for the purposes of this requirement for the 2014/15 financial year, that officer is the Head of Finance
- To manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets
- To approve the Statement of Accounts.

The Head of Finance's Responsibilities

The Head of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts. This is required by the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in United Kingdom ('the Code'), to present fairly the financial position of the Authority at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year (ended 31 March 2015).

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Head of Finance 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 Head of Finance has also:

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

The Statement of Accounts present a true and fair view of the financial position of West Berkshire Council as at 31 March 2015.



Andy Walker
Head of Finance 8 June 2015

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

2013/14			Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement Table 05	2014/15		
Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000		Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000
				Note		
Net Expenditure on Continuing Services						
54,124	(8,534)	45,590	Adult social care		59,807	(12,317)
10,333	(2,155)	8,178	Central Services		9,616	(1,701)
10,148	(1,033)	9,115	Cultural & Related Services		13,532	(1,633)
32,340	(3,719)	28,621	Environmental & Regulatory Services		23,650	(3,583)
5,343	(1,751)	3,592	Planning Services		5,031	(1,762)
141,654	(102,693)	38,961	Education and Children's Services		154,916	(108,923)
21,453	(4,752)	16,701	Highways and Transport Services		32,535	(15,153)
48,680	(41,793)	6,887	Housing Services		48,199	(42,501)
4,463	(4,458)	5	Public Health		4,779	(4,878)
946	(57)	889	Non-Distributed costs	8a	369	(1,078)
329,484	(170,945)	158,539	Net Cost of Services	8b	352,434	(193,529)
		26,225	(Gain) / loss on the disposal of non current assets			(106)
		3,611	Precepts to Parishes	8e		3,648
		141	Levies Payable			140
		87	(Surpluses)/deficits on trading undertakings	(6)		113
		30,064	Other Operating Expenditure			3,795
	(449)		Interest Receivable	12a		(399)
	(369)		(Surpluses)/deficits on investment properties	16a		(386)
	9,430		Pension Interest & Expected return on Assets			62,556
	4,920		Interest Payable and similar charges	12a		5,353
		13,532	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure			67,124
		202,135	Net Operating Expenditure			229,824
	(78,243)		Income from Council Tax			(80,223)
	(16,589)		Income from Business Rates			(19,219)
	(30,418)		Non Ring Fenced Government Grants			(27,604)
	(17,174)		Capital Grants and Contributions	(26)		(25,155)
	(142,424)		Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income			(152,201)
		59,711	Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services			77,623
	(23,716)		(Surplus) or deficit on revaluation of Fixed Assets	25b		5,056
	9,088		Actuarial (gains) / losses on pension funds	(18)		238
	(14,628)		Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure			5,294
		45,083	Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure			82,917

Balance Sheet

2013/14 £000	Balance Sheet Table 06	Note	2014/15	
			£000	£000
	Property, plant and Equipment			
197,593	Buildings	15a	192,775	
81,380	Land	15a	69,910	
135,803	Other	15a	141,832	
1,484	Assets Under Construction	15a	0	
<u>416,260</u>				404,517
9,277	Investment properties	16b		8,811
425,537	Total Property, Plant and Equipment			413,328
48	Long Term Debtors			107
425,585	TOTAL LONG TERM ASSETS			413,435
	Current Assets			
4,000	Short term investments	12a	4,000	
35	Inventories	18a	16	
18,541	Short term debtors	(19)	15,892	
4,993	Assets held for sale	15a	4,046	
0	Cash and cash equivalents	(20)	2,939	
<u>27,569</u>	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS			26,893
453,154	TOTAL ASSETS			440,328
	Current Liabilities			
(183)	Cash and cash equivalents	(20)	0	
(25,891)	Short term borrowing	12a	(12,643)	
(32,593)	Short term creditors	(21)	(36,707)	
<u>(58,667)</u>	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES			(49,350)
394,487	TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			390,978
	Long term Liabilities			
(597)	Provisions	(22)	(876)	
(478)	Contributions deferred account		(478)	
(184,063)	Pension liability	9f	(250,135)	
(98,000)	Borrowings PWLB	13c	(111,594)	
(16,005)	PFI liability	17b	(15,468)	
<u>(299,143)</u>				(378,551)
95,344	TOTAL ASSETS LESS LIABILITIES			12,427
8,451	General Fund	24a	7,967	
2,360	Working Balances	24a	2,233	
12,301	Earmarked Reserves	24a	12,036	
18,884	Capital Reserves	24a	21,258	
<u>41,996</u>	Usable Reserves	24a		43,494
53,348	Unusable reserves	(25)		(31,067)
95,344	TOTAL RESERVES			12,427

Movement in Reserves Statement

Movement in Reserves Statement 2014/15 Table 07	General	Earmarked	Capital		Working	Capital	Reserves		Total Authority Reserves
	Fund	GF	Receipts	Deferred			Balances	Reserves	
	Balance	Reserves	Reserve	Credit			£000	£000	£000
Balance as at 31 March 2014	8,451	12,301	0	0	2,360	18,884	41,996	53,348	95,344
Surplus or (deficit) on provision of services	(77,860)	0	0	0	0	0	(77,860)	0	(77,860)
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(5,294)	(5,294)
Comprehensive Expenditure & Income	(77,860)	0	0	0	0	0	(77,860)	(5,294)	(83,154)
Adjustment required due to statutory accounting policies	76,984	0	0	0	0	2,374	79,358	(79,358)	0
Net Increase / (Decrease) before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	(876)	0	0	0	0	2,374	1,498	(84,652)	(83,154)
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves	392	(265)	0	0	(127)	0	0	237	237
Increase / (Decrease) in Year	(484)	(265)	0	0	(127)	2,374	1,498	(84,415)	(82,917)
Balance as at 31 March 2015	7,967	12,036	0	0	2,233	21,258	43,494	(31,067)	12,427

Movement in Reserves Statement 2013/14	General	Earmarked	Capital		Working	Capital	Reserves		Total Authority Reserves
	Fund	GF	Receipts	Deferred			Balances	Reserves	
	Balance	Reserves	Reserve	Credit			£000	£000	£000
Balance as at 31 March 2013	8,001	12,586	2,437	2	2,061	20,314	45,401	95,026	140,427
Surplus or (deficit) on provision of services	(59,711)	0	0	0	0	0	(59,711)	0	(59,711)
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,628	14,628
Comprehensive Expenditure & Income	(59,711)	0	0	0	0	0	(59,711)	14,628	(45,083)
Adjustment required due to statutory accounting policies	60,175	0	(2,437)	(2)	0	(1,430)	56,306	(56,306)	0
Net Increase / (Decrease) before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	464	0	(2,437)	(2)	0	(1,430)	(3,405)	(41,678)	(45,083)
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves	(14)	(285)	0	0	299	0	0	0	0
Increase / (Decrease) in Year	450	(285)	(2,437)	(2)	299	(1,430)	(3,405)	(41,678)	(45,083)
Balance as at 31 March 2014	8,451	12,301	0	0	2,360	18,884	41,996	53,348	95,344

Cash Flow Statement

2013/14	Cash Flow Statement		2014/15	
£000	Table 08	Note	£000	£000
	Operating Activities			
94,832	Taxation		99,286	
196,007	Grants		203,414	
906	Rents		989	
748	Sale of goods and rendering of service		1,847	
449	Interest received		399	
442	Other receipts from operating activities		449	
<u>293,384</u>	Cash inflows generated from operating activities			306,384
(101,830)	Cash paid to and on behalf of employees		(100,689)	
(43,108)	Housing benefit paid out		(39,993)	
(3,360)	Precepts paid		(3,648)	
(97,893)	Cash paid to suppliers of goods and services		(126,359)	
(4,920)	Interest paid		(5,353)	
(19,734)	Other payments for operating activities		(19,862)	
<u>(270,845)</u>	cash outflows from operating activities			(295,904)
<u>22,539</u>	Net cashflows from operating activities	(27)		<u>10,480</u>
	Investing activities			
(26,266)	Purchase of property plant and equipment		(30,489)	
(66,500)	Purchase of short and long term investments		(51,500)	
(59,362)	Other payments for investing activities		(49,609)	
2,496	Proceeds from sale of PPE and investment properties		342	
62,500	Proceeds from the short and long term investments		51,500	
57,881	Other receipts from investing activities		53,312	
<u>(29,251)</u>	Net cash flows from investing activities			(26,444)
	Financing activities			
85,000	cash receipts of short and long term borrowing		101,680	
252	other receipts from financing activities		260	
(79,000)	repayments of short and long term borrowing		(81,980)	
(1,363)	other payments for financing activities		(874)	
<u>4,889</u>	Net cashflows from financing activities			19,086
(1,823)	Net increase/decrease in cash and cash equivalents		3,122	
2,006	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		(183)	
<u>183</u>	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	(28)		<u>2,939</u>

INDEX

1. Statement of Accounting Policies
 - I. General Principles
 - II. Post Balance Sheet Events
 - III. Accruals
 - IV. Cash and Cash Equivalents
 - V. Government Grants and Contribution
 - VI. Charges to Revenue for Non-Current assets
 - VII. Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under statue of Income and Expenditure
 - VIII. Employee Benefits
 - IX. Overheads and Support Services
 - X. Investment properties
 - XI. Heritage assets
 - XII. Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)
 - XIII. Inventories and Work in Progress
 - XIV. Provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets
 - XV. Financial instruments
 - XVI. Private Finance initiative
 - XVII. Leases
 - XVIII. Reserves
 - XIX. VAT
2. Accounting Standards issued not adopted
3. Critical Judgements
4. Prior Year Adjustment
5. Post Balance Sheet Events
6. Trading Operations
7. Income
8. Expenditure
9. Employee Benefits
10. Related Party Transactions
11. Auditor's Fees
12. Financial instruments
13. Nature and extent of risks arising from Financial Instruments
14. Heritage assets
15. Non Current Assets
16. Investment properties
17. Private Finance Initiative
18. Inventory and Work in Progress
19. Debtors
20. Cash and Cash Equivalents
21. Creditors
22. Provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets
23. Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme
24. Reserves and Balances
25. Unusable Reserves
26. Unapplied Capital Grants & Contributions and Receipts
27. General Fund Deficit Reconciliation to Revenue Activities Net Cash Inflow
28. Cash Flow Reconciliation to Balance Sheet
29. Disclosure of Deployment of Dedicated School Grant
30. Adjustment between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulation
31. Amounts reported for Resource Allocation Decisions

(1) Statement of Accounting Policies

I. General principles

The purpose of the Statement of Accounting Policies is to explain the basis of measurement that has been used in the preparation of the financial statements. The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2014/15 financial year and its position at the year end 31 March 2015.

The Financial Statements for 2014/15 have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2014/15 issued by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and where appropriate the International Accounting Standards (IAS). The Accounting convention adopted is principally historical cost modified by fair value for particular categories of assets and liabilities.

There are no instances in the Statement of Accounts where the fundamental accounting concepts have not been followed. The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. There are no items in the Balance Sheet at 31 March 2015 for which there is believed to be a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year.

The Council has to consider all their interests and to prepare a full set of group accounts where they have material interests in subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures. West Berkshire Council currently has no interests that necessitate the production of Group Accounts.

II. Post Balance Sheet Events

Post Balance Sheet Events are included in the notes to the core Financial Statements as they occur and represent significant transactions / events which are known to have taken place since the balance sheet date.

III. Accruals of Income and Expenditure

All revenue and capital income and expenditure relating to the financial year is accounted for in the year that it takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received. In particular:

- Fees, charges and rents due from customers are accounted for as income at the date the Council provides the relevant goods or services
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed. Where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption; they are carried as inventory on the Balance Sheet
- Works are charged as expenditure when they are completed, before which they are carried as works in progress on the Balance Sheet
- Interest payable on borrowing and receivable on investment is accounted for 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 income and expenditure have been recognised in the accounts but cash has not been received nor paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded on the Balance Sheet.

An exception to this rule is the periodic costs such as gas and electricity, which are included in the accounts on a payments basis and are not considered material to the accounts.

IV. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value. The Council's policy is to include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

V. Government Grants and Contributions

Whether paid on account, by instalments or in arrears, government grants and third party contributions and donations are recognised as income at the date that the Authority satisfies the conditions of entitlement to the grant/contribution. There must also be reasonable assurance that the monies will be received and the expenditure for which the grant is given has been incurred. Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Balance Sheet under creditors. When conditions are satisfied the grant or contribution is moved to the relevant service revenue account.

Where capital grants have been credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement they are reversed out of the General Fund through the Movement in Reserves Statement.

VI. Charges to Revenue for non current assets

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

- Depreciation attributable to the assets used by the relevant service
- Impairment losses attributable to the clear consumption of economic benefits on tangible fixed assets used by the service and other losses where there are no accumulated gains in the revaluation reserve against which they can be written-off.

The Authority is not required to raise Council Tax to cover depreciation, impairment losses or amortisations. However, it is required to make an annual provision from revenue to contribute towards the reduction in its overall borrowing requirement (equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by the Authority in accordance with statutory guidance). Depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are therefore replaced by revenue provision in the General Fund balance, by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account.

VII. Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute

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

VIII. Employee Benefits

IAS19 Change to Accounting Standard

There have been several significant changes in relation to the international accounting standard IAS19 Employee Benefits. This has resulted in changes to accounting treatment for financial years starting on or after 1 January 2013. There is no impact on the Balance Sheet however the three main changes are as follows:

1. Expected Return on Assets

There has been a change on how pension scheme assets are to be accounted for; now advance credit for anticipated outperformance of return seeking assets (such as equities) is no longer permitted by IAS19. This has been replaced with an equivalent figure calculated using a discount rate (as opposed to using a figure calculated using expected return on assets assumptions).

2. Asset Disclosures

IAS19 requires a much more detailed breakdown of the pension fund assets. The values of the assets, broken down into different classes that distinguish between the nature and risk now need to be disclosed. A further breakdown is also needed showing those assets which have a quoted market price and those which do not. The disclosure included in the Council's 2014/15 published financial statements only showed the main categories of equities, bonds, property and cash as required. As a result of the change some of these categories are split out further. (Table 23)

The cost of salaries and wages has been included in the accounts based on 12 months and 52 pay weeks.

In line with IAS 19 an accrual has been made for leave and flexible hours owing at year end. The accrual is based on a sample of leave owing and then averaged out to give a total for the whole Authority. No adjustment has been made for other employee costs.

Employees of the Council are members of two separate pension schemes:

- The Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by Capita Teachers' Pensions on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE).
- The Local Government Pensions Scheme is administered by The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

Both schemes provide defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pension), earned as employees working for the Council.

However, the arrangements for the teachers' scheme mean that liabilities for these benefits cannot be identified to the Council. The scheme is therefore accounted for as if it were a defined contributions scheme – no liability for future payments of benefits is recognised in the Balance Sheet and the Education Service revenue account is charged with the employer's contributions payable to teachers' pensions in the year.

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

- The liabilities of the Berkshire pension scheme attributed to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, etc, and projected earnings of current employees.
- Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices using a discount rate. (The discount rate is the yield on the Merrill Lynch Non Gilt Sterling AA over 15 year Corporate Bond index, with an adjustment to reflect the liabilities relative to the duration of the index.)
- The assets of the Berkshire Pension Fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:
 - Quoted securities – current bid price

- Unquoted securities – professional estimate
 - Unitised securities – current bid price
 - Property – market value.
- The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into 7 components:
 - 1) Current service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Income and Expenditure Account to the revenue accounts of services for which the employees worked
 - 2) 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 Net cost of Services in the Income and Expenditure Account as part of Non Distributed Costs
 - 3) Interest cost – the expected increase in the present value of liabilities during the year as they move one year closer to being paid – debited to Net Operating Expenditure in the Income and Expenditure Account
 - 4) Expected return on assets – the annual investment return on the fund assets attributable to the Council, based on an average of the expected long-term return – credited to Net Operating Expenditure in the Income and Expenditure Account
 - 5) Gains/losses on settlements and curtailments – the result of actions to relieve the Council of liabilities or events that reduce the expected future service or accrual of benefits of employees – debited to the Net Cost of Services in the Income and Expenditure Account as part of Non Distributed Costs
 - 6) Actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions – debited to the Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses
 - 7) Contributions paid to the Berkshire Pension Fund – cash paid as employer’s contributions to the pension fund.

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 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 Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and any amounts payable to the fund 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 are earned by employees.

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

Redundancy policy: It is the Council’s policy to minimise the impact of organisational change on its employees and to redeploy employees whenever possible. Therefore redundancies and redundancy payments only occur when absolutely necessary and in agreement with Trade Unions.

When redundancy payments are applicable it will be as a result of a decision by the Authority to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy.

It is the Council's policy not to offer enhanced pension payments on termination of employment.

IX. Overheads and Support Services

The costs of overheads and support services are charged to those that benefit from the service in accordance with the costing principles of the CIPFA Service Reporting Code of Practice (SeRCOP). The full cost of overheads and support services are shared between users in proportion to the benefits received.

The costs of the Corporate and Democratic Core have been separately identified and are not borne by the revenue services. This category is defined by the SeRCOP and accounted for, within the Central Services heading of the Net Cost of Services in the Income and Expenditure Account.

X. Investment Property

Only properties that the Authority holds solely to earn rental income or capital appreciation are classed as investment properties. These properties are not used by the Council in its daily business. Initially investment properties are valued at cost and are then re-valued annually.

XI. Heritage Assets

FRS 30, Heritage Assets, has been adopted by the Council. Heritage assets are those assets held by the Authority for cultural, environmental or historical reasons in relation principally to their contribution to knowledge and culture.

XII. Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)

Only assets with a value of £5k or more are counted as non-current assets.

Where a non-current asset yields economic benefit to the Authority, all expenditure on the acquisition, creation and enhancement of the asset, is capitalised on an accruals basis. This excludes expenditure on routine repairs and maintenance of non-current assets, which is charged direct to service revenue accounts.

Non-current assets are initially valued at cost, comprising all expenditure that is directly attributable to that asset, on the basis recommended by CIPFA and in accordance with the Statements of Asset Valuation Principles and Guidance Notes issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, known as the RICS Red Book.

CIPFA guidance allows authorities to choose whether to depreciate its assets at either the mid point through the year or at the end of the year. West Berkshire assets have been depreciated at the end of the year.

Non-current assets are classified into the groupings shown in the Balance Sheet under the following headings:

- Land and Buildings, shown at fair value
- Plant and Equipment, shown at depreciated historical cost
- Infrastructure Assets, shown at depreciated historical cost
- Community Assets, shown at depreciated historical cost
- Investment Properties, shown at market value

- Assets under construction, shown at historical cost
- Assets held for sale, shown at fair value.

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at fair value are re-valued, as a minimum, every five years, except for investment properties which are re-valued annually. From 2007/08 all increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve as unrealised gains.

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.

If an impairment loss was identified on a non-current asset it would be charged to the Income and Expenditure Account. If there were accumulated revaluation gains in the Revaluation Reserve for that asset, an amount up to the value of the loss would be transferred from the Revaluation Reserve to the Capital Adjustment Account.

When an asset is sold, the value of the asset in the Balance Sheet is written off to the Income and Expenditure Account as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Any revaluation gains in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Amounts in excess of £10k are categorised as capital receipts. The balance of receipts is required to be credited to the usable capital receipts reserve and can only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Council's underlying need to borrow. Receipts are appropriated to the reserve from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Where an item of property plant or equipment is made up of components that have different asset lives, IAS 16 requires the components to be recognised as separate assets. West Berkshire Council componentise assets where components are either 10% of the asset's value or have value of more than £250k. These assets are recognised either at the time of purchase or on revaluation.

In accordance with International Accounting Standard 16 depreciation is provided for on all fixed assets with a finite useful life.

All assets with the exception of freehold land, community assets, investment properties and assets under construction are depreciated,

Depreciation is calculated on the following basis:

- Dwellings and other buildings – straight line allocation over the life of the property as estimated by a valuer, between 10 and 60 years
- Vehicles, plant and equipment - straight line allocation over the life of the asset, mainly 10 years
- IT assets are depreciated over 5 years
- Infrastructure – straight line allocation, between 10 and 40 years.

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.

Where assets have been componentised, components can be depreciated over different asset lives, but they will always be in the same asset class.

Available-for-sale Assets are initially measured and carried at fair value. Where the asset has fixed or determinable payments, annual credits to the Income and Expenditure Account for interest receivable are based on the amortised cost of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. Where there are no fixed or determinable payments, income (eg, dividends) is credited to the Income and Expenditure Account when it becomes receivable by the Council.

Assets are maintained in the Balance Sheet at fair value. Values are based on the following principles:

- Instruments with quoted market prices – the market price
- Other instruments with fixed and determinable payments – discounted cash flow analysis
- Equity shares with no quoted market prices – independent appraisal of company valuations.

Changes in fair value are balanced by an entry in the Capital Adjustment Account and the gain/loss is recognised in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services. The exception is where impairments losses have been incurred – these are debited to the Income and Expenditure Account, along with any net gain/loss for the asset accumulated in the Reserve.

Where assets are identified as impaired because of a past event, the asset is written down and a charge made to the Income and Expenditure Account. Any gains and losses that arise on de-recognition of the asset are credited/debited to the Income and Expenditure Account. Where fair value cannot be measured reliably, the instrument is carried at cost (less any impairment losses).

Deferred Capital Receipts are amounts derived from the sales of assets, which will be received in instalments over agreed periods of time. They arise principally from mortgages and sales of council houses.

Capital Receipts from the disposal of assets are held in the Capital Receipts Unapplied Account until such time as they are used to finance other capital expenditure or to repay debt.

Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 a specific proportion of each capital receipt must be set aside or “reserved”; normally only the usable element is available to the Council.

XIII. Inventories and Work in Progress

Inventories are shown in the Balance sheet on a cost basis. This is compliant with IAS 2, which recommends valuation at the lower cost or net realisable value.

XIV. Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Assets

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council an obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits, but where the timing of the transfer is uncertain. For instance, the Council may be involved in a court case that could eventually result in the making of a settlement or the payment of compensation.

Provisions are charged to the appropriate service revenue account in the year that the Authority becomes aware of the obligation, based on the best estimate of the likely settlement. When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision set up in the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year – where it becomes more likely than not that a transfer of economic benefits will not 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 met by another party (e.g. from an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income in the relevant service revenue account if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the obligation is settled.

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

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

XV. Financial Instruments

The term 'financial instrument' covers both financial assets and liabilities and includes debtors, creditors, the Council's borrowings, PFI liabilities and investment transactions. It broadly covers the instruments used in the treasury management activity of the Council, including the borrowing and lending of funds and the making of investments.

Loans raised by the Council are mainly through the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). All interest is charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

As part of its interest and debt management, on occasion the Council may repay loans before their maturity date; usually receiving a discount or incurring a premium. Such gains and losses on premature repayment of debt are recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year they occur, unless they meet the modification test in The Code (i.e. the present values of the debt restructured has not changed significantly). Otherwise they are adjusted through the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account (FIAA) in accordance with statutory criteria.

Where PWLB borrowing is repaid and replaced on the same day, gains and losses are amortised using the effective interest rate method provided the modification test criteria set out in The Code are met. For financial assets and liabilities carried at fair value, the fair value has been determined using discounted cash flow analysis. The reconciliation of amounts charged to the Income and Expenditure Account to the net charge required against the General Fund Balance is managed by a transfer to or from the General Fund Balance.

Provisions for bad debts have been established in respect of general debtors in accordance with the CIPFA code of practice. The level of the provision has been set to provide adequate cover based upon an aged debt profile as at 31 March 2014.

Borrowings The loan debt held by Berkshire County Council (BCC) when it was abolished due to local government reorganisation as at the 31 March 1998 amounted to approximately £220m. The portfolio of debt consisted entirely of Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) loans, of which some £40m was deemed to be West Berkshire's liability as part of the disaggregation process. At that time it was agreed by all the Berkshire authorities that the total debt would be administered by Reading Borough Council as part of their role as Designated Authority overseeing the closure of the BCC accounts.

The Prudential Code presented the opportunity for this Council and other Berkshire authorities to take back the direct management of the remaining part of the ex BCC loan debt. The transfer took place with effect from 1 December 2005 and at that time £28.92m of Public Works Loan Board debt was transferred to West Berkshire Council.

The level of Investment required to fund the capital programme currently over and above the level of external funding available is borrowed from the Public Works Loans Board.

Investments are shown in the Balance Sheet at cost.

Interest has been credited to certain reserves at the year-end based on the average level of balances during the year. The balance of the interest received (after the amount credited to reserves) has been credited to the General Fund.

Financial Liabilities are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges to the Income and Expenditure Account for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument.

For most of the borrowings this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable and the interest charged to the Income and Expenditure Account is the amount payable for the year in the loan agreement.

Financial Assets: Loans and Receivables are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the Income and Expenditure Account for interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument.

For the loans that the Council has made, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable and interest credited to the Income and Expenditure Account is the amount receivable for the year in the loan agreement.

Capital Financing: The Prudential Code Framework places the emphasis for capital expenditure on affordability. Local authorities themselves decide how much they can afford to borrow, the costs of this borrowing being met from the revenue budget.

Every year, a borrowing limit and annual investment strategy is produced, which is approved by Full Council.

Instruments Entered into Before 1 April 2006: The Council entered into a number of financial guarantees that are not required to be accounted for as financial instruments. These guarantees are reflected in the Statement of Accounts to the extent that provisions might be required or a contingent liability note is needed.

XVI. Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

PFI contracts are agreements to receive services, where the responsibility for making available the fixed assets needed to provide the services passes to the PFI contractor. Payments made by the Council under a contract are generally charged to revenue to reflect the value of services received in each financial year.

Prepayments: A prepayment for services receivable under the contract arises when assets are transferred to the control of the PFI contractor, usually at the start of the scheme. The difference between the value of the asset at the date of transfer and any residual value that might accrue to the Authority at the end of the contract is treated as a contribution made to the contractor and is accounted for as a prepayment. The prepayment is written down (charged) to the respective revenue account over the life of the contract to show the full value of services received in each year. However, as the charge is a notional one, it is reversed out in the General Fund to remove any impact on Council Tax or rents.

Reversionary Interests: The Council has passed control of certain land and buildings over to the PFI contractor, but this property will return to the Council at the end of the scheme (reversionary interests). An assessment has been made of the net present value that these assets will have at the end of the scheme (unenhanced) and a reversionary interest asset has been created in the Council's Balance Sheet.

As the asset is stated initially at net present value, the discount will need to be unwound over the life of the scheme by earmarking (decreasing) part of the unitary payment to ensure the reversionary interest is recorded at current prices when the interests revert to the Council.

Residual Interests: Where assets created or enhanced under the PFI scheme are to pass to the Council at the end of the scheme at a cost less than fair value (including nil) (residual interests), an amount equal to the difference between the fair value and the payment to be made at the end of the contract is built up as a long-term debtor over the contract life by reducing the amount of the payment charged to the revenue.

PFI Credits: Government grants received for PFI schemes, in excess of current levels of expenditure.

XVII. Leases

The Council has acquired a number of assets, mainly vehicles and equipment by means of operating leases. In accordance with current accounting procedures the operating leases are not stated in the Balance Sheet. Rentals are charged to revenue in accordance with the terms of the lease. The Council did not enter into any finance lease agreements during the year.

XVIII. Reserves

The Council sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts to the General Fund. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service revenue account in that year and put against the Net Cost of Services in the Income and Expenditure Account. The reserve is then appropriated back into the General Fund Balance so that there is no net charge against council tax for the expenditure.

Certain reserves are kept to manage the accounting processes for tangible fixed assets and retirement benefits. These do not represent usable resources for the Council. Both usable and unusable reserves are explained in the relevant notes below.

XIX. VAT

Income and expenditure in the Council's accounts excludes any amounts related to VAT. VAT is reconciled and accounted for to HM Revenues and Customs on a monthly basis.

(2) Accounting Standards issued not adopted

Under the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2014/15 (the Code), the Council is required to disclose information setting out the impact of an accounting change required by a new accounting standard that has been issued but not yet adopted by the Code.

The following standards have been issued that will be adopted by the Code in 2015/16 and will be applicable to the Council from 1 April 2015.

- IFRS 13 Fair Value Measurement. This introduces a requirement for the concept of fair value measurement to be applied to all assets and liabilities which use fair value as a measurement basis. In respect of property, plant and equipment the only change is in the valuation of surplus property. Currently surplus property is valued at existing use value before being reclassified as surplus assets. In future surplus assets will be valued at fair value.
- IFRIC 21 Levies. This clarifies the recognition point for payment of levies as the activity which triggers the payment of the levy. This is not expected to have any impact on the Council, as this is already current accounting practice.

In addition there have been a number of minor changes to existing accounting standards:

- IFRS 8 Operating Segments will require the Council to disclose the factors used to identify the Council's reportable segments. This will require an additional disclosure in the 2015/16 accounting policies.
- IAS 16 Property, Plant and Equipment. The amendment sets out that where non-current assets are revalued, the gross carrying amount is adjusted in a manner consistent with the revaluation of the carrying amount. This is not expected to have a material impact for the accounts.

(3) Critical judgements

In applying the accounting policies set out in note 1, the Council has had to make certain critical judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events:

- The Council anticipates that the pressures on public expenditure will continue to be severe. These pressures will be mitigated by further service area and corporate savings, and a limited use of reserves.
- The Council recognises school assets for Community schools on its balance sheet. The Council has not recognised assets relating to Academies, Voluntary Aided, Voluntary Controlled or Foundation schools as it is of the opinion that these assets are not controlled by the Council.

(4) Prior Year Adjustments There are no prior year adjustments.

(5) Post Balance Sheet Events There are no post balance sheet events.

(6) Trading operations

West Berkshire Council operates a 'buy-back' scheme for schools in West Berkshire. Schools are able to procure services from the open market; some schools chose to buy services from the Council. The services provided by the Council include property, payroll, HR, finance, ICT, health & safety, insurance and tree management. These are classified as internal trading accounts.

The Council also has some external trading accounts primarily to do with leased car insurance and commercial properties. The total income, expenditure and deficit are:

2013/14			Trading Operations Table 09	2014/15		
Expenditur £000	Income £000	Deficit £000		Expenditure £000	Income £000	Deficit £000
1,693	(1,647)	46	External Trading Accounts	1,753	(1,504)	249
5,431	(5,390)	41	Internal Trading Accounts	10,670	(10,806)	(136)
7,124	(7,037)	87	Net deficit	12,423	(12,310)	113

(7) Income

7a The Council provides services on behalf of a number of other organisations in West Berkshire for which the cost is recharged.

Agency Services Table 10	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000	2012/13 £000	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000
Gross Payroll	1,689	1,760	1,508	2,053	1,507
Service Charge	7	6	6	6	5
After School Clubs	18	17	17	14	14
Town Council	1	1	1	1	1
Charities	1	1	1	1	1

7b The income from Council tax shown on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account is the amount that West Berkshire received net of major preceptors. Any amounts owing to or from major preceptors is shown within debtors or creditors. The Authority has received a number of grants and contributions that have yet to be recognised as income as they have conditions attached to them that will require the monies or property to be returned to the giver. The balances at the year end are shown as capital grants received in advance.

7c Principal grant income

2013/14	Grant Income	2014/15
£000	Table 11	£000
	Credited to taxation and non specific grant income	
7,614	Revenue Support Grant	7,424
1,983	Council Tax Freeze Grant	2,003
6,241	Council Tax Support Funding	6,720
127	Lead Local Flood Authority Funding	73
125	Capitalisation Provision Redistribution Grant	0
128	Homelessness Prevention Funding	74
4,422	Early Intervention Grant	2,278
197	Local Services Support Grant	0
1,793	NHS Funding Social Care	2,210
3,254	Learning Disability Health Reform Grant	1,960
50	Business Support Scheme	0
1,632	New Homes Bonus	2,262
170	Council Tax Transition Grant	0
2,524	Education Services Grant	2,479
55	Community Safety Grant	0
49	Severe Weather Recovery	0
54	Other	121
<u>30,418</u>	Total Non Ringfenced Government Grants	<u>27,604</u>
5,270	Section 106 Contributions	7,857
11,904	Capital Grants	17,298
<u>17,174</u>	Total Capital Grants	<u>25,155</u>
	Credited to services	
88,896	Dedicated Schools Grant	88,090
41,185	Housing Benefit Grant	40,831
4,352	Public Health	4,819
0	Local Services Support Grant	134
0	Education Services Grant	90
0	Community Safety Grant	73
0	New Homes Bonus	54
242	Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG)	0 *
8,614	Learning Support Council, Skills & Education Funding Agencie	10,515
5,125	Other Specific Government Grants	6,049
<u>148,414</u>	Total Grants Credited to Net Cost of Services	<u>150,655</u>

* Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) was retained as a central grant in 2012/13 and allocated to a service in 2013/14

7d Other Government grant income

2013/14 £000	Other Government Grants Table 12	2014/15 £000
2,312	Private Finance Initiative	2,312
412	Adoption Reform Grant	155
460	Bellwin Scheme 2	192
87	Council Tax Benefit	0
0	DOH/NHS England	211
0	Discretionary Housing Payments	253
105	Drug Action	0
96	Education Grants	450
0	Troubled Families	379
140	Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers	263
228	Youth Offending	279
1,285	Other	1,555
5,125	Total Other Government Grants	6,049

(8) Expenditure**8a Non-distributed costs**

These costs in the Net Cost of Services of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account are primarily due to impairment costs and a credit for pension curtailments.

8b Net cost of services

Includes depreciation charges for the use of Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE), impairment costs associated with PPE, REFCUS (Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute) that is capital expenditure on assets that do not belong to the Council, IAS 19 pension costs and movements in Reserves. These are subsequently reversed, so that the net effect on the amount to be met from Government Grants and local taxation is zero.

8c Pooled services

The pooled budget for Community Equipment was established 1 April 2004 under Section 31 of the Health Act 1999. The agreement exists between the six unitary authorities in Berkshire and the Primary Care Trusts covering the same geographical area. The pooled budget is administered by the lead authority Slough Borough Council. The aim of the partnership is to improve the integration of health and social care community equipment services to meet user need.

2013/14 £000	Berkshire Community Equipment Service Table 13	2014/15 £000
Funding provided to the pooled budget		
(465)	West Berkshire	(489)
(3,356)	Berkshire clinical commission groups	(4,066)
(1,490)	Other unitary authorities	(1,735)
(5,311)	Total income	(6,290)
Expenditure met from the pooled budget		
465	West Berkshire	489
3,356	Berkshire clinical commission groups	4,066
1,490	Other unitary authorities	1,735
5,311	Total expenditure	6,290

8e Parish Council Precepts

Parish Councils are required to precept on the Council, which in turn precepts on the Collection Fund. The total precept is £3,655k (2013/14: 3,618K). There was also a refund of special expenses on the parishes concerning closed church yards of £(7)k (2013/14: £7k), giving a net £3,648 (2013/14: £3,611k) figure as the precepts to the Parishes.

8f Publicity

Set out below, under the requirements of section 5(l) of the Local Government Act 1986, is the Council's and school spending on publicity. Publicity covers all forms of communication with the public for example advertisements for job vacancies as well as press notices. The expenditure is included in the Income and Expenditure Account as part of the Net Cost of Services.

2013/14		Publicity Table 14	2014/15	
Council £000	Schools £000		Council £000	Schools £000
249	34	Marketing and Public Relations	259	41
30	321	Recruitment and Advertising	88	286
279	355	Total Expenditure	347	327

(9) Employee benefits**9a Exit packages**

The Authority terminated the contracts of a number of employees in 2014/15. These officers were from all areas in the Council and were made redundant as part of the Authority's restructuring of its services.

Exit package banding Table 15	2013/14				2014/15			
	Compulsory redundancies	Other departures	Total exit packages	Total cost £000	Compulsory redundancies	Other departures	Total exit packages	Total cost £000
COUNCIL								
Up to £19,999	14	3	17	127	5	3	8	55
£20,000 - £39,999	1	1	2	59	2	2	4	114
£40,000 - £59,999	1	0	1	45	2	0	2	97
£60,000 - £79,999	1	0	1	61	2	0	2	144
	17	4	21	292	11	5	16	410
SCHOOLS								
Up to £19,999	9	2	11	69	16	4	20	172
£20,000 - £39,999	3	3	6	183	3	3	6	142
	12	5	17	252	19	7	26	314

9b Remuneration Benefits

The number of employees whose remuneration including redundancy costs but excluding pension contributions was £50k or more in bands of £5k:

Remuneration Bandings Table 16a	Schools				Council Staff				TOTALS			
	Number of employees		Left during year		Number of employees		Left during year		Number of employees		Left during year	
	2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15
£50k-£54k	36	28	3	1	24	36	0	2	60	64	3	3
£55k-£59k	20	28	0	0	15	8	2	0	35	36	2	0
£60k-£64k	8	9	0	0	17	18	1	1	25	27	1	1
£65k-£69k	11	9	0	0	9	9	0	1	20	18	0	1
£70k-£74k	5	3	1	0	3	2	1	0	8	5	2	0
£75k-£79k	1	2	0	0	3	1	0	0	4	3	0	0
£80k-£84k	3	4	0	0	7	9	0	0	10	13	0	0
£85k-£89k	1	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	4	0	1
£90k-£94k	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0
£95k-£99k	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
£100k-£104k	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	0	0
£105k-£109k	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
£130k-£134k	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
£135k-£139k	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
	<u>86</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>169</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>

9c Members' expenses

The following amounts were paid to members of the Council during the year:

2013/14 £000	Members' expenses Table 16b	2014/15 £000
456	Allowances	456
15	National Insurance	15
16	Pensions	24
1	Training	0
2	Employee Expenses	1
25	Car Allowance	23
9	Members Expenses	8
<u>524</u>		<u>527</u>

The tables below disclose the salary information of those individuals who are on the Council's Corporate Board, as well as those individuals whose salary is over £150k.

Executive Remuneration		Salary (Including fees & allowances)	Benefits in Kind	Remuneration excluding pension contributions	Pension contributions	Remuneration including pension contributions
Table 17		£	£	£	£	£
Chief Executive - Nick Carter						
Resources	2014/15	133,418	0	133,418	21,480	154,898
	2013/14	138,418	0	138,418	20,546	158,964
Corporate Directors						
Environment	2014/15	102,751	0	102,751	16,543	119,294
	2013/14	106,189	0	106,189	15,737	121,926
Communities	2014/15	102,751	0	102,751	16,543	119,294
	2013/14	102,244	0	102,244	15,737	117,981
Deputy Director						
Communities	2014/15	86,022	0	86,022	13,849	99,871
	2013/14	89,235	0	89,235	13,181	102,416
Senior Council Personnel						
Head of Legal Services	2014/15	78,522	0	78,522	12,642	91,164
	2013/14	81,592	0	81,592	12,026	93,618
Head of Human Resources	2014/15	78,522	0	78,522	12,642	91,164
	2013/14	81,652	0	81,652	12,026	93,678
Head of Finance	2014/15	78,522	0	78,522	12,642	91,164
	2013/14	80,548	0	80,548	12,026	92,574
TOTAL	2014/15	660,508	0	660,508	106,342	766,849
TOTAL	2013/14	679,878	0	679,878	101,279	781,157

9d Retirement Benefits

Under International Accounting Standards (IAS) 19 Employee Benefits, certain disclosures are required in the Authority's accounts. The reporting standard requires specific entries to the Balance Sheet and the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account relating to the net asset / liability recognised in relation to the Authority's share and demands (actual and future) of the Berkshire Pension Fund.

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

The Authority participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme administered by The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund. This is a defined benefit scheme, where retirement benefits are determined independently of the investments of the scheme and employers have obligations to make contributions where assets are insufficient to meet employee benefits.

The date of the last actuarial report received by the Council was the 31 March 2015. IAS 19 requires the Authority to recognise the cost of retirement benefits in the Net Cost of Services when employees earn them, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However the charge the Authority is required to make against Council Tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The following transactions have been made to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account, in the Net Cost of Services and the financing and investment section.

2013/14 £000	Local Government Pension Scheme Table 18	2014/15 £000
	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure account	
11,527	Current service cost	11,922
95	Past service cost, including curtailments	106
11,622	Total Service Cost	12,028
	Financing and investment income and expenditure	
15,747	Interest cost	16,873
(8,966)	Interest on scheme assets	(8,943)
6,781	Total post employment benefit charged to the surplus or deficit on the provisions of services	7,930
	Other post employment benefit charged to the comprehensive income and expenditure statement	
	Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising:	
3,162	Return on assets less interest	(9,703)
(16,556)	Actuarial (gains) and losses arising on change in demographic assumptions	0
10,518	Actuarial (gains) and losses arising on change in financial assumptions	63,939
(3,001)	Liabilities assumed / (extinguished) on settlements	0
1,414	Settlement prices received / (paid)	0
16,523	Experienced loss / (gain) on defined benefit obligations	238
(674)	Other actuarial gains / (losses)	0
160	Administrative expenses	152
11,546	Total post employment benefit charged to the comprehensive income and expenditure statement	54,626
29,949	Net Charge / Net surplus to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account	74,584
	Movement in Reserves Statement	
(29,949)	Reversal of net charges made to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services for post employment benefits	(74,584)
7,783	Actual amount charged against the General Fund balance for pensions in the year	8,513
(22,166)	Net liability arising from the defined benefit obligation	(66,071)

The re-measurements on defined liabilities required by the revised IAS19 standard are £54,524k (2013/14: loss of £12,973k) and are included within the pension interest & expected return on assets line on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

9e Assets and Liabilities in relation to retirement benefits: The net pensions to be recognised are made up of two main elements.

Liabilities: the retirement benefits that have been promised under the formal terms of the pension scheme. These liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis, estimating the future cash flows that will arise from the liabilities discounted back to their present values.

2013/14 £000	Funded Liabilities Table 19	2014/15 £000
356,471	Opening balance	383,520
11,527	Current service cost	11,922
15,747	Interest cost	16,873
10,518	Change in financial assumptions	63,939
(16,555)	Change in demographic assumptions	0
3,079	Contributions by scheme participants	3,295
16,523	Actuarial (gains) and losses	238
(3,001)	Liabilities extinguished on settlements	0
(10,329)	Estimated benefits paid net of transfers in	(11,215)
95	Past service costs, including curtailments	106
(555)	Unfunded pension payments	(561)
383,520	Closing balance	468,117

Assets: the Authority's attributable share of the investments held in the pension scheme to cover the liabilities are valued at 'bid value'.

2013/14 £000	Fair Value of Scheme Assets Table 20	2014/15 £000
194,575	Opening balance	199,457
8,966	Interest on assets	8,943
(3,162)	Return on assets less interest	9,703
674	Other actuarial gains and (losses)	0
(160)	Administrative expenses	(152)
7,783	Employer contributions including unfunded	8,512
3,079	Contributions by scheme participants	3,295
(10,884)	Estimated benefits paid plus net transfers in	(11,776)
(1,414)	Settlement prices received and (paid)	0
199,457	Closing balance	217,982

The expected return on scheme assets is determined by considering the expected returns available on the assets underlying the current investment policy. Expected yields on fixed interest investments are based on gross redemption yields as at the Balance Sheet date. Expected returns on equity investments reflect long term real rates of return experienced in their respective markets.

9f Scheme History: The underlying assets and liabilities for retirement benefits attributable to the Authority (including a percentage of the Berkshire County Council pension fund) at 31 March 2015 are:

Present value of Scheme Liabilities Table 21	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000	2012/13 £000	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000
Present value of Liabilities	(273,917)	(332,188)	(356,471)	(383,520)	(468,117)
Fair value of Assets	177,844	177,223	194,575	199,457	217,982
(Deficit) on the pension scheme	(96,073)	(154,965)	(161,896)	(184,063)	(250,135)
Experience loss/(gain) on defined benefit obligation	9,690	1,013	(559)	(16,523)	(238)
Return on plan assets in excess of interest	(3,686)	(11,053)	9,135	(3,162)	9,654

For consistency the assets have been shown at bid price (estimated where necessary) for periods prior to 31 March 2011.

The liabilities show the underlying commitments that the Authority has in the long run to pay in respect of retirement benefits. However statutory arrangements for funding the deficit, allow that the deficit on the Scheme will be corrected by increased contributions over the remaining working life of employees, as assessed by the Scheme Actuary.

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels etc. The Authority's liabilities have been assessed by Barnett Waddingham, an independent firm of actuaries, estimates for the Fund being based on the latest full valuation of the scheme. The main assumptions used in their calculations are:

2013/14	Principal actuarial assumptions	Table 22	2014/15
Mortality assumptions			
Longevity at 65 for current pensioners:			
22.7	Men		22.8
26.0	Women		26.1
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners:			
24.9	Men		25.1
28.3	Women		28.4
3.6%	Rate of Inflation		3.3%
2.8%	CPI increase		2.5%
4.6%	Rate of increase in Salaries		4.3%
2.8%	Rate of increase in Pensions		2.5%
4.5%	Rate of discounting scheme liabilities		3.4%
50.0%	Take-up of option to convert annual pension into retirement lump sum		50.0%

Assets held by the whole fund and analysed in terms of the investments in which they are held as at 31 March 2015 are:

31/03/14		Pension fund assets Table 23	31/03/15	
£000	%		£000	%
83,771	42%	Equities	96,855	45%
1,995	1%	Gilts	2,945	1%
31,913	16%	Other Bonds	29,653	14%
23,935	12%	Property	25,889	12%
3,990	2%	Cash	11,532	5%
		Alternative assets - now split out below		
35,902	18%	Target Return	37,319	17%
17,951	9%	Commodities	8,221	4%
7,978	4%	Infrastructure	9,056	4%
(7,978)	(4)%	Longevity Insurance	(7,787)	(4)%
199,457	100%	Total	213,683	100%

The Council paid an employer's contribution of £7.9m (2013/14: £7.2m). This provides members with defined benefits related to pay and service. The contribution rate is determined by the Fund's Actuary, based on triennial actuarial valuations. Under the Scheme Regulations, contribution rates are set to meet 100% of the overall liabilities of the Fund. In addition, the Council is responsible for all early releases of benefit payments, these amounted to £137k (2013/14: £158k).

9g Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

The Council paid £5.4m (2013/14: £5.5m) to Teachers' Pensions in respect of teachers' retirement benefits, representing 16.8% of pensionable pay. There were no contributions remaining payable at the year-end.

The Authority is also responsible for all pension payments relating to added years benefits awarded together with the related increases.

(10) Related Party Transactions

The Council is required to disclose any material transactions that have taken place with related parties, bodies or individuals that could affect the decision making process within the Council. Transactions with Precepting Authorities, payments to the pension fund, levies to other bodies and Government departments are shown in the Collection Fund, notes to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the Cash Flow Statement. The list below represents the Council's material transactions over £100k with related parties during the financial year.

2013/14 £000	Related Parties Table 24	2014/15 £000
384	Corn Exchange Theatre Trust	366
1007	West Berkshire Mencap	971
294	Vodafone Ltd	206
135	Reading Borough Council	583
113	Bucks, Berks & Oxon Wildlife Trust	557
256	Sovereign Housing Association	87
<u>2,189</u>	Total	<u>2,770</u>

Council members have declared an interest in the following organisations:

The Corn Exchange Trust
The Greenham Common Community Trust
The Sovereign Housing Association
The Thames Valley Police Authority
Vodafone Ltd
West Berkshire Mencap
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Reading Borough Council
Newbury Town Council.

No Chief Officers nor their close relations or members of the same household have disclosed any declarable transactions with the Council. This disclosure note has been prepared using the Council's Register of Members' Declarations of Interest. The Council has prepared this disclosure in accordance with its current interpretation and understanding of IAS 24 and its applicability to the public sector utilising current advice and guidance. Central Government has effective control over the general operations of the Authority – it is responsible for providing the statutory framework with which the Authority operates, provides some of the funding and prescribes the terms of many transactions that the Authority has other parties (eg Council tax bills, housing benefits).

(11) Auditor's Fees

In 2014/15 the following fees were incurred relating to external audit.

2013/14 £000	Audit fees Table 25	2014/15 £000
128	Fees payable to KPMG with regard to external audit services	128
(19)	Rebate from the Audit Commission with regard to external services	(13)
10	Fees payable to KPMG with regard to grants audit	14
<u>119</u>	Total	<u>129</u>

(12) Financial Instruments

The Council has adopted the CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and set treasury management indicators to control key financial instrument risks in accordance with CIPFA's Prudential Code.

12a Financial Instrument balances

The investments, lending & borrowing disclosed on the Balance Sheet are made up as follows:

Financial Instrument Balances Table 26	Long Term		Short Term	
	31/03/14 £000	31/03/15 £000	31/03/14 £000	31/03/15 £000
Cash and Investments				
Loans and receivables	0	0	4,000	4,000
Available-for-sale financial assets	0	0	0	0
Unquoted equity under available for sale	0	0	0	0
Cash and cash equivalents	0	0	0	2,939
Total Investments	0	0	4,000	6,939
Debtors				
Financial assets carried at contract amount	0	0	10,389	11,574
Borrowings				
Financial Liabilities at amortised cost	114,005	127,062	25,891	12,643
Financial Liabilities at fair value through profit and loss	0	0	0	0
Cash and cash equivalents	0	0	183	0
Other Borrowing	0	0	0	0
Total Borrowings	114,005	127,062	26,074	12,643
Creditors				
Financial Liabilities carried at Contract	0	0	21,390	25,725

Notes:

Interest paid on long term borrowing was £4,341k (2013/14: £3,850k)

Interest paid on the credit arrangement within the PFI contract was £1,008k (2013/14: £1,037k)

Interest paid on short term borrowing was £3.5k (2013/14: £33k)

Total interest paid £5,353k (2013/14: £4,920k)

Interest earned on investment was £399k (2013/14: £449k)

12b Fair value of each class of financial assets and liabilities which are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost is:

31/03/14		Fair value of liabilities and assets Table 27	31/03/15	
Carrying Amount £000	Fair Value £000		Carrying Amount £000	Fair Value £000
Fair value of liabilities carried at amortised cost				
20,505	27,194	PWLB Maturity Loans	20,505	32,875
77,495	89,254	Other PWLB Loans > 1 Year	91,089	118,669
16,005	16,005	Other Long term Borrowing	15,468	15,468
25,891	25,891	Short term borrowing	12,643	12,643
183	183	Cash and cash equivalents	0	0
140,079	158,527	Total Financial Liabilities	139,705	179,656
Fair value of assets carried at amortised cost				
0	0	Cash and cash equivalents	2,939	2,939
4,000	4,000	Banks and building society deposits > 3 months	4,000	4,000
4,000	4,000	Total Financial assets	6,939	6,939

Notes

Short Term Borrowing

Short term borrowing at the 31 March 2015 consisted of £8.0m (2013/14: £14.0m) cashflow loans of less than 1 year; £4.1m (2013/14: £3.4m) principal due to be repaid on PWLB annuity loans within one year, plus £537k (2013/14: £8.5m) principal due to be repaid within one year on the credit arrangement within the PFI waste management contract.

Long Term Borrowing

All PWLB maturity loans were inherited from the former Royal County of Berkshire in December 2006.

The balance due over more than 1 year on annuity loans from the PWLB, which West Berkshire Council has taken out since April 2005, to help fund investment in capital assets, is £91.1m (2013/14: £77.5k)

Other long term borrowing consists of the principal outstanding on the credit arrangement within the PFI contract which is due to be repaid over more than one year.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

The cash balance at 31 March 2015 consists of bank deposits of £3.44m (2013/14: £2.91m) less the value of cheques issued by the Council, which were unrepresented at that date £0.5m (2013/14: £3.1m).

(13) Nature and extent of risks arising from Financial Instruments

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

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

Credit Risk arises from the short-term lending of surplus funds to banks, building societies and other local authorities as well as credit exposures to the Council's customers.

13a Investments

The table below summarises the nominal value of the Council's investment portfolio as at 31 March 2015 and shows that all deposits outstanding as at 31 March 2015 met the Council's credit rating criteria at that date:

Investments Table 28 Counter party	Credit rating criteria met		Balances invested as at 31/03/15				Total £000
	When placed Yes/No	On 31/03/15 Yes/No	< 1 mth £000	>1 mths <3 £000	>3 mths <6 £000	>6 mths <12 £000	
Building Societies	Yes	Yes	0	0	0	4,000	4,000
Call Accounts with UK Banks	Yes	Yes	802	0	0	0	802
Total			802	0	0	4,000	4,802

Note

£802k held in call accounts at 31 March 2015 is included in the cash and cash equivalent table.

13b Doubtful receivables

The invoiced debt has been reviewed by age to determine an appropriate provision for debts not likely to be collectable.

Balance 31/03/14 £000	Bad Debt Provision £000	Invoiced Receivables Doubtful Debt Table 29	Bad Debt Provision %	Balance 31/03/15 £000	Bad Debt Provision £000
2,981	30	Current	1%	4,210	42
1,740	105	Over 30 days	6%	1,046	63
89	9	Over 60 days	10%	378	38
25	6	Over 90 days	25%	135	34
213	106	Between 120 to 365 days	50%	292	146
137	123	Between 1 and 2 years	90%	213	192
113	102	Between 2 and 3 years	90%	90	81
153	153	Earlier years	100%	220	220
5,451	634			6,584	816

Deferred Payment Agreements of £983k (2013/14: £690k) are excluded from the above debt provision as they are secured on property

Housing Benefit aged debt assumed recovery is 50% for those under some form of payment scheme, otherwise 100% provision is made for those with no payment scheme and where the debt is over one year one.

13c Liquidity Risk: The Council has ready access to borrowings from the Money Markets to cover any day to day cash flow need and the Public Works Loans Board (PWL) for any purpose relevant to its statutory functions or for the purpose of the prudent management of its financial affairs. As a result there is no significant risk that the Council will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments. The Council has safeguards in place to ensure that a significant proportion of its borrowing does not mature for repayment at any one time in the future to reduce the financial impact of re-borrowing at a time of unfavourable interest rates.

The approved prudential indicator limits for the maturity structure of debt and the limits on investments greater than one year in duration are the key parameters used to address this liquidity risk. The Council does not normally invest for more than one year. The maturity structure of financial liabilities and assets are as follows (at nominal value):

31/03/14 £000	Liquidity Risk Table 30	31/03/15 £000
Loans outstanding		
98,000	PWLB loans for more than one year	111,594
16,005	Other Long Term PFI Borrowing	15,468
25,891	Temporary Borrowing	12,643
<u>139,896</u>	Total	<u>139,705</u>
25,891	Less than 1 year	12,643
0	Between 1 & 2 years	55
842	Between 2 & 5 years	678
9,744	Between 5 & 15 years	11,774
103,419	More than 15 Years	114,555
<u>139,896</u>	Total	<u>139,705</u>

13d Market Risk: The Council is exposed to interest rate risk in two different ways; the first being the uncertainty of interest paid/received on variable rate instruments, and the second being the effect of fluctuations in interest rates on the fair value of an instrument.

The Council's policy is to aim to keep a maximum of **50%** of its borrowings in variable rate loans. The treasury management team has an active strategy for assessing interest rate exposure that feeds into the setting of the annual budget and which is used to update the budget quarterly during the year. During the Financial Year and at 31 March 2015, the Council had no financial loan instruments with variable rates of interest.

(14) Heritage Assets

The Authority has two heritage assets. Neither of these assets are disclosed in the Balance Sheet since the cost of obtaining reasonable valuations would not be commensurate with the benefits to users of these statements.

14a The Berkshire Archives

In 1998, Berkshire County Council was abolished and succeeded by six unitary authorities. Under the terms of the Order dissolving the County Council and creating Unitary Authorities in Berkshire, the Record Office remained a county-wide service, with West Berkshire Council acting as the Archive Authority whilst due to the location of the Record Office location, Reading Borough Council was deemed, under a service level agreement, the Host Authority. All six authorities entered into a joint agreement for the funding and management of the service; the current agreement runs until 31 March 2028.

The Berkshire Record Office holds archives representing 900 years of the Royal County of Berkshire's history, including records of county, district, unitary authority and parish councils, the church, magistrates' courts, schools, charities, businesses, local voluntary associations, families and individuals. Records are available for study in the Record Office search room

for administrative, legal, educational and recreational purposes, and any interested member of the public is welcome to register as a reader.

The Record Office continues to acquire documents that contribute to our knowledge of the county's past. Recent acquisitions include the records of Yattendon Church of England School, Pangbourne and District Volunteer Centre, and Berkshire County Cricket Club. Altogether over 200 new accessions, amounting to nearly 2000 boxes, were added to the collections in 2014/15. Recent projects have included the conservation of the records of Broadmoor Hospital (generously funded by The Wellcome Trust), the publication of a new index to the important collection of probate records (1480-1857), and a collaboration with Reading University to bring fresh perspective to the story of 'Oscar Wilde and Reading Gaol'. Members of staff also regularly give talks to local organisations about the work of the Record Office, and are happy to arrange visits for local groups.

14b West Berkshire Museum Collections

There has been a public museum in Newbury since 1843 but the current museum and its collections were established in 1904 when the Cloth Hall had been refurbished in memory of Queen Victoria.

The current collections cover Natural Sciences, Geology, Archaeology, Social & Local History, Fine Art, Decorative Art, Costume, Photographs and Local Studies Resources.

The majority of the collections are of local or regional significance but there are some items of national significance such as the Bronze Age material within archaeology; Civil War material within archaeology; Egyptology from the Earl of Carnarvon; some of the local history material, particularly the Kennet & Avon Canal material; the world collections material is also of national significance because it was assembled by Harold Peake, one of the Museum's first curators, to illustrate his theory of comparative archaeology. The collections of international significance include: Mesolithic material in archaeology and material relating to the Greenham Common peace camps.

The Museum collects material that supports the Sense of Place theme for audience development, exhibitions, outreach, and collection development; enabling community engagement and dialogue to reflect local communities in displays and explore individual and community identities. During 2014 there have been 52 groups of items accessioned into the collection. These include material relating to Shaw House School, a model of Thatcham Ordnance Depot, a mug produced in Bucklebury to celebrate the birth of Prince George, a collection of paintings by local artist John Perkin, and a number of artefacts received under the terms of the Treasure Act. These include material from medieval and Anglo-Saxon periods discovered as a result of metal detecting.

The museum reopened to the public after a four-year refurbishment programme on 25 August 2014. In the first six months of opening it attracted approximately 12,000 visitors.

(15) Non Current Assets

The following table shows the current value of the Council's fixed asset register including the movement in the fixed assets due to depreciation, revaluations, disposals, impairments and additions from the capital programme.

15a Fixed Assets

Movements in Property, Plant & Equipment & Investment Properties							Investment	Assets	
2014/15	Land & Buildings	Plant & Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	properties	held		TOTAL	
Table 31	£000	£000	£000	£000	Assets	for sale	£000	£000	
Valued at Current value									
Book Value @ 01/04/14	325,310	31,908	184,130	157	9,277	5,428		556,210	
Revaluations	3,988	0	0	0	1,581	0		5,569	
Impairments	(30,298)	0	0	0	(2,739)	(678)		(33,715)	
Reclassifications	1,474	0	0	0	0	9		1,483	
Other movements	(9,949)	(10,618)	(5,393)	(148)	0	0		(26,108)	
Additions	10,067	1,277	13,349	0	692	0		25,385	
Disposals	(408)	0	0	0	0	(200)		(608)	
Book Value @ 31/03/15	<u>300,184</u>	<u>22,567</u>	<u>192,086</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8,811</u>	<u>4,559</u>		<u>528,216</u>	
Depreciation @ 01/04/14	(46,346)	(22,904)	(57,331)	(148)	0	(435)		(127,164)	
Charged to services	(12,895)	(2,383)	(6,214)	0	0	(171)		(21,663)	
On revalued assets	11,531	0	0	0	0	89		11,620	
Reclassifications	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	
Other movements	9,950	10,618	5,393	148	0	0		26,109	
On disposal	252	0	0	0	0	4		256	
Balance @ 31/03/15	<u>(37,508)</u>	<u>(14,669)</u>	<u>(58,152)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(513)</u>		<u>(110,842)</u>	
Net Book Value @ 31/03/15	<u>262,676</u>	<u>7,898</u>	<u>133,934</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8,811</u>	<u>4,046</u>		<u>417,374</u>	
Net Book Value @ 31/03/14	<u>278,964</u>	<u>9,004</u>	<u>126,799</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9,277</u>	<u>4,993</u>		<u>429,046</u>	
Revaluation reserve									
Opening	(87,749)	0	0	(7)	(964)	(3,990)		(92,710)	
Movement	10,185	0	0	(10)	(335)	701		10,541	
Closing	<u>(77,564)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(17)</u>	<u>(1,299)</u>	<u>(3,289)</u>		<u>(82,169)</u>	
Assets under Construction									
Opening Balance 01/04/14	1,484	0	0	0	0	0		1,484	
Movement in year									
Additions	(1,484)	0	0	0	0	0		(1,484)	
Closing Balance 31/03/15	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	

A proportion of these properties have been revalued during the year by Wilks Head & Eve a London-based firm of chartered surveyors in accordance with the Code of Practice issued by CIPFA and the "Red Book" (Valuation – Professional Standards 2012 edition) issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The Revaluation Reserve records the unrealised revaluation gains arising since 1 April 2007. Investment properties are assets held solely to earn rentals or for capital appreciation or both, they cannot be used for operational purposes.

Assets held for sale are those assets the Authority is actively trying to sell. This Authority has four assets held for sale which are: the former Pound Lane Depot, Taceham House, former playing fields on Love Lane and an area of land adjacent to the Phoenix Centre. The Greenham Common Control Tower was sold on 16 April 2014.

Movements in Property, Plant & Equipment & Investment Properties 2013/14 Table 32	Land &	Plant &	Infrastructure	Community	Investment	Assets	TOTAL
	Buildings	Equipment	Assets	Assets	properties	held	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	for sale	£000
Valued at Current value							
Book Value @ 01/04/13	346,378	30,340	173,953	201	8,995	100	559,967
Revaluations	25,978	0	0	1	733	1,600	28,312
Impairments	(23,344)	0	0	(45)	(448)	0	(23,837)
Reclassifications	(3,723)	0	0	0	(5)	3,728	0
Additions	7,775	1,568	10,177	0	2	0	19,522
Disposals	(27,754)	0	0	0	0	0	(27,754)
Book Value @ 31/03/14	<u>325,310</u>	<u>31,908</u>	<u>184,130</u>	<u>157</u>	<u>9,277</u>	<u>5,428</u>	<u>556,210</u>
Depreciation @ 01/04/13	(40,597)	(19,930)	(51,594)	(148)	0	(4)	(112,273)
Charged to services	(15,232)	(2,974)	(5,737)	0	0	(193)	(24,136)
On revalued assets	7,768	0	0	0	0	4	7,772
Reclassifications	242	0	0	0	0	(242)	0
On disposal	1,473	0	0	0	0	0	1,473
Balance @ 31/03/14	<u>(46,346)</u>	<u>(22,904)</u>	<u>(57,331)</u>	<u>(148)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(435)</u>	<u>(127,164)</u>
Net Book Value @ 31/03/14	<u>278,964</u>	<u>9,004</u>	<u>126,799</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9,277</u>	<u>4,993</u>	<u>429,046</u>
Net Book Value @ 31/03/13	<u>305,781</u>	<u>10,410</u>	<u>122,359</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>8,995</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>447,694</u>
Revaluation reserve							
Opening	(83,609)	0	0	(14)	(1,276)	0	(84,899)
Movement	(4,140)	0	0	7	312	(3,990)	(7,811)
Closing	<u>(87,749)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(7)</u>	<u>(964)</u>	<u>(3,990)</u>	<u>(92,710)</u>
Assets under Construction							
Opening Balance 01/04/13	197	0	0	0	0	0	197
Movement in year							
Additions	1,287	0	0	0	0	0	1,287
Closing Balance 31/03/14	<u>1,484</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,484</u>

All expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE) is accounted for on an accruals basis and capitalised in the Balance Sheet. All PPE are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value except for investment property (held solely to generate rental income or capital appreciation) which is held at market value. Infrastructure assets and community assets are included at depreciated historical cost. Investment properties are revalued annually whilst all other assets are included at current value and revalued at intervals of not more than five years.

15b Capital Expenditure: The total capital expenditure for the year was £30,489k (2013/14: £26,266k).

15c Capital expenditure financing

2013/14 £000	Capital Expenditure Financing Table 33	2014/15 £000
156,803	Opening Capital Financing Requirement	159,196
	Capital Investment	
19,541	Property, Plant and Equipment	25,386
1,286	Assets under construction	0
5,439	Revenue Expenditure Funded from capital under statute	13,103
	Sources of Finance	
(2,496)	Capital receipts	(338)
(13,554)	Government Grants	(18,238)
(774)	Other Grants	(499)
(233)	Revenue funding	0
(111)	Other internal balances and funds	0
(2,783)	Developers/other contributions	(2,223)
(3,922)	MRP/Loans Principal Repaid	(12,640)
159,196	Closing Capital Financing Requirement	163,747
	Explanation of Movements in Year	
2,393	Increase in underlying need to borrowing (unsupported by government financial assistance)	4,551
2,393	Increase/ (decrease) in capital financing requirement	4,551

15d Amenities provided by the Authority are:

31/03/14 Nos	Capital Assets - Amenities Table 34	31/03/15 Nos
8	Public Conveniences	8
25	Car Parks	25
2	Industrial Properties	2
3	Farms	3
2	Civic Amenity Sites	2
8	Leisure Centres	8
9	Community Services	9
10	Museum and Libraries	10
60	Schools and associated properties	60
6	Commercial Premises	6
317	Public Open Spaces	335
9	Council Offices	9
16	Community Centres	16
2	Highways Depots	2
48	Housing Operational Properties	48
525	Total	543

15e Capital Assets: During the year a proportion of the Assets were revalued in line with the five year rolling programme. The one Foundation school in the district is not included in the Council's asset register but the Council is required to disclose the valuation. The fixed assets of this school are £13.1m (2013/14: £13.3m) being £10.5m for building and £2.6m for land.

The main items of capital expenditure in the year were as follows:

Main Items of Capital Expenditure (>£150k)	2014/15
Table 35	£000
<u>Social Care and Housing</u>	
Disabled Facilities Grants	755
Total for Social Care and Housing	755
<u>Education Projects</u>	
Maintenance of School Buildings	2,738
Francis Baily Primary School - Additional Places	175
Purley Infant School - Expansion to 0.5FE Primary School	201
Spurcroft Primary School Expansion	235
John O'Gaunt School	277
The Willows Primary School	326
Lambourn Primary School	355
The Castle School - Additional Places	602
The Winchcombe School - Additional Places	701
Brookfields School - Post 16 Expansion	705
Universal Infant Free School Meals	803
Little Heath School	1,292
John Rankin Infant & Junior School - Additional Places	1,634
Total for Education	10,044
<u>Highways Maintenance and Improvements</u>	
Maintenance of the highways network	5,047
Flood Damaged Road Repairs	2,427
A4 Calcot Widening	1,412
Cold Ash Hill Retention Pond Study	821
Essential Maintenance of Bridges	338
Grants for Flood Defences to Flooded properties	307
Land Drainage	286
Oak End Way, Padworth - Flood Defence Works	145
Street Lighting Improvements	239
Local Sustainable Transport	199
Total for Highways	11,221
<u>Other Council Projects</u>	
Capital Contribution to Waste Contract generate revenue savings	8,000
Superfast Broadband Infrastructure	1,421
Redevelopment of the Newbury Museum	588
Maintenance and health and safety of Council offices	455
Improvements to IT infrastructure and systems	263
Modernisation of Leisure Centres	219
Total for Other Council Projects	10,946
Total Main Items of Capital Expenditure	32,966

Wherever possible the Council aims to fund any necessary capital investment from external sources of funding i.e. grants, developers' contributions and capital receipts. The level of investment required over and above the level of external funding available must then be weighed up against the revenue cost of repaying loans to fund capital expenditure from external sources. In establishing its Prudential Framework, the Council determined that it could support a capital programme of £11,021k (2013/14: £12,592k).

15f Leased Assets

Council as Lessor

The Council has not entered into any finance leases as a lessor.

Operating leases: The Council lets a number of properties on operating leases for the following purposes:

- Sporting and community facilities which are let to organisations such as parish councils and charities which help support the council's priorities
- Industrial and other commercial premises which help support the economic development of the area
- Other properties including farms and shared ownership dwellings.

31 March 2014			Table 36	31 March 2015		
Sporting & Community facilities	Industrial & Commercial Premises	Other	Council as lessor Operating Leases	Sporting & Community facilities	Industrial & Commercial Premises	Other
£000	£000	£000	Leases expiring:	£000	£000	£000
76	438	36	Not later than 1 year	78	457	48
176	973	99	Between 1 and 5 years	170	1,076	131
178	5,222	156	Between 5 and 25 years	183	4,672	150
46	7,542	153	Over 25 years	93	4,923	101
476	14,175	444		524	11,128	430

Being the future minimum lease payments receivable under non cancellable leases.

The rental income credited to the income statement was £642k (2013/14: £659k)

Council as Lessee

The Council has not entered into any finance leases as a lessee.

Operating leases: The Council has a number of leases relating to buildings, vehicles, office equipment and leisure equipment. The buildings include social care facilities, schools and children centres. These items are not the property of the Council and consequently are not recorded in the Balance Sheet.

31 March 2014		Table 37	31 March 2015	
Land & Buildings	Vehicles Plant & Equipment	Council as lessee Operating Leases	Land & Buildings	Vehicles Plant & Equipment
£000	£000	Leases expiring:	£000	£000
389	459	Not later than 1 year	388	403
1,001	822	Between 1 and 5 years	973	541
3,887	6	Between 5 and 25 years	3,294	10
7	0	Over 25 years	5	0
5,284	1,287		4,660	954

Being the minimum lease payments payable

The charge to the Income and Expenditure Statement for both Land & Building and Vehicles, Plant & Equipment was £628k (2013/14: £658k) and £459k (2013/14: £598k) respectively.

(16) Investment Properties

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.

16a Rental income

2013/14 £000	Rental income Table 38	2014/15 £000
(384)	Rental income from Investment Properties	(404)
0	Capital Charges	10
15	Direct operating expenses arising from investment properties	8
<u>(369)</u>	Net Income	<u>(386)</u>

There are no restrictions on the Authority's ability to realise the value inherent in its investment property or on the Authority's right to remittance of income and the proceeds of disposal. The Authority has no contractual obligations to purchase, construct, develop, maintain, repair or enhance investment properties. The following table summarises the movement in the fair value of investment properties over the year.

16b Investment properties

2013/14 £000	Investment Properties Table 39	2014/15 £000
8,995	Balance at start of year	9,277
	Additions	
2	Subsequent Expenditure	692
	Other changes	
323	Net gains/losses from fair value adjustments	(1,286)
(43)	To/(from) Property, Plant & Equipment	128
<u>280</u>	Total other changes	<u>(1,158)</u>
<u>9,277</u>	Balance at end of year	<u>8,811</u>

(17) Private Finance Initiative – IWMF Padworth

The Council entered into a PFI contract with Veolia ES West Berkshire Ltd in March 2008 for the provision of waste collection and disposal services.

17a The contract included provision of an Integrated Waste Management Facility (IWMF), built on Council owned land at Padworth Sidings. This £25.97m facility opened on 19 October 2011, and is recognised as both an asset and liability in the Balance Sheet. However, whilst capital repayments actually commenced from 1 April 2013 notional capital payments have been spread over the 21 years from the month of opening to the end of the PFI contract on 30 September 2032.

The future payment stream is estimated as follows:

Padworth PFI payments 2013/14 £000	Table 40 Due within	Repayment of Liability £000	Interest £000	Service Charges £000	Total 2014/15 £000
16,994	Repayment in year	506	1,008	16,073	17,587
	Deferred liability				
18,373	Within 1 year	537	977	16,639	18,153
76,980	2 to 5 years	2,497	3,558	70,101	76,156
105,362	6 to 10 years	4,079	3,491	97,244	104,814
117,237	11 to 15 years	5,485	2,084	109,295	116,864
90,345	16 to 20 years	3,405	380	58,853	62,638
425,291		16,509	11,498	368,205	396,212

- 17b** These payments have been calculated to compensate Veolia for the fair value of the services provided, the capital expenditure incurred and interest payable. The capital asset movement recognised by WBC with and the associated outstanding PFI liability for capital expenditure incurred by Veolia is:

31/03/14 £000	Padworth PFI Asset movements & Liabilities	Table 41	31/03/15 £000
	Movement in asset value:		
31,217	Gross Book Value at start of year		28,965
0	Additions		11
(2,252)	Revaluation		(1,022)
28,965	Gross Book Value at year-end		27,954
(915)	Depreciation at the start of year		(1,759)
(844)	Depreciation		(701)
0	Revaluation		1,060
(1,759)	Depreciation at year-end		(1,400)
27,206	Net Book Value at year-end		26,554
	Movement in deferred liability:		
(24,988)	Balance outstanding at the start of year		(16,511)
8,000	Adjustment due to restructuring of contract		0
477	Principal repayment in year		506
(16,511)	Balance outstanding at year-end		(16,005)
(506)	Within 1 year		(537)
(16,005)	Deferred liability		(15,468)
(16,511)	Balance outstanding at year-end		(16,005)

The contract was restructured in 2013/14 which had the effect of reducing the level of outstanding debt included in the contract by £8.0m in 2014/15. At the end of the contract the IWFM will revert, at no residual cost, back to the Council.

(18) Inventory and Work in Progress

- 18a Inventory** - goods and materials charged to revenue, which have not been used by the end of year, totalled £16k (2013/14: £35k) for the Tourist Information centre and Shaw House. This stock is carried forward to be charged in the year it is used.

18b Contractual commitments: on major capital schemes at the 31 March 2014 were:

Estimated commitments at 31/03/14	Capital commitments Table 42	Estimated contract cost at 31/03/15	Contract payments		Estimated commitments at 31/03/15
			prior to 01/04/14	within 2014/15	
£000		£000	£000	£000	£000
5	Trinity School new sports facilities	3,463	3,458	5	0
47	Denefield School	6,830	6,783	47	0
24	Brookfields Special School	1,425	1,396	29	0
5	Chieveley Primary School	3,008	2,996	7	5
54	The Downs School-Science Block	3,950	3,896	54	0
21	Kennet School Sensory Impairment Unit	1,823	1,802	21	0
14	Burgfield St Mary's Primary School	1,187	1,166	21	0
13	Long Lane Primary School	477	463	0	14
1,747	Spurcroft Primary School Expansion	2,473	53	313	2,107
416	John Rankin Infant School Extension	890	413	451	26
696	The Winchcombe School - Basic Need	907	236	649	22
4,060	Superfast Broadband Infrastructure	4,610	0	1,421	3,189
548	Newbury Museum Redevelopment	1,729	1,183	503	43
0	John Rankin Junior School Extension	1,150	0	1,099	51
0	Lambourn Primary School	888	0	268	620
0	Little Heath School	2,947	0	1,255	1,692
0	The Willows School	2,512	0	126	2,386
0	The Castle School Basic Need	571	0	557	14
0	Brookfields Special School Post 16 Expansion	699	0	678	21
0	John O'Gaunt School Modernisation	539	0	55	484
7,650		42,078	23,845	7,559	10,674

(19) Debtors

Debtors: represents income due within one year:

31/03/14	Debtors	31/03/15
£000	Table 43	£000
4,550	Central Government	3,760
857	Local Government	867
228	NHS	404
44	Academy	35
4,038	Collection Fund	4,517
2,095	Payments in Advance	2,317
9,260	Other Debtors	10,268
21,072	Total Debtors	22,168
(2,531)	less provision	(6,276)
18,541	Total Debtors	15,892
34	Government Departments	0
6	Local Government	20
3	Academy	12
2,052	Other Payments in Advance	2,285
2,095	Total Payments in Advance	2,317

(20) Cash and cash equivalents

The balance of Cash and Cash Equivalents is made up of the following elements:

31/03/14 £000	Cash & Cash Equivalents Table 44	31/03/15 £000
1,029	Cash held by the Authority	1,856
(2,878)	Bank current accounts	281
1,666	Short Term Deposits	802
<u>(183)</u>	Total	<u>2,939</u>

Bank current account figures for 31 March 2014 and 31 March 2015 represent the current account balance less the value of cheques issued by the Council which were unrepresented at that date. Short term deposits at 31 March 2015 are in the Goldman Sachs Money Market Fund £158k (2013/14: £56k), HBOS Deposit Account £102k (2013/14: £1,606k) and Santander Deposit Account £542k (2013/14: £4k).

(21) Creditors

Creditors are payments the Authority owes and are due to be paid in the short term:

31/03/14 £000	Creditors Table 45	31/03/15 £000
2,990	Central Government	4,193
556	Local Government	3,275
79	NHS	215
52	Academy	105
906	Collection Fund	1,029
7,307	Receipts in Advance	5,759
20,703	Other creditors	22,131
<u>32,593</u>	Total Creditors	<u>36,707</u>
	Receipts in Advance	
2,071	Central Government	1,481
59	Local Government	70
25	NHS	4
66	Academy	40
5,086	Other Receipts in Advance	4,165
<u>7,307</u>	Total Receipts in Advance	<u>5,760</u>

(22) Provisions, contingent liability and contingent assets

Provisions Table 46	Balance 31/03/14 £000	Arising in Year £000	Payments in Year £000	Balance 31/03/15 £000
Crookham (extraction of minerals)	9	0	0	9
Provision for liabilities	154	358	(154)	358
Other Provisions	434	75	0	509
Total Provisions	597	433	(154)	876

Other Provisions includes West Berkshire Council's share of future claims against Berkshire County Council's liabilities. Provisions represent the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of expenditure required to settle a known obligation.

Contingent Liabilities: There is one legal case awaiting recovery of legal costs. It is impossible at this time to assess what monetary amount may be recovered.

A group of Property Search Companies are seeking to claim refunds of fees paid to the Council to access land charges data. Proceedings have not yet been issued. The Council has been informed that the value of those claims at present is in the region of £120k plus interest and costs. The claimants have also intimated that they may bring a claim against all English and Welsh local authorities for alleged anti-competitive behaviour. It is not clear what the value of any such claim would be as against the Council. Negotiations are ongoing between the parties. It is possible that additional claimants may come forward to submit claims for refunds, but none have been intimated at present.

(23) Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme

At the present time the Council is not required to take part in the scheme as it no longer meets the threshold criteria.

(24) Reserves and balances

24a Usable: The Authority's usable reserves are made up as follows:

31/03/14 £000	Usable Reserves Table 47	31/03/15 £000
8,451	General Fund	7,967
2,360	Working balances	2,233
12,301	Earmarked reserves	12,036
18,884	Capital Reserves	21,258
41,996	Total usable reserves	43,494

24b General Fund: This balance represents the total general reserve that the Council holds for non-specific items and represents the total of the General Fund and the Risk Fund.

24c Working Balances: This balance represents resources used for cash flow purposes that are held for consumption in the following financial year.

24d Earmarked Reserves: The amount shown for Earmarked reserves is made by a number of funds and balances where the amounts are held for specific future projects.

Earmarked Reserves Table 48	31/03/14 £000	Receipts £000	Payments £000	31/03/15 £000
Total Working Balances	2,360	1,960	(2,087)	2,233
General Fund	6,480	0	(43)	6,437
Risk Fund	1,971	0	(441)	1,530
Total General Reserve	8,451	0	(484)	7,967
Schools Balances	4,803	5,555	(5,238)	5,120
Special Expenses	6	8	(8)	6
Self Insurance Fund	1,295	0	(493)	802
Long term commitment	1,175	34	(76)	1,133
Ex BCC Liabilities	273	0	0	273
Specific Earmarked Reserves	3,821	1,699	(1,795)	3,725
Waste Management Strategy	928	49	0	977
Total Earmarked Reserves	12,301	7,345	(7,610)	12,036
Total General Fund	23,112	9,305	(10,181)	22,236

24e School Balances:

School balances 2014/15 Table 49	Nursery £000	Primary £000	Secondary £000	Special £000	Totals £000
Opening balances	151	3,420	143	1,089	4,803
Transfers to Academies	0	0	0	0	0
Restated balances	151	3,420	143	1,089	4,803
Movement	19	60	(167)	405	317
Closing balances	170	3,480	(24)	1,494	5,120
Representing					
Underspent	170	3,534	480	1,494	5,678
Overspent	0	(54)	(504)	0	(558)
Net balance	170	3,480	(24)	1,494	5,120

Includes all school balances for each sector - revenue and capital. Special schools now include the balances of the two pupil referral units who moved to delegated budgets from 01/04/13.

If schools under spend their delegated budgets during the year they must be allowed to carry forward the balance for use in future years. At 31 March 2015 Schools held total balances of £5,120k (2013/14: £4,803k).

The £5,120k (2013/14: £4.803k) is an amalgamation of unspent and overspent balances, of which £5,678k is the unspent (surplus) and £(558)k is the overspent (deficit) (2013/14: £4,945k and £(142)k respectively). Five schools closed with an overall deficit balance (2013/14: five).

West Berkshire's Schools Forum has set a recommended maximum limit for balances on schools' delegated budgets of 8% primary, and 5% secondary of the annual budget or £20,000 (whichever is greater). In line with the Scheme for Financing Schools, schools with balances in excess of these limits, are asked to explain the purposes for which their balances have been earmarked. Six schools have closed with an excess balance totalling £42k, compared to 3 schools totalling £36k at the end of 2013/14.

The Schools Forum will consider explanations from schools at their June 2015 meeting, and any schools retaining an excess balance outside permitted uses will have the excess balance clawed back.

- 24f Special Expenses:** holds the balances for the Closed Church Yards and Hungerford Town Footway Lighting Accounts. Precepts are raised to offset the costs of maintaining these accounts.
- 24g Self Insurance Fund:** This Fund has been established to ensure that costs to the Council in relation to claims can be met whilst limiting the impact of higher premiums on the Council's revenue budget. The Fund is used to pay the first £250k of any property claim and the first £100k of other claims. External insurance covers the balance of claims.
- 24h Long Term Commitment:** these reserves are mainly to do with commuted sums given to the Council from developers to maintain open spaces and playgrounds over a period of time. Also included are reserves for Planning Development and Building Maintenance.
- 24i Ex BCC liabilities:** represents the allocation to West Berkshire Council of ex Berkshire County Council (BCC) provisions, mainly relating to insurance matters.
- 24j Specific Earmarked Reserves:** The main items included within this are items provided for in the 2013/14 financial year to support the 2014/15 budget, funds set aside for future restructuring costs and items for specific future liabilities.
- 24k Waste Management Strategy:** The fund will be used to help meet the revenue and capital costs associated with the Council's PFI arrangement for the provision of waste collection and disposal services over the twenty five year life of the contract.

(25) Unusable Reserves

31/03/14 £000	Unusable Reserves Table 50	31/03/15 £000
(3,293)	Accumulated Absences Account	(3,031)
92,710	Revaluation reserve	82,169
149,404	Capital Adjustment Account	143,525
(184,063)	Pension Reserve	(250,135)
(1,410)	Collection Fund	(3,595)
53,348	Total Unusable Reserves	(31,067)

25a Accumulated Absence Account: This account shows the differences that would arise on the General fund Balance from accruing compensated absences earned but not taken in the year. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account. The amounts will change year on year depending on how much leave employees still have to take.

25b Revaluation Reserve: This reserve contains the gains made by the Authority arising from increases in the value of its Property, Plant and Equipment. The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

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

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

2013/14 £000	Revaluation Reserve Table 51	2014/15 £000
84,899	Opening Balance	92,710
27,557	Upward revaluations of assets	7,871
(3,841)	Impaired assets	(12,927)
23,716	Surplus or (deficit) on revaluation of Fixed Assets	(5,056)
0	Sold assets	(115)
(10,300)	Academy Schools removed	0
(5,605)	Depreciation in year	(5,370)
92,710	Closing Balance	82,169

25c Capital Adjustment Account: This account holds the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or enhancement of 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.

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

2013/14 £000	PPE - Capital Adjustment Account Table 52	2014/15 £000
176,214	Opening Balance	149,404
774	Revenue contribution to capital	0
2,496	Capital receipts applied	338
13,916	External funding of new capital assets	17,201
3,922	Minimum Revenue Provision / Loans Principal	12,640
3,540	External funding of REFCUS	3,759
(5,459)	REFCUS Assets charged	(13,103)
(24,182)	Depreciation	(21,687)
5,606	Historic cost depreciation adjustment	5,370
0	Write out asset values on disposal	(351)
0	Revaluation reserve re sold assets	115
(11,557)	Impaired assets	(11,447)
(26,281)	Academy schools removed	0
10,300	Revaluation reserve re academy schools	0
115	Revaluations Investment Properties	1,286
149,404	Closing Balance	143,525

25d Pension Reserve: The Pension Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provision. Post employment benefits are accounted for in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as 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 Authority makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pay any pensions for which it is directly responsible.

25e Collection Fund Adjustment Account: This account shows the differences arising from the recognition of council tax income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from Council Tax payers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund.

2013/14 £000	Rates and Tax Income Adjustment Account Table 53	2014/15 £000
(842)	Opening Balance	(1,407)
(565)	Amount by which council tax income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(2,188)
(1,407)	Closing Balance	(3,595)

(26) Unapplied Capital Grants, Contributions and Receipts

The Council is required to split capital grants and contributions into those which have been used to finance Capital expenditure, and those which are still unapplied. The following table shows the amounts which were unapplied at the start of the year, how much has been used during the year and the amount left unapplied at the end of the year.

Unapplied Capital Grants and Contributions	Opening Balance 31/03/14 £000	New Grants and Contributions £000	Grants repaid to funding body & Contributions Written off £000	Amount applied to fund Capital Expenditure £000	Closing Balance 31/03/15 £000
Table 54					
Section 106 & Other Contributions	(12,847)	(7,857)	83	3,478	(17,143)
Capital Grants	(6,037)	(17,298)	0	19,220	(4,115)
Grants & other contributions unapplied	(18,884)	(25,155)	83	22,698	(21,258)
Grants with Conditions	(3,064)	(2,721)	0	3,928	(1,857)

(27) General Fund Deficit Reconciliation to Revenue Activities Net Cash Inflow

2013/14 £000	Net Cashflow Table 55	2014/15	
		£000	£000
(450)	General Fund (Surplus) / Deficit		484
	Non Cash Transactions		
17,600	Contribution to/(from) Reserves		3,214
	Items on an accruals basis		
(5)	(Increase)/Decrease in Stock	19	
4,688	(Increase)/Decrease in Debtors	2,649	
706	Increase/(Decrease) in Creditors	4,114	
			6,782
<u>22,539</u>	Items classified outside Revenue Activities		<u>10,480</u>
<u>22,539</u>	Net cashflows from operating activities		<u>10,480</u>

(28) Cash flow Reconciliation to Balance Sheet

Cash flow reconciliation	31/03/14	Movement	31/03/15
Table 56	£000	£000	£000
Temporary Borrowing	25,891	(13,248)	12,643
Temporary Investments	(4,000)	0	(4,000)
Cash and cash equivalents	183	(3,122)	(2,939)

(29) Disclosure of Deployment of Dedicated Schools Grant

The Council's expenditure on schools is funded primarily by grant monies provided by the Department for Education, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The DSG allocation is based on the number of pupils recorded in the January school census. An element of DSG is recouped by the Department to fund academy schools in the Council's area. DSG is ringfenced and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget, as defined in the School Finance (England) Regulations 2011.

The Schools Budget includes elements for a range of educational services provided on an authority-wide basis (mainly for children educated out of maintained school settings including special needs placements and pupil referral units) and for the Individual Schools Budget, which is divided into a budget share for each maintained school.

Details of the deployment of DSG receivable for 2013/14 are as follows:

Deployment of Dedicated School Grant	Central Expenditure	Individual Schools Budget	Total
Table 57	£000	£000	£000
Final DSG for 2014/15 before Academy recoupment			120,021
Academy figure recouped for 2014/15			(32,344)
Total DSG after Academy recoupment for 2014/15			87,677
Plus: Brought forward from 2013/14			1,513
Less: Carry forward to 2015/16 agreed in advance			0
Agreed initial budgeted distribution in 2014/15	14,308	74,882	89,190
In year adjustments	0	0	0
Final budgeted distribution for 2014/15	14,308	74,882	89,190
Less Actual central expenditure	(13,841)		(13,841)
Less Actual ISB deployed to schools		(74,249)	(74,249)
Plus Local Authority contribution for 2014/15	0	0	0
Carry forward to 2015/16	467	633	1,100

(30) Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulation

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

- 2014/15 Table for year end 31 March 2015 on page 63
- 2013/14 Table for year end 31 March 2014 on page 64

(31) Amounts reported for Resource Allocation Decisions

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 Authority's Members 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 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).
 - The cost of retirement benefits is based on cash flows (payments of employer's pension's contributions) rather than current service cost of benefits accrued in the year.
- 2014/15 Table for year end 31 March 2015 on page 65
 - 2013/14 Table for year end 31 March 2014 on page 66

Adjustment between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulation	General Fund		Useable Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	Movement in Reserves		Total Authority Reserves
	Balance	Deferred Credit	£000	£000	Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	
2014/15 Table 58	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:							
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:							
Depreciation	33,134	0	0	0	33,134	(33,134)	0
<i>Being charges for depreciation and revaluation losses of non-current assets-</i>							
Investments	(1,286)	0	0	0	(1,286)	1,286	0
<i>Being movements in the fair value of investment properties</i>							
Grants applied	1,206	0	0	(22,782)	(21,576)	21,576	0
<i>Being capital grants and contributions applied</i>							
Revenue funded	13,103	0	0	0	13,103	(13,103)	0
<i>Being revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute</i>							
Disposals	351	0	0	0	351	(351)	0
<i>Being amounts of non-current assets write off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Income and Expenditure Statement</i>							
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement							
Statutory provision	(12,640)	0	0	0	(12,640)	12,640	0
<i>Being statutory provision for the financing of capital investment</i>							
Capital expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Being capital expenditure charged against the General Fund and HRA balances</i>							
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Grants Unapplied Account							
Grants unapplied	(25,156)	0	0	25,156	0	0	0
<i>Being capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>							
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve							
Cash transfer	(246)	0	0	0	(246)	246	0
<i>Being transfer of cash proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>							
Capital Receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Being use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure</i>							
Adjustment primarily involving the Pensions Reserve							
Reversals	74,584	0	0	0	74,584	(74,584)	0
<i>Being reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>							
Pension contributions	(8,513)	0	0	0	(8,513)	8,513	0
<i>Being employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in year</i>							
Adjustment primarily involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account							
Council tax income	2,185	0	0	0	2,185	(2,185)	0
<i>Being amount by which council tax income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements</i>							
Adjustments primarily involving the Accumulated Absences Account							
Remuneration	262	0	0	0	262	(262)	0
<i>Being amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements</i>							
Total	76,984	0	0	2,374	79,358	(79,358)	0
<i>Total Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations</i>							

Adjustment between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulation	General		Useable	Capital Grants	Movement in		Total Authority Reserves
	Fund Balance	Deferred Credit	Capital Receipts Reserve	Unapplied Account	Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	
2013/14 Table 59	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:							
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:							
Depreciation	35,817	0	0	0	35,817	(35,817)	0
<i>Being charges for depreciation and revaluation losses of non-current assets-</i>							
Investments	(115)	0	0	0	(115)	115	0
<i>Being movements in the fair value of investment properties</i>							
Grants applied	2,273	0	0	(18,731)	(16,458)	16,458	0
<i>Being capital grants and contributions applied</i>							
Revenue funded	5,459	0	0	0	5,459	(5,459)	0
<i>Being revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute</i>							
Disposals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Removal of Academies	26,281	0	0	0	26,281	(26,281)	0
<i>Being amounts of non-current assets write off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Income and Expenditure Statement</i>							
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement							
Statutory provision	(3,922)	0	0	0	(3,922)	3,922	0
<i>Being statutory provision for the financing of capital investment</i>							
Capital expenditure	(774)	0	0	0	(774)	774	0
<i>Being capital expenditure charged against the General Fund and HRA balances</i>							
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Grants Unapplied Account							
Grants unapplied	(17,174)	0	0	17,174	0	0	0
<i>Being capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>							
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve							
Cash transfer	(125)	(2)	0	127	0	0	0
<i>Being transfer of cash proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>							
Capital Receipts	0	0	(2,437)	0	(2,437)	2,437	0
<i>Being use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure</i>							
Adjustment primarily involving the Pensions Reserve							
Reversals	20,862	0	0	0	20,862	(20,862)	0
<i>Being reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>							
Pension contributions	(7,783)	0	0	0	(7,783)	7,783	0
<i>Being employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in year</i>							
Adjustment primarily involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account							
Council tax income	(568)	0	0	0	(568)	568	0
<i>Being amount by which council tax income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements</i>							
Adjustments primarily involving the Accumulated Absences Account							
Remuneration	(56)	0	0	0	(56)	56	0
<i>Being amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements</i>							
Total	60,175	(2)	(2,437)	(1,430)	56,306	(56,306)	0
<i>Total Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations</i>							

Notes to the Financial Statements

Directorate Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2015

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CI&ES) Table 60	Communities £000	Environment £000	Resources £000	Below the line items £000	T total £000
Fees, charges & other service income	(12,772)	(10,209)	(4,931)	(404)	(28,316)
Government grants	(98,730)	(2,350)	(42,703)	0	(143,783)
Total Income	(111,502)	(12,559)	(47,634)	(404)	(172,099)
Employee expenses	27,871	12,635	13,416	0	53,922
Other operating expenses	151,745	32,773	47,096	7,721	239,335
Total operating expenses	179,616	45,408	60,512	7,721	293,257
Net Cost of Services	68,114	32,849	12,878	7,317	121,158

Reconciliation to Net Cost of Services in Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

Cost of Services in Service Analysis	121,158
Add services not included in main analysis	0
Amounts not included in the analysis but included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	0
Amounts included in the analysis but not included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	37,747
Net Cost of Services in Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	158,905

Reconciliation to Subjective Analysis	Service Analysis £000	Amounts included in the analysis but not included in the CI&ES £000	Amounts not included in the analysis but included in the CI&ES £000	Allocation of support service recharges £000	Net Cost of Services £000	Corporate Amounts £000	T total £000
Fees, charges & other service income	(28,316)	3,726	0	0	(24,590)	(19,219)	(43,809)
Interest and investment income	0	0	0	0	0	(399)	(399)
Income from council tax	0	0	0	0	0	(80,222)	(80,222)
Government grants and contributions	(143,783)	(25,155)	0	0	(168,939)	(27,604)	(196,542)
Total Income	(172,100)	(21,429)	0	0	(193,529)	(127,444)	(320,972)
Employee expenses	53,923	3,970	0	10,243	68,136	0	68,136
Other service expenses	239,335	8,618	0	0	247,953	42,561	290,515
Support Service recharges	0	0	0	(12,090)	(12,090)	0	(12,090)
Depreciation, amortisation, impairment and disposal	0	46,588	0	1,846	48,435	0	48,435
Interest Payments	0	0	0	0	0	5,353	5,353
Precepts & Levies	0	0	0	0	0	3,648	3,648
Gain / Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	0	0	0	0	0	(106)	(106)
Total operating expenses	293,258	59,176	0	0	352,434	51,456	403,890
Surplus or deficit on the provision of services	121,158	37,747	0	0	158,905	(75,988)	82,917

Notes to the Financial Statements

Directorate Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2014

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CI&ES)	Communities	Environment	Resources	Below the line items	Total
Table 61	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Fees, charges & other service income	(12,463)	(10,196)	(5,514)	(1,285)	(29,458)
Government grants	(99,476)	(2,717)	(45,760)	(460)	(148,413)
Total Income	(111,939)	(12,913)	(51,274)	(1,745)	(177,871)
Employee expenses	28,230	12,795	12,597	879	54,501
Other operating expenses	151,955	32,750	50,816	9,735	245,256
Total operating expenses	180,185	45,545	63,413	10,614	299,757
Net Cost of Services	68,246	32,632	12,139	8,869	121,886

Reconciliation to Net Cost of Services in Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

Cost of Services in Service Analysis	121,886
Add services not included in main analysis	0
Amounts not included in the analysis but included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(9,121)
Amounts included in the analysis but not included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	45,774
Net Cost of Services in Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	158,539

Reconciliation to Subjective Analysis	Amounts included in		Amounts not included in the	Allocation of support service recharges	Net Cost of Services	Corporate Amounts	Total
	Service Analysis	the analysis but not included in the CI&ES	analysis but included in the CI&ES				
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Fees, charges & other service income	(29,458)	2,385	0	0	(27,073)	0	(27,073)
Interest and investment income	0	0	(449)	0	(449)	0	(449)
Income from council tax	0	0	0	0	0	(78,243)	(78,243)
Government grants and contributions	(148,413)	4,991	0	0	(143,423)	(64,181)	(207,604)
Total Income	(177,871)	7,376	(449)	0	(170,945)	(142,424)	(313,369)
Employee expenses	54,501	4,160	0	10,861	69,522	0	69,522
Other service expenses	245,256	3,453	0	0	248,710	35,374	284,084
Support Service recharges	0	0	0	(11,800)	(11,800)	0	(11,800)
Depreciation, amortisation, impairment and disposal	0	30,784	0	939	31,724	0	31,724
Interest Payments	0	0	(4,921)	0	(4,921)	4,471	(450)
Precepts & Levies	0	0	(3,751)	0	(3,751)	3,751	0
Gain / Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total operating expenses	299,757	38,397	(8,672)	0	329,484	43,596	373,080
Surplus or deficit on the provision of services	121,886	45,773	(9,121)	0	158,539	(98,828)	59,711

The Collection Fund Income and Expenditure Account

As collection authority West Berkshire Council is responsible for the billing and recovery of Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates. Such transactions are required to be shown separately from the provision of services by the District Council. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers and the distribution to local authorities and the Government of council tax and non-domestic rates.

Council Tax 2013/14 £000	Business Rates 2013/14 £000	Collection Fund Income & Expenditure Account		Council Tax 2014/15 £000	Business Rates 2014/15 £000
		Table 62	notes		
		Income			
(91,799)		Council Tax Receivable	1	(93,057)	
	(79,852)	Business Rates Receivable	2		(83,659)
(443)		Government Grants		(449)	
(92,242)	(79,852)	Total Income		(93,506)	(83,659)
		Expenditure			
		Precepts & Demands:	4		
0	40,801	Central Government		0	41,637
79,028	39,985	West Berkshire Council		80,068	40,805
9,425	0	Thames Valley Police Authority		9,727	0
3,632	816	Royal Berkshire Fire Authority		3,676	833
92,085	81,602			93,471	83,275
(903)	0	Transfer to General Fund in respect of distribution of previous year's estimated deficit	5	189	(4,044)
		Charges to the Collection Fund			
0	461	Transitional Relief Payment		0	2
0	257	Costs of collection		0	260
141	(357)	(Increase) / decrease in Bad Debt Provision		82	486
0	690	(Increase) / decrease in Provision for Appeals	6	0	7,725
141	1,051			82	8,473
91,323	82,653	Total Expenditure		93,742	87,704
(919)	2,828	(Surplus)/Deficit for the year		236	4,045
948	0	(Surplus)/deficit brought forward at 1st April		29	2,828
29	2,828	(Surplus)/deficit carried forward at 31st March		265	6,873

(1) Council Tax

2013/14 £000	Council Tax Table 63	2014/15	
		£000	£000
107,953	Opening Debit	108,899	
<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	108,899
107,953			
	Less reduced debit	0	
(1,677)	Exemptions	(1,684)	
(6,907)	Discounts	(7,344)	
(90)	Disabled relief	(94)	
(7,480)	Council Tax Support	(6,720)	
<u>(16,154)</u>			<u>(15,842)</u>
91,799	Net Closing Debit		93,057

(2) National Non-Domestic Rates

From 1st April 1994 until 31st March 2012 each Authority received its Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) income direct from the central pool rather than passing it through the Collection Fund. From 1st April 2013 following the introduction of the new business rates retention scheme 49% of business rates collected by the Authority are now retained with the remainder being shared between Central Government (50%) and the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authority (1%) The aim of the scheme is to give Councils greater incentive to grow the businesses in their area and allows West Berkshire Council to retain its proportionate share of the business rates growth. It does, however increase the volatility of the income received from NDR due to the risks of non payment and volatility in the tax base.

2013/14 £000	National Non-Domestic Rates Table 64	2014/15	
		£000	£000
87,597	Opening Debit	92,238	
<u>87,597</u>			92,238
(2,048)	Less empty and revalued properties	(2,677)	
	New funded relief	(421)	
461	Transitional relief	2	
(6,052)	Mandatory relief	(6,417)	
(133)	Discretionary relief	(121)	
	Amount collected in respect of last year's rates bills deferred in line with National Scheme	319	
	RV List amendments	736	
			<u>(8,579)</u>
79,825	Net Closing Debit		83,659
257	Costs of Collection	260	
(357)	Contribution to Bad Debt Provision	486	
690	Contribution to Appeals Provision	7725	
<u>590</u>			<u>8,471</u>

The opening debit is arrived at by multiplying the total rateable value by the rate poundage (43.3 pence in the pound).

(3) Government Grants

A £449k (2013/14: 443k) grant with respect to Ministry of Defence properties was credited to the Collection Fund.

(4) Precepts & Demands

Under Council Tax, parishes are required to precept on the district who in turn precept on the Collection Fund, whilst Thames Valley Police and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service precept directly on the Collection Fund. Under the new Business Rates Retention Scheme West Berkshire, Central Government and Royal Berkshire Fire Authority all precept directly on the Collection Fund.

(5) Transfer to the General Fund

This represents a transfer to the general fund in respect of the estimated deficit/surplus on the collection fund as at January 2014. This surplus is shared between the precepting bodies. In January 2014 it was estimated that the Collection Fund would have a Business Rates deficit of £4m and a Council Tax surplus of £189k. The following amounts were therefore due to/from preceptors:

Council Tax 2013/14 £000	Business Rates 2013/14 £000	Contributions to Collection Fund Surplus and Deficit Table 65	Council Tax 2014/15 £000	Business Rates 2014/15 £000
777	0	West Berkshire Council	(162)	1,981
0	0	Central Government	0	2,022
93	0	Thames Valley Police	(19)	0
33	0	Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authority	(8)	41
903	0		(189)	4,044

(6) Provision for Appeals

A provision has been made to reflect Business Rates appeals made to the Valuation Office Agency that are outstanding as at the 31 March 2015. The provision results from the introduction of the Business Rates Retention Scheme in 2013/14.

2013/14 £000	Business Rate Appeals Table 66	2014/15 £000
0	Opening balance	690
690	Transfer from Income & Expenditure Account	7,725
0	Write off in the year	(735)
690	Closing Balance	7,680

(7) **Council Tax Base**

The Council's tax base is calculated by reference to the number of properties in particular value bands within the District. The number of properties is adjusted for single person occupancy, empty properties, disabled use etc to arrive at a total for each band. Each band is then converted to a band D equivalent to determine the tax base.

Council Tax Base Table 67		Band	Net Dwellings £0.00	Multiplier	Band D Equivalent £0.00
	Disabled	A	1.00	5/9	0.56
	up to £40,000	A	1,573.00	6/9	1,048.67
over £40,000	up to £52,000	B	3,916.91	7/9	3,046.49
over £52,000	up to £68,000	C	14,872.93	8/9	13,220.38
over £68,000	up to £88,000	D	14,823.57	9/9	14,823.57
over £88,000	up to £120,000	E	9,420.65	11/9	11,514.15
over £120,000	up to £160,000	F	6,238.89	13/9	9,011.73
over £160,000	up to £320,000	G	4,128.70	15/9	6,881.17
over £320,000		H	647.85	18/9	1,295.70
					<u>60,842.42</u>
	Adjustment for losses on collection			x	0.996
					<u>60,599.05</u>

Glossary

Academy (School) - is a type of school that is independent of Local Education Authority control but remains publicly funded.

Accruals basis - Accounting for income and expenditure during the financial year in which they are earned or incurred, not when money is received or paid.

Actuary - A person or firm who analyses the assets and future liabilities of a pension fund and calculates the level of employers' contributions needed to keep it solvent.

Amortised Cost: Most financial instruments (whether borrowing or investment) are valued in 2014/15 on an amortised costs basis using the effective interest rate (EIR) method.

Audit Commission - The independent public body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently, and effectively in the areas of local government, housing, health, criminal justice, and fire and rescue services.

Best Value - Delivering economy, efficiency and effectiveness to secure continuous service improvement – 'providing the quality services you want at a price you are willing to pay'.

Book value - The value of a fixed asset, such as a building or machine, as recorded in an organisation's books. It is the lower of the depreciated cost and the recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is the higher of the value in use and the net realisable amount.

Capital adjustment account - An account that reflects the difference between the cost of fixed assets consumed and the capital financing set aside to pay for them.

Capital expenditure - Expenditure on the acquisition or creation of a fixed asset or expenditure that adds to and does not merely maintain the value of an existing fixed asset.

Capital programme - A list of capital projects approved to start in a specified financial year.

Capital receipt - Proceeds from the sale of capital assets (e.g. land, buildings and equipment).

Capitalisation - Treatment of expenditure as capital rather than as revenue (see also capital expenditure).

CIPFA - Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy

Collection fund - An account maintained by a district council recording the amounts collected in council tax.

Community asset - An asset that the Council intends to hold forever, that has no determinable useful life, and that may have restrictions on its disposal. Examples of community assets are parks and historic buildings.

Contingency provision - A sum included usually as a central provision within the budget to meet expenditure where timing and scale are uncertain.

Contingent liabilities - A potential liability that is uncertain because it depends on the outcome of a future event.

Contracts Rules of Procedure – the rules apply in every case where the Council enters into an agreement with another party for the supply of goods, materials or services to, or the execution of work for, the Council.

Corporate and Democratic Core - Has two elements: the costs of corporate management are the infrastructure overheads which allow services to be provided and information required for public accountability and the democratic representation costs relating to all aspects of members' activities.

Council tax - A domestic property tax based on capital values with a personal element (a 25% discount for single-adult households). Each property is allocated to one of eight tax bands according to its capital value.

Creditor - An individual or body to which the Council owes money at the Balance Sheet date.

Current asset - An asset that is realisable or disposable within less than one year without disruption to services.

Current liability - A liability that is due to be settled within one year.

Debtor - An individual or body that owes money to the Council at the Balance Sheet date.

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - A Government grant that can only be used to fund expenditure within the schools' budget.

Deferred contributions and Government grant accounts - Accounts that reflect the value of fixed assets in the Balance Sheet that are financed by specific Government grants or external contributions.

Defined benefit pension scheme - A pension scheme in which a pensioner's benefits are specified, usually relating to their length of service and final salary.

Deposit - Receipt held that is repayable in prescribed circumstances.

Depreciated replacement cost - Relating to fixed assets, the current replacement costs adjusted for depreciation. This method of valuation is used when it is not practical to estimate the open market value for the existing use of a specialised property.

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

Developers' contribution - If a development derives special benefit from highway works, developers can be required to contribute towards the costs. They arise mainly as a result of agreements under section 278 of the Highways Act 1980.

Discretionary increase in pension payments - This increase arises when an employer agrees to the early retirement of an employee other than for reasons of ill health and agrees to pay pension benefits based on more years than he or she actually worked.

Dividends - Income to the Pension Fund on its holdings of UK and overseas shares.

Earmarked reserve - See Reserve.

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

Finance lease - Under this type of lease, the risks and rewards of ownership of the leased goods transfer to the lessee (the organisation paying the lease).

Financial instruments - Any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another.

Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) - Accounting standards that govern the treatment and reporting of income and expenditure in an organisation's accounts.

Financial Rules of Procedure – outlines how West Berkshire should transact business

Fixed asset - An asset that yields benefits to the local authority and the services it provides for a period of more than one year.

Foundation schools - A category of school that receives its funding from the Council but owns its land and buildings and employs its own staff.

General Fund - The accumulated credit balance on the General Fund. It is the excess of income over expenditure in the Income and Expenditure Account after adjusting for movements to and from reserves and other non-cash items. This balance is needed as a cushion against unforeseen expenditure.

Government grant released - The reduction in the value of a Government grant deferred when the corresponding fixed asset is depreciated or disposed of.

Historical cost - The amount originally paid for a fixed asset.

Impairment loss - A loss arising from an event that significantly reduces an asset's value. An example is physical damage or a fall in market value.

Infrastructure asset - Fixed assets that cannot be taken away or transferred, and whose benefits can only be obtained by continued use of the asset created. Examples of infrastructure assets are carriageways and footpaths.

Internal trading account - A service within the Council that operates on a trading basis with other parts of the Council.

International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) - International accounting standards that govern the treatment and reporting of income and expenditure in an organisation's accounts, which came fully into effect from 1 April 2010.

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) - The LGPS is a nationwide scheme for employees working in local government or working for other employers participating in the Scheme and for councillors.

Long-term borrowing - A loan repayable in more than one year from the Balance Sheet date.

Long-term debtor - An individual or body that owes money to the Council that is not due for payment within one year from the Balance Sheet date.

National business rates - Charges collected by district councils from non-domestic properties, at a national rate in the pound set by the Government. The proceeds are pooled nationally and redistributed to areas in proportion to their population.

Net assets - The amount by which assets exceed liabilities (same as net worth).

Net Book Value - The original cost of the item less accumulated depreciation for the item.

Net operating expenditure - Gross expenditure less fees and charges for services and specific grants but before the deduction of revenue support grant, national business rates and council tax income.

Non-current assets - An asset which is not easily convertible to cash or not expected to become cash within the next year.

Non-distributed costs - Overheads for which no user directly benefits and which are therefore not split between services.

Non-operational asset - A fixed asset held by the Council but not directly occupied, used or consumed in the delivery of services. Examples of non-operational assets are investment properties, heritage assets or assets that are surplus to requirements, pending sale or development.

Operational asset - A fixed asset held and occupied, used or consumed by the Council in the direct delivery of services.

Operational lease - Under this type of lease, the risks and rewards of ownership of the leased goods stay with the lessor (the company leasing out the goods).

Past service cost - For a defined benefit pension scheme, the increase in the present value of the scheme's liabilities related to employee service prior periods arising in the current period as a result of the introduction of, or improvement to, retirement benefits.

Pooled budget - Partners contribute a set amount of money to form a separate budget. The purpose and scope of the budget is agreed at the outset and then used to pay for relevant services and activities.

Post Balance Sheet event - Events that occur between the Balance Sheet date and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue.

Precept - The demand made by the County Council on the collection funds maintained by the district councils for council taxpayers' contribution to its services.

Private equity - Mainly specialist pooled partnerships that invest in private companies not normally traded on public stock markets – these are often illiquid (i.e. not easily turned into cash) and higher-risk investments that should provide high returns over the long term.

Private Finance Initiative (PFI) - Contracts typically involving a private sector entity (the operator) constructing or enhancing property used in the provision of a public service, and operating and maintaining that property for a specified period of time. The operator is paid for its services over the period of the arrangement.

Projected unit actuarial method - One of the common methods used by actuaries to calculate a contribution rate to the LGPS, which is usually expressed as a percentage of the members' pensionable pay.

Provisions - An estimated figure within the accounts for liabilities that are known to exist but cannot be measured accurately.

Realised capital resources - Usable capital resources arising mainly from the disposal of fixed assets.

Related party during the financial period - Two or more parties are related when:

- one party has direct or indirect control over the other party
- the parties are subject to common control from the same source
- one party has influence over the financial and operational policies of the other party to the extent that the other party may not be able to pursue its own interests at all times
- influence from the same source results in one of the parties entering into a transaction that is against its own separate interests.

Reserve - The Council's reserves fall into two categories. The 'unearmarked' reserve is the balance on the General Fund. An 'earmarked' reserve is an amount set aside in the Council's accounts for specific purposes.

Residual life - The assumed remaining life of a fixed asset used in calculating depreciation.

Revaluation reserve - Records unrealised net gains from asset revaluations after 1 April 2007.

Revenue contributions to capital - The use of revenue funds to finance capital expenditure.

Revenue expenditure - The operating costs incurred by the Council during the financial year in providing its day-to-day services. It is distinct from capital expenditure on projects that benefit the Council over a period of more than one financial year.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG) - Government financial support that does not have to be spent on a particular service. It is based on the Government's assessment of the Council's spending need, its receipt from national business rates and its ability to generate income from the council tax.

RICS Red Book - contains the valuation standards, mandatory rules, best practice guidance and related commentary for all RICS members undertaking asset valuations.

Scheme for Financing Schools – Sets out the financial relationship between the Authority and the maintained schools which it funds.

Service Reporting Code of Practice for Local Authorities (SeRCOP) - The code of practice containing a standard definition of services and total cost so that spending comparisons can be consistent between local authorities; was formally known as the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice (BVACOP).

Short-term investments - An investment that is readily realisable.

Specific grants - Central Government grants to finance a particular service.

Stocks - Goods that are acquired in advance of their use in providing services or their resale.

Straight-line basis - Dividing a sum equally between several years.

Useful life - Period over which the Council will benefit from the use of a fixed asset.

Work in progress - A product or service that is incomplete at the end of the year and is due to be recharged to an external body.

Write-off - Elimination of an asset or liability over a defined period, usually by means of charging or crediting the revenue account.

Abbreviations

AGS	Annual Governance Statement
AONB	Area of Outstanding Nature Beauty
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
DSG	Dedicated Schools Grant
FIAA	Financial Instruments Adjustment Account
FRICS	Fellow of The Royal Institute Of Chartered Surveyors
FRS	Financial Reporting Standard
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
IAS	International Accounting Standards
IAS 16	Accounting for Property, Plant and Equipment
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standards
IT	Information Technology
NBV	Net Book Value
NDR	National Non-Domestic Rate
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PWLB	Public Works Loans Board
RICS	Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
RSG	Revenue Support Grant
SoA	Statement of Accounts
SORP	Statement of Recommended Practice
SeRCOP	Service Reporting Code of Practice, formally the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice
VAT	Value Added Tax
WBC	West Berkshire Council

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 7

Title of Report:	Internal Audit Annual Report 2014-15
Report to be considered by:	Governance and Ethics Committee
Date of Meeting:	24 th August 2015
Forward Plan Ref:	GE3001

Purpose of Report: To provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's internal control framework

Recommended Action: To note the report

Reason for decision to be taken: To support the Annual Governance Statement

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: Internal Audit reports

Published Works: n/a

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Strategy aim:

CSA5 – Become an even more effective Council

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy aims, priorities and core services by:
Ensuring the internal control framework in fit for purpose

Portfolio Member Details

Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Roger Croft - Tel 07765 224249
E-mail Address:	rcroft@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	23 July 2015

Contact Officer Details

Name:	Ian Priestley
Job Title:	Chief Internal Auditor
Tel. No.:	01635 519253
E-mail Address:	ipriestley@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy:	none
Financial:	none
Personnel:	none
Legal/Procurement:	none
Property:	none
Risk Management:	Internal Audit identifies weaknesses in systems that pose risks to the Council's operation. This allows managers to take action to mitigate those risks.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:			
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)			
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at http://intranet/EqIA			<input type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the Annual Report on the work of Internal Audit as required by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 This report is intended to provide evidence to support the Council's Annual Governance Statement by setting out the results of the work Internal Audit has done over the last year.
- 2.2 This report builds on the interim report made to Governance and Audit earlier in the year, but does not repeat the detail of that report.
- 2.3 The report highlights the fact that four audits were rated as weak during the second half of the year, but that where weaknesses were previously identified then management action has been taken to remedy them.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 This item is not relevant to equality.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Council's internal control framework is robust.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require Internal Audit to make a formal report annually to the Council. The report should:
- (1) include an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management systems and internal control environment.
 - (2) disclose any qualifications to that opinion, together with the reasons for the qualification.
 - (3) present a summary of the audit work from which the opinion is derived, including reliance placed on work by other assurance bodies.
 - (4) draw attention to any issues Internal Audit judges particularly relevant to the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.
 - (5) compare the work actually undertaken with the work that was planned and summarise the performance of the Internal Audit function against its performance measures and criteria.
- 1.2 In addition to the formal annual report, Internal Audit provide an interim report to the Governance and Audit Committee in the course of the year. The interim report addresses emerging issues in respect of the whole range of areas to be covered in the formal annual report. An interim report was made to the Governance and Audit Committee at the February meeting of the Committee.
- 1.3 This annual report meets the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

2. Opinion on the "Internal Control Framework"

- 2.1 No fundamental weaknesses were identified in Council's internal control framework through the work carried out by Internal Audit. Where audit work identified weaknesses then management action has been taken to resolve issues identified.
- 2.2 Overall the internal control framework remains robust.

3. Issues identified in the course of the year

- 3.1 The following summarises the results of the audit work where an opinion was given, and this table demonstrates that, in particular, the main financial systems of the Council are robust. In addition it should be noted that the identification of weaknesses is an inevitable part of the auditing process. What is then key is that Management responds positively by implementing agreed recommendations.

Type	Very weak	Weak	Satisfactory	Well Controlled	Very Well Controlled
Key Financial System				3	
Other systems		4	1	2	

3.2 The following paragraphs highlight the issues raised in respect of the weak opinion audits noted above.

- (1) Corporate - Anti Fraud - Whilst the exposure of the Council to the risk of fraud and corruption is considered to be low, we found that several key policies/strategies were out-of-date or otherwise in need of review. We consider that there needs to be greater liaison/co-ordination between key officers who are involved in investigating fraud and corruption within and on behalf of the Council. There is also a need to publicise the existence of fraud and corruption across the Council to raise awareness with staff of fraud and corruption and how it can take place. This could be undertaken by publicising the existence of the Council's relevant policies and outcomes of cases that have been investigated (this could be at a local level and/or nationally) which would also act as a deterrent. Awareness would also be raised by establishing specific training covering fraud for those services/teams where there is a more inherent risk of fraud occurring. We also consider that the identification of the risk of fraud through the Council's risk management process could be strengthened.

Heads of Finance Comments - The audit opinion was "weak" because a number of the Council's policies and procedures in relation to fraud and corruption need refreshing and bringing into line with the latest best practice advice from cipfa. However, the advice from cipfa is very much "one size fits all" whereas we have always applied a risk based approach to anti fraud work, and in my view the risk of fraud and corruption at WBC is very low. WBC is a very well managed organisation with very strong governance arrangements, as noted in the recent Peer Review by the Local Government Association, and it would be a mistake to invest heavily in something where the risk is minimal. For example over the 12 or so years that we have had a whistleblowing policy in place we have had only two cases brought to our attention and both were dealt with robustly.

- (2) Finance - Commercial Rents - There are procedure notes in place covering the management of commercial property, however not all key processes have been included for example the use of the Uniform database/the Asset Team's monitoring spreadsheets. Commercial properties are recorded on both Uniform as well as on the Asset Team's spreadsheets, there is no reconciliation to ensure that the data on both sets of records agrees, or that the number of properties record agrees with the number of deeds held by the Council. The Uniform database is not fully utilised and management reports

are not produced to assist in the management of the day to day processes covering commercial properties eg monitoring when expiry dates of lease/tenancy agreements are due. Where agreed, tenants/ lease holders can arrange their own property insurance, however during our review we found that no checks are made to ensure that they are complying with this arrangement and have the relevant insurance cover. We found that the procedures include the requirement that properties should be checked to ensure that tenants/ lease holders are complying with their legal agreement (i.e. kept in good repair). However, we found that there are no checks carried out on occupied properties and inspections of empty properties do not always meet the requirements of the Council's property insurers. We were informed that for some of the larger unoccupied properties a request is made through Property Services for an external contractor to carry out daily inspections. For other properties the arrangements for inspection are more of an adhoc/informal arrangement i.e. smaller unoccupied properties may be visited by one of the Asset Team, for unoccupied units at the Kennet Enterprise Centre, the Assets Team has an arrangement with the tenants of neighbouring units to raise any concerns. When discussing the draft report we were informed that the team consider that the cost of carrying out regular physical checks on occupied properties considerably outweighs the risk associated with not doing so and the benefit of doing so would be minimal.

The Head of Finance comments – The Asset Team keep their own detailed paper and electronic records on all properties owned or leased by the Council including the expiry dates of lease/tenancy agreements which are relied upon for day to day management of properties. There is currently a vacancy within the Asset team to which we have not yet been able to recruit so there is not currently sufficient resource in the Asset Team to reconcile the two sets of records and ensure that Uniform is up to date. We will be able to explore the best way to resolve the possible discrepancies between the two sets of records when the vacant post has been filled. On the issue of insurance and property checks, I do not consider this to be a significant risk to the Council as the majority of the Council's commercial tenants have ground leases and are therefore liable for the upkeep and insurance of their own buildings. However, we will also be in a better position to address this issue when the vacancy in the Asset Team has been filled.

- (3) Corporate - Archive Service - We found the controls in place relating to the day to day operations of the archiving function by the Postal Team to be satisfactory. However, we found that the Council does not have effective processes in place for ensuring that records in storage are regularly reviewed to minimise the costs incurred. We also found that the Council does not have a complete and detailed central record of all items that have been sent into storage in which to check the storage invoice details against.

We consider that some of the weaknesses we identified are partly due to the responsibility for archiving operations being transferred between services over the years, as this seems to have resulted in a lack of continuity in the detailed knowledge of what arrangements were actually set up/agreed at the time. We also noted that some of the older records sent to storage do not have a destruction date, and therefore these records could be retained in perpetuity unnecessarily, which would result in unnecessary expenditure being incurred. Services are responsible for managing and reviewing their

own records held in storage, they are recharged on an actual cost basis to encourage them to be pro-active with this. However, we do not consider this piecemeal / uncoordinated approach is effective, as our review found a considerable number of boxes in storage beyond their destruction date.

Head of ICT comments – Some of the continuity issues described were exacerbated by a number of staff changes in the Postal Team. The team is now stable and re-staffed and the Information Security Manager (who manages this team) reviewed the archiving process to help implement improvement identified by the audit.

- (4) Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding - Social Fund Reform (Communities Grant) - The key areas of weakness we identified relate to the fact that Communities Grant transactions / expenditure totals are not recorded in the Council's general ledger, and therefore not included in the budget monitoring process. We appreciate that the accounting arrangement proposals had been consulted upon before being set up and it had been agreed at the time that the proposed arrangements were considered suitable. A separate bank account is used to hold grant funds/draw payment, we noted that this bank account has not been reconciled since the Council became responsible for the grant in April 2013. The Council has defined its policy for using the grant which includes the criteria for qualifying for grant payments together with high level 'internal procedures' covering the administration of the Communities Grant. The processes for recording/supporting each grant payment made were found to be comprehensive, however these processes have not been documented. A spreadsheet has been set up to record applications and the value of payments, we noted that it does not include a trail to the actual payments made. Also there were errors on the spreadsheet for 2013/14 which has resulted in it not reflecting the correct opening/closing balance and we could not verify the opening balance for the current year to the previous year.

The Head of Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding comments - The bank account has not been reconciled in the way audit suggested as there is a resource issue in doing this. However, all payments that leave the bank account are checked and cannot leave the account without authorisation from a second officer, therefore there is a full audit trail with spot checks on the account. The processes are now being written up and the formatting issue has been resolved on the spreadsheet. Additional columns have also been added to the spreadsheet to provide an audit trail of when payments are made and the relevant invoice information. I believe that apart from the bank reconciliation not being done in the way audit have asked for it to be done, (although this is being done effectively), we have done everything else.

- 3.3 The following summarises the results of follow up audit work. A follow up review is carried out, usually six months after the audit has been finalised. The purpose of this review is to assess the extent to which agreed recommendations have been implemented by management. Follow up audits measure the progress with implementing agreed recommendations and are scored as either "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory".

3.4 This table demonstrates that the Council has responded effectively where weaknesses were identified. In all cases the follow up audit found satisfactory progress had been made with implementing agreed action plans. Overall this represents very good performance.

Type	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory
Key Financial System		1
Other systems		7

3.5 What the above demonstrates is that the Council has responded quickly and effectively to the items of concern identified. This provides further evidence of the robust nature of the system of internal control within the Council.

4. Performance of Internal Audit

4.1 Delivery of the audit plan was on target in the current year, 83% against a target of 80%.

5. Summary of Audit Opinions

5.1 Appendix C outlines the number and range of audit opinions, including results of follow up reviews over the period 2010 - 2015, broken down between Fundamental / Key Financial Systems and other systems.

5.2 The information does not show any significant trends however the following points are worth noting:

- (1) None of the fundamental systems have scored as weak or very weak, indeed the vast majority of these audits are in the well or very well controlled category. Also all of the follow ups to these audits have been given a satisfactory opinion. This is not surprising, given that the systems are audited every year, but it is reassuring, given that these systems handle virtually all of the Council's financial transactions.
- (2) The incidence of unsatisfactory follow ups has dropped. This indicates that managers are responding positively to audit recommendations.
- (3) The last year 14-15 has seen a "spike" in the number of weak opinions. This may be a one off, or may indicate that the savings programme that the Council has implemented over the last five years is now starting to impact as controls are removed to deliver savings.

5.3 Corporate Board have reviewed the 5 weak audits, subsequent to receiving this report. In addition a separate report on the Archive service was discussed at Corporate Board earlier this year and a report on Anti Fraud work is presently being prepared for Corporate Board.

Appendices

Appendix A - Current work underway

Appendix B - Completed work

Appendix C - Summary of Audit Opinions over the last 5 years

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/A

Officers Consulted: Corporate Board

Trade Union: N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

1) CURRENT AUDITS – 2014-15

Directorate/Service	Audit Title	Current Position of Work	Audit Plan Year
Corporate	National Fraud Initiative 14/15	Ongoing	2014/15
Resources			
Customer Services	Accounts Payable	Ready for Review	2014/15
Customer Services	Payroll	Ready for Review	2014/15
Customer Services	Accounts Receivable	Testing	2014/15
Customer Services	Housing Benefits	Ready for Review	2014/15
Customer Services	Council Tax	Testing	2014/15
Customer Services	NNDR	Testing	2014/15
Strategic Support	Service Planning/ Performance Management	Draft Issued	2013/14
Finance	Treasury Management	Ready for Review	2014/15
Finance	General Ledger	Testing	2014/15
Finance	Budgetary Control	Background	2014/15
Human Resources	Staff Training and Development	Ready for Review	2014/15
Public Health and Wellbeing	Public Health	Testing	2014/15
Legal Services	Contract letting	Ready for Review	2014/15
Strategic Support	Data Protection	Draft Issued	2014/15

Communities			
Directorate	Disclosure and Barring Service	Draft Issued	2014/15
Children's Services	Turnaround Families Programme – testing of grant claims	Ongoing testing of claims	2014/15
Children's Services	Section 17 Payments	Testing	2014/15
Education	Schools Library and Museum Services Joint Arrangements	Ready for Review	2014/15
Education	Building Maintenance	Ready for Review	2014/15
Environment			
Culture and Environmental Protection	Waste Management and Disposal Contract – Contract Management	Draft Issued	2014/15
Culture and Environmental Protection	Libraries Purchasing/Stock Control	Ready for Review	2014/15
Planning and Countryside	Building Control	Ready for Review	2014/15
Highways and Transport	Concessionary Fares	Draft issued	2014/15
Highways and Transport	Home to School Transport	TOR Issued/Background	2014/15

2) CURRENT ADVISORY REVIEWS/OTHER WORK

Directorate/Service	Audit Title	Current position of work
ICT	Audit Manager carrying out the Assurance Role for the Superfast Broadband Project	Ongoing

3) CURRENT FOLLOW-UPS

Directorate/Service	Audit title
Corporate	Mileage Claims
Corporate	The Capital Programme/Use of the Project Management Methodology
Resources	
Finance	Treasury Management
Finance	Insurance
Finance	General Ledger
Finance	Procurement Cards
Customer Services	Housing Benefits
Customer Services	Council Tax
Customer Services	NNDR
Customer Services	Payroll
Customer Services	Accounts Payable
Customer Services	Accounts Receivable
Communities	
Adult Social Care	Personal Budgets - Direct Payments
Children's Services	Carers Payments
Adult Social Care	Phoenix Centre
Environment	
Highways and Transport	Personal Vehicle Business Usage Checks
Culture and Environmental Protection	Clean and Greener

This page is intentionally left blank

1) **AUDITS completed during second half of 14-15**

Directorate/Service	Audit Title	Date Audit finalised	Overall Opinion
Corporate	Corporate Fraud Review	26/01/15	Weak
Resources			
Finance	Treasury Management	13/10/2014	Well Controlled
Finance	MTFS	19/02/2015	Well Controlled
Finance	Commercial Rents	12/11/2014	Weak
Customer Services/Finance	Car Loans and Car leasing	24/10/2014	Satisfactory
Strategic Support	Members Expenses	23/12/2014	Well Controlled
Customer Services	Accounts Payable 13/14	01/12/2014	Well Controlled
Customer Services	Payroll 13/14	06/01/2015	Well Controlled
Strategic Support/ICT and Corporate Services	The Council's Archived Records Service	09/02/2015	Weak
Communities			
Children's Services	Supervision Checks	17/10/2014	N/A - Advisory
Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding	Social Fund Reform	14/04/2015	Weak
Environment			

NOTE

The overall opinion is derived from the number/significance of recommendations together with using professional judgement. The Auditor's judgement takes into account the depth of coverage of the review (which could result in more issues being identified) together with the size/complexity of the system being reviewed.

3) **COMPLETED FOLLOW-UPS**

<u>Directorate/ Service</u>	<u>Audit Title</u>	<u>Date follow up finalised</u>	<u>Overall Opinion of Report</u>	<u>Opinion – Implementation progress</u>
Resources				
Human Resources	Recruitment	10/11/2014	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Finance	Treasury Management	13/10/2015	Well Controlled	Satisfactory
Strategic Support	Equality and Diversity	26/02/2015	Well Controlled	Satisfactory
Communities				
Adult Social Care	Assessment of Need/Purchase of Care – Respite	10/02/2015	Weak	Satisfactory
Education	School Meals Contract	07/10/14	Well Controlled	Satisfactory
Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding	Deputyship/ Appointeeship	23/03/2015	Weak	Satisfactory
Environment				
Highways and Transport	Structural Maintenance and Engineering	06/01/2015	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Culture and Environmental Protection	Licensing	01/10/2014	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Appendix C
Summary of audit opinions.

	Audits											Follow Up					
	Fundamental					Total	Other					Total	Fundamental		Other		Total
	VW	W	S	WC	VWC		VW	W	S	WC	VWC		Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	
2014-15	0%	0%	0%	63%	38%	8	0%	38%	23%	38%	0%	13	29	4		10	14
2013-14	0%	0%	14%	57%	29%	7	0%	15%	62%	23%	0%	13	27	3		9	12
2012-13	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%	5	0%	22%	39%	33%	6%	18	28	5	1	7	13
2011-12	0%	0%	0%	79%	21%	14	0%	8%	71%	21%	0%	24	52	9		14	23
2010-11	0%	0%	0%	80%	20%	15	0%	0%	58%	21%	21%	19	49	13	5	25	43

The five weak audits for 14-15 were:

1. Corporate - Anti Fraud
2. Corporate - Archive Service
3. Finance - Commercial Rents
4. Community Care Housing and Safeguarding - Social Fund Reform (Community Grant)
5. Adult Social Care - Personal Budgets / Direct Payments

Copies of the 5 reports are attached

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 8

Title of Report:	Annual Governance Statement 2014-15
Report to be considered by:	Management Board for information in July 2015 Governance and Ethics Committee on 24 August 2015
Forward Plan Ref:	GE3002

Purpose of Report: To allow the committee to review the Annual Governance Statement prior to signature by the Leader and Chief Executive

Recommended Action: The Annual Governance Statement sets out a number of actions to mitigate risks to the Council's governance arrangements, these should be considered and approved by the committee

Reason for decision to be taken: To provide assurance to the Leader and Chief Executive to enable them to sign the Annual Governance Statement

Key background documentation: Service risk registers and Heads of Service Assurance Statements.

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSA5 – Become an even more effective Council
The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy aim by: strengthening the Council's governance arrangements

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Roger Croft - Tel 07765 224249
E-mail Address:	rcroft@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	09 July 2015

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Ian Priestley
Job Title:	Chief Internal Auditor
Tel. No.:	01635 519253
E-mail Address:	ipriestley@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy: None
Financial: None
Personnel: None
Legal/Procurement: None
Property: None
Risk Management: None

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Not relevant to equality		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>	

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report sets out the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the Council for 2014-15.
- 1.2 This report outlines issues that Corporate Board considered should be included in the 2014-15 AGS as requiring action to resolve.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 One issue of concern, in terms of the Council's governance arrangements, was noted in 13-14. This related to recruitment of Social Workers in Children's Services. Action has been taken to deal with this through a number of measures including an improved recruitment and retention package.
- 2.2 Two issues of concern have been identified in the preparation of the 14-15 AGS.
 - (1) The recent OFSTED of Children's Services
 - (2) The Council's financial position
- 2.3 Actions are being put in place to manage these issues.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 This item is not relevant to equality.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Council has effective governance arrangements that are kept under constant review, with appropriate actions being taken where required.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines the purpose of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and explains how the necessary assurance to support the AGS has been obtained. This should enable the Committee to make an informed judgement as to the effectiveness of the process that the Council has followed in conducting the annual review of the system of internal control within the Council.

2. Purpose of the AGS

- 2.1 The AGS is designed to provide stakeholders of the Council with assurance that the Council has operated within the law and that the Council has met the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations:

“The Council shall conduct a review at least once in a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control”.

- 2.2 A copy of the AGS for 2014-15 is attached to this report, for review, at Appendix A.

- 2.3 The Council relies on a number of sources of information to carry out the review of the system of internal control. These are:

- (1) Head of Service Assurance Statements and service risk registers (appendices B & C)
- (2) The Chief Internal Auditors annual report
- (3) The Monitoring Officer’s annual report
- (4) The s151 Officer’s annual report
- (5) Reports from external regulators, eg OFSTED, KPMG (the Council's External Auditor), the LGA (peer review process).

- 2.4 This evidence provides the assurance that enables the Leader and Chief Executive to sign the AGS with confidence.

- 2.5 The Annual Governance Statement was prepared by the Finance and Governance Group and reviewed by the Risk Management Group and Corporate Board.

3. Governance issues identified as requiring action

- 3.1 A key element of the review of the system of internal control is the identification of any weaknesses or risks in the system, along with recommendations to mitigate such issues. Then in the subsequent year further report is made on progress with implementing agreed recommendations.

- 3.2 The Annual Governance Statement for 2013-14 outlined one area where action was required in relation to recruitment of social workers in Children and Family Services. In order to deal with this a number of actions were taken including:

- (1) Improved terms and conditions

- (2) Setting up a social work academy
 - (3) Improvements to the recruitment processes
- 3.3 In addition Corporate Board is monitoring the effectiveness of the changes, through updates from the service.
- 3.4 Two issues have been identified as requiring action in this years AGS. These relate to:
- (1) Issues raised in the OFSTED review of Children and Family Services Services
 - (2) The Council's overall financial position, given a number of pressures that are likely to be difficult to finance.
- 3.5 In terms of the OFSTED review of Children's Services the Council will implement an action plan that will be approved by the Department for Education. In addition the Council has made a commitment to move the OFSTED rating for Children's to "good".
- 3.6 In terms of the Council's financial position work has started to build the budget for 16-17 and as part of that process programme of savings is being developed.
- 4. Role of Governance and Audit Committee re the AGS for 2013-14**
- 4.1 A key function of the Governance and Audit Committee is to review and approve the AGS for 14-15 prior to it being signed off by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.
- 4.2 In order to be able to review the AGS the Committee needs to examine the evidence, noted in 2.3, above, that supports the AGS. This evidence is presented in separate reports

Appendices

Appendix A - Annual Governance Statement

Appendix B - Summary of Heads of Service Assurance Statement returns

Appendix C - Proforma for the Head of Service Assurance Statement

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/A

Officers Consulted: Corporate Board

Trade Union: N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

Annual Governance Statement

1 Scope of responsibility

- 1.1 West Berkshire Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. West Berkshire Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, West Berkshire Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3 West Berkshire Council has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.
- 1.4 This statement explains how West Berkshire Council has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2 The purpose of the governance framework

- 2.1 The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which West Berkshire Council is directed and controlled and its activities through which it engages with, leads and accounts to the community. It enables West Berkshire Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services.
- 2.2 The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of West Berkshire Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
- 2.3 The governance framework has been in place at West Berkshire Council for the year ended 31 March 2015 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and statement of accounts.

3 The governance framework

- 3.1 The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise West Berkshire Council's governance arrangements are set out below and include arrangements for:
 - Identifying and communicating West Berkshire Council's Strategy that sets out its purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users;
 - Reviewing West Berkshire Council's Strategy and its implications for West Berkshire Council's governance arrangements;

- Measuring the quality of services for users, ensuring they are delivered in accordance with West Berkshire Council's Strategy and ensuring that they represent the best use of resources;
- Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation;
- Consultation on the budget and any proposed budget reductions are planned in good time and adhere to the Council's own consultation policy. As part of any consultation on the budget the Council is cognisant of the "Gunning" principles which requires the Council to consult at the formative stage which would mean potential options being available for the residents to comment on. Clearly as the Council's budget reduces and the pressure on further reductions increases this approach becomes more difficult. However, where options are available the Council will seek the views of the residents. The Council will also continue to ensure that the requirements of an Equality Impact Assessment are met and ask our residents how a proposed reduction in service might impact on them and how they could help to mitigate the impact;
- Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication;
- Developing, communicating and embedding codes of conduct, defining the standards of behaviour for members and staff;
- Reviewing and updating the Constitution including Contracts Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules of Procedure, The Scheme of Delegation, which clearly define how decisions are taken and the processes and controls required to manage risks;
- Ensuring the authority's financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on "The Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010)";
- The Governance and Audit Committee which performs the core functions of an audit committee, as identified in CIPFA's "Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities";
- The Finance and Governance Group which helps to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful;
- Conducting a regular review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit;
- Whistle blowing procedures for receiving and investigating complaints from staff or the public;
- Identifying the development needs of Members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training;

4 Review of effectiveness

- 4.1 West Berkshire Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of all managers within West Berkshire Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment.
- 4.2 The following processes have been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance framework, and includes:
- The work of the Finance and Governance Group reviewing the Constitution on annual basis and referring changes to the Governance and Audit Committee and Council;
 - The work of the Risk Management Group and the Risk Management framework;
 - The annual assurance statements produced by all Heads of Service;
 - The work of the Governance and Audit Committee;
 - The work of the Standards Committee;
 - The work of Internal Audit; and
 - The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.
 - Responding positively to external regulators such as OFSTED, the Information Commissioner, the Local Government Ombudsman and external auditor KPMG.
 - Commissioning regular external peer reviews by the Local Government Association.
- 4.3 We have been advised of the implications of the result of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework by the Governance and Audit committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

5 Significant governance issues identified in the AGS for 2013/14

- 5.1 The following is an outline of the significant governance issue that was identified in preparing the 2013/14 AGS.
- Recruitment and retention in Children's services - Instability in the workforce, which was compromising the quality of practice and the delivery of a safe and effective safeguarding service, led to a specific review of recruitment and retention in the service.
- 5.2 The following measures were implemented during 2014/15:
- The Council reviewed the recruitment and retention procedures and implemented a range of measures to improve the terms and conditions of child and family social workers in four core social work teams, to make the working environment more conducive to good social work practice for all our social workers, to implement a social work academy and to improve our recruitment processes so that we didn't lose suitable applicants during the process.

6 Significant Governance Issues identified in 2014/15

6.1 The following is an outline of the significant governance issues identified in 2014/15.

- Children Services, OFSTED review – the practice issues identified in children and family services in 2014/15 and addressed through the implementation of the recruitment and retention package and related measures had not been sufficiently improved by the time OFSTED inspected the service in March 2015. As a result the service was judged to be inadequate for “help and protection” and therefore inadequate for “overall effectiveness”. As a consequence of this judgement the Department of Education is considering issuing the Council with an “Improvement Notice”. The form this will take, and whether an Improvement Board will be required, is currently under discussion between the Council and the DfE.

- Resourcing service delivery – The Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy highlights a funding gap of very significant proportions that may impact on the Council’s ability to deliver the outcomes set out in the Council Strategy. Key unfunded pressures include:
 1. Care Act funding, presently subject of a Judicial Review taken by the Council against the Department of Health
 2. Moving the Childrens Service from an “inadequate” to a “good” rating, as set out in the Council Strategy
 3. Placement costs for Childrens Services
 4. John O Gaunt School funding gap
 5. Volatility around the business rate retention.
 6. The budget, planned for July and subsequent “Spending Review” may result in further grant cuts, greater than allowed for in current plans.

6.2 The following measures will be implemented during 2015/16:

- Children Services, OFSTED review - The Council will implement the Improvement Plan that is prepared in response to the OFSTED inspection judgement. This plan is to be submitted to the Department for Education no later than 24 August 2015
- Resourcing – Implement a savings programme that will ensure the Council is able to set a balanced budget for 2016-17

Signed:

Nick Carter – Chief Executive

Gordon Lundie – Leader of the Council

Appendix B - Summary of returns of Heads of Service Assurance Statements

Resources

Service	Assurance Statement received	Risk Register Received
Public Health and Wellbeing	Yes	Yes
Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Finance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Support	Yes	Yes
ICT and Corporate Support	Yes	Yes
Human Resources	Yes	Yes
Customer Services	Yes	Yes

Environment

Service	Assurance Statement received	Risk Register Received
Highways and Transport	Yes	Yes
Planning and Countryside	Yes	Yes
Culture and Environmental Protection	Yes	Yes

Communities

Service	Assurance Statement received	Risk Register Received
Education	Yes	Yes
Children's Services	No	No
Adults Social Care	Yes	Yes
Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding	Yes	Yes

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix C

Annual Governance Statement – Head of Service Assurance Statement

Guidance note for officers and Members completing the Statement

The Accounts and Audit Regulations requires the Council to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The AGS is prepared annually by the “Finance and Governance Group” and is signed by the Leader and Chief Executive. In summary the AGS is a statement of assurance to the effect that:

- The Council has followed the 6 principles of Corporate Governance, outlined in the CIPFA / SOLACE publication “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government” and confirmed in the Council’s own Local Code of Corporate Governance
- the Council has an effective Internal Control Framework (ICF) in place
- the ICF has been reviewed in the preceding year. (It must be reviewed annually)
- that any weaknesses that have been identified in the ICF are being dealt with through an appropriate action plan.

Each Head of Service is responsible for delivering the objectives set out in their Service Delivery Plan. Heads of Service are responsible for identifying and managing the risks that may affect delivery of service objectives. This work includes monitoring the effectiveness of controls put in place to mitigate the risks and carrying out remedial action where controls are weak or not in place.

Each Head of Service is required to assist the preparation of the AGS for the Council by providing an assurance statement for the internal control framework within their service. Taken together the assurance statements from the Heads of Service will form a key part of the evidence that supports the signing of the AGS by the Leader and Chief Executive.

An outline recommended Statement of Assurance is attached.

The Head of Service should read and **amend as appropriate** the Statement before signing the statement.

The signed statement should be passed to your Corporate Director to be reviewed and countersigned.

An electronic copy of the Statement, with an electronic copy of the up to date service risk register should be emailed to ipriestley@westberks.gov.uk.

Statement of Assurance forService – 2014/15

1	<p>Statutory obligations & Local Code of Corporate Governance</p> <p>I have identified all principal statutory obligations and these are identified in my Service Delivery Plan. The Service Delivery Plan clearly sets out how the statutory obligations will be delivered. The principles of Corporate Governance outlined in the Council’s Local Code of Corporate Governance have been consistently applied in the delivery of this Service.</p>	
2	<p>Service Risk Register</p> <p>I have identified all risks that may affect the delivery of the Service Delivery Plan objectives. My Service Management Team has reviewed the register each quarter. I have reviewed the risk register with my Corporate Director each quarter. A copy of the Risk Register is attached to this statement.</p>	
3	<p>Internal Controls</p> <p>I have identified controls that are designed to mitigate the risks identified in 2 above. I have assigned responsibility for the effective operation of each control to a nominated officer. I have, through the 1.2.1 process, obtained assurance and evidence from each nominated officer that the controls have been tested and are operating effectively. I confirm that all my Budget Holders are aware of and have read the Council’s Financial and Contracts Rules of Procedure that are available as part of the Council’s Constitution on the Intranet.</p>	
4	<p>Control Weaknesses</p> <p>I have identified risks that are considered to be significant (Red) and that do not at present have effective controls to mitigate the level of risk. I have put in place action plans to provide effective controls going forwards where resources allow. I have through 1.2.1’s and my Service Management Team, ensured continuous review of the progress of action plans. Where action plans have fallen behind schedule the Corporate Director has been informed Where resources are not available to deliver the required controls the Corporate Director has been informed.</p>	

Statement of Assurance forService – 2014/15

<p>5</p>	<p>Major Projects</p> <p>A risk register and action plan has been prepared for all major projects. The Corporate Board has been kept up to date on all issues relating to the risks to the delivery of each project. The Council’s Project Management Methodology has been applied for all projects.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Overall Assurance from Head of Service</p> <p>In my opinion the internal control framework of theService is soundly based. All significant risks to the service objectives have been identified and controls are in place to mitigate those risks. The exceptions to this are listed in the Action plan to the Service Risk Register which also outlines progress towards implementing outstanding controls.</p> <p>Signed byHead of.....Service</p> <p>Date</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Corporate Director Review</p> <p>I have reviewed the processes set out above and the Service Risk Register and Action Plan, copy attached, with the Head of on an ongoing basis during the year both at 1.2.1’s and at Service Group Management Team meetings.</p> <p>I agree with the opinion of the Head ofService set out in 6 above.</p> <p>Where actions to remedy weaknesses have fallen behind schedule, or resources available to deliver effective controls are inadequate I have drawn this to the attention of Corporate Board and the relevant portfolio holder.</p> <p>Signed byCorporate Director</p> <p>Date</p>	

This page is intentionally left blank

Title of Report:	Annual Governance Statement - Statement in Support by the Section 151 Officer
Report to be considered by:	Management Board for information in July 2015 Governance and Ethics Committee on 24 August 2015
Forward Plan Ref:	GE3003

Purpose of Report: To provide evidence and independent verification of governance matters which may impact on the Annual Governance Statement from the viewpoint of the Section 151 Officer.

Recommended Action: To note the report.

Reason for decision to be taken: In accordance with CIPFA Guidance and current policy of the Council.

Key background documentation: Action plans relating to risk.

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim(s):

CSA5 – Become an even more effective Council

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Roger Croft - Tel 07765 224249
E-mail Address:	rcroft@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	23 July 2015

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Andy Walker
Job Title:	Head of Finance and s151 Officer
Tel. No.:	01635 519433
E-mail Address:	awalker@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy: Established as part of CIPFA guidance and reporting arrangements adopted by Council in connection with the Annual Governance Statement.

Financial: No financial implication associated with this report.

Personnel: N/A

Legal/Procurement: In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1985 together with any amendments thereto. In addition the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 is applicable.

Property:

Risk Management: Insofar as is possible any risks have been assessed in accordance with the Risk Strategy.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Not relevant to equality			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
---	--	------------------------------

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the Annual Governance Statement, CIPFA guidance recommends that the Section 151 Officer provides "a key source of assurance that the Council's systems and procedures of internal control which are in operation are effective, efficient and being complied with". The Chief Financial Officer/ s151 Officer is to ensure that all parts of the Council act in accordance with the budgetary and policy requirements in connection with the setting of the budget and financial administration standards within the Council.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The definitive Statement on the Role of the Finance Director in Local Government is set out in a CIPFA publication of 2003. This identifies 5 key roles:

- Maintaining strong financial management underpinned by effective financial controls;
- Contributing to corporate management and leadership;
- Supporting and advising democratically elected representatives;
- Supporting and advising officers in their operational roles; and
- Leading and managing an effective and responsive financial service.

- 2.2 The s151 Officer is required to report to all the local authority's Members, in consultation with the Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer if there is, or there is likely to be, unlawful expenditure or an unbalanced budget. Such a report known as a Section 114 report derives from the Local Government Finance Act 1998 as updated by the 2000 Act and Members of the Council are required to have regard to the s151 Officer's advice. Not to do so would be a breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 This item is not relevant to equality.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Overall it is the s151 Officer's assessment that all parts of the Council acts in accordance with the budgetary and policy requirements in connection with the setting of the budget and meets financial administration standards as set out in legislation. There have been no formal reports required by the s151 Officer to Council under the relevant legislation. The report is to be noted.

Executive Report

1. Background

1.1 As part of the Annual Governance Statement, CIPFA guidance recommends that the Section 151 Officer provides "a key source of assurance that the Council's systems and procedures of internal control which are in operation are effective, efficient and being complied with". The Chief Financial Officer/ s151 Officer is to ensure that all parts of the Council act in accordance with the budgetary and policy requirements in connection with the setting of the budget and financial administration standards within the Council.

2. Role of the Section 151 Officer

2.1 The definitive Statement on the Role of the Finance Director in Local Government is set out in a CIPFA publication of 2003. This identifies 5 key roles:

- Maintaining strong financial management underpinned by effective financial controls;
- Contributing to corporate management and leadership;
- Supporting and advising democratically elected representatives;
- Supporting and advising officers in their operational roles; and
- Leading and managing an effective and responsive financial service.

2.2 The s151 Officer is required to report to all the local authority's Members, in consultation with the Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer if there is, or there is likely to be, unlawful expenditure or an unbalanced budget. Such a report known as a Section 114 report derives from the Local Government Finance Act 1998 as updated by the 2000 Act and Members of the Council are required to have regard to the s151 Officer's advice. Not to do so would be a breach of the Code of Conduct for Members. Specified and explicit provision is now included in the Revised Code of Conduct adopted by the Council. Any breaches will be dealt with locally.

2.3 Each year the s151 Officer reports as part of the budget decision making process his opinion on the adequacy of reserves and robustness of the budget estimates.

2.4 The s151 Officer is consulted about a wide range of discretions under the Council's constitution, in particular exceptions under the financial rules of procedure and the contract rules of procedure. The s151 Officer maintains a record of all such exemptions given and discretions sought and granted. From a legal perspective the Monitoring Officer is also involved in certain decisions and records such involvement.

2.5 Throughout the year budget monitoring ensures that any budget overspends or income shortfalls are identified and corrective measures can be put in place to ensure that the overall council revenue budget keeps within the policy and budgetary framework agreed at the annual budget setting process. In 2014/15 the provisional outturn has delivered an overspend of £30k against the budget. This result only represented a 0.02% variance to the Council Budget for 2014/15 and which is considered reasonable.

- 2.6 All Executive or other decision making body reports have clearly set out financial recommendations. It is the responsibility of the s151 Officer to ensure that the financial implications of all such decisions are adequately considered and that recommendations are based upon prudent financial advice. The s151 Officer is a member of Corporate Board and involved in all significant resource decisions and in particular key decisions of the authority.
- 2.7 The Council has a Medium Term Financial Strategy in place. There is also a Finance and Governance Group of Officers whose membership includes both the s151 Officer and Monitoring Officer overseeing and monitoring all aspects of financial governance and escalating where necessary any issues that need Corporate Board action and support.
- 2.8 There has been no necessity to implement the Section 114 process during 2014/15 and the s151 Officer confirms the robustness of the financial and budgetary frameworks. However, the Council is facing a number of significant financial pressures in the coming year and will need to rely heavily on these frameworks in place to deliver a balanced budget for 2016/17.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 Overall it is the s151 Officer's assessment that all parts of the Council acts in accordance with the budgetary and policy requirements in connection with the setting of the budget and meets financial administration standards as set out in legislation. There have been no formal reports required by the s151 Officer to Council under the relevant legislation.

Appendices

There are no Appendices to this report.

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/A

Officers Consulted: Ian Priestley, David Holling and Corporate Board

Trade Union: N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

Title of Report:	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT - STATEMENT IN SUPPORT BY THE MONITORING OFFICER
Report to be considered by:	Management Board for information in July 2015 Governance and Ethics Committee on 24 August 2015
Forward Plan Ref:	GE3004

Purpose of Report: To provide evidence and independent verification of governance matters which may impact on the Annual Governance Statement from the viewpoint of the Monitoring Officer.

Recommended Action: To note the report.

Reason for decision to be taken: In accordance with CIPFA Guidance and current policy of the Council.

Key background documentation:

- Reports to Standards Committee relating to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct during 2014/2015
- Action plans relating to risk
- Updates to the constitution
- Other reports on potential impacts of legislation

<p>The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy principle:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSP9 - Doing what's important well</p> <p>The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy principle by:</p> <p>Reviewing and providing assurance on the effectiveness of the Council's governance and other arrangements which may impact on the Annual Governance Statement.</p>

Governance and Ethics Committee Chairman	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Quentin Webb – Tel (01635) 202646
E-mail Address:	qwebb@westberks.gov.uk
Date Member agreed report:	23 July 2015

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	David Holling
Job Title:	Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer
Tel. No.:	01635 519422
E-mail Address:	dholling@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

- Policy:** Established as part of CIPFA guidance and reporting arrangements adopted by Council in connection with the Annual Governance Statement.
- Financial:** No financial implication associated with this report.
- Personnel:** N/A
- Legal/Procurement:** In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 together with the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Localism Act 2011.
- Property:** N/A
- Risk Management:** Insofar as is possible any risks have been assessed in accordance with the Risk Strategy.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Not relevant to equality			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the Annual Governance statement, CIPFA guidance recommends that the S151 and Monitoring Officers give assurance that the Council's systems and procedures for which they have responsibility regarding internal controls are effective and being complied with. The Monitoring Officer looks at the legality of actions by bodies within the Council as part of duties under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (the 1989 Act).

2. Proposals

- 2.1 Throughout the year the Governance and Audit Committee is referred to amendments to the Council's constitution and its rules of procedure where amendment is necessary. Subject to its view, matters are then referred to Council for adoption. This ensures that administrative processes remain effective, efficient and pertinent.
- 2.2 Ethics and matters of probity are dealt with by Standards Committee (Governance & Ethics Committee after 2nd July). The development of a complaints regime as regards complaints about District and Parish Members has been reviewed and updated following the Localism Act 2011. Members have been updated on changes to Standards arrangements and the processes for dealing with complaints. Training has been provided to new and existing members on the Code of Conduct and ethical matters.
- 2.3 Reviews of risk registers have been carried out by the Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer in their roles as members of the Council's Corporate Board. In addition, liabilities likely to impact upon the Council's operations from a legal perspective where appropriate have been identified.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 There is no decision to be made which impacts on Equality matters.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer's view of the Council's governance arrangements are that they are robust and effective. There has been no necessity to report formally to Council under Section 5 of the 1989 Act. Ethical matters are managed by the Standards Committee (Governance & Ethics Committee). The report is to be noted.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the Annual Governance Statement, CIPFA guidance recommends that the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer provide "a key source of assurance that the Council's systems and procedures of internal control which are in operation are effective, efficient and being complied with". In essence this requires the Monitoring Officer, as the Officer charged with ensuring that the Council, and every part of it, acts legally and is not acting in a manner thought to constitute maladministration or injustice. In addition, the Chief Financial Officer/S151 Officer similarly ensures that all parts of the Council act in accordance with the budgetary and policy requirements in connection with the setting of the budget and financial administration standards within the Council.
- 1.2 This report reviews the Annual Governance Statement and its requirements, in particular relating to ethical and probity matters, any changes to the Constitution regarding regulation and guidance, together with an assessment of risks and liabilities.

2. The Role of the Monitoring Officer

- 2.1 Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Monitoring Officer to prepare a formal report to full Council where it appears that the Council, a committee or an Officer has acted or is likely to act illegally, or in a manner such as to constitute maladministration or injustice. The Monitoring Officer's role in essence is to ensure the legality of local governance arrangements based upon statutory requirements and guidance from Government and other outside bodies. As mentioned above, this role complements that of the Section 151 Officer and the Head of Paid Service (the Chief Executive) whose roles are also established by statute. The Monitoring Officer is part of the Council's Corporate Board and attends meetings of the Finance and Governance Group which looks at use of resources and has taken on the role of reviewing the constitution in a systematic way. If changes are necessary due to legislative impacts or administrative arrangements these are reported to Corporate Board, the Governance and Audit/Ethics Committee and ultimately Council for member adoption. The process is open and transparent.
- 2.2 The formal report process under Section 5 is one which should be approached with extreme caution and should not be undertaken lightly. If such action is proposed it is generally the view that outside advice from Counsel should be sought by the Monitoring Officer. During 2014/15 there have been no reports or investigations necessary which fall within the requirements of Section 5 of the 1989 Act.
- 2.3 The Monitoring Officer's advice has been sought in connection with a number of day-to-day administrative matters and in particular advice in connection with the Code of Conduct for Members and Officers. Training has been provided for Members and Officers on the Council's Code of Conduct and Officer Code. In addition support regarding the Code has been provided for Town and Parish Councils and on occasion for individual parishes following recommendations from Standards Committee if considered appropriate.

3. Robustness of corporate governance arrangements

- 3.1 As Members will be aware, the Governance and Audit (Ethics) Committee considers reports throughout the year regarding certain amendments which have been required in connection with changes to the Constitution.
- 3.2 During 2010/11 following an audit of the Constitution and its processes the Finance and Governance Group of Officers which includes the Monitoring Officer, S151 Officer, Chief Internal Auditor and Head of Strategic Support began a systematic review of each part of the Constitution. This process has resulted in a number of changes to various parts some brought about due to legislative changes and others as a result of administrative arrangements within the Council. This process continued into 2014/15 and has taken into account the impacts of new legislation introduced which introduced changes at various levels within the Council.
- 3.3 This systematic review of the Constitution ensures that the Council's administrative arrangements remain effective and efficient bearing in mind changes imposed by government and other bodies as well as improving transparency and openness. This process was recognised as good best practice during the recent LGA Peer Review.

4. Ethics & Probity

- 4.1 As in previous years, ethics and probity matters were considered by the Council's Standards Committee. Advice for Members of West Berkshire Council and Parish and Town Councils on the Code has been given in order that the Council fulfils its role as "Responsible Authority" under the Local Government Act 2000 and the Localism Act 2011.
- 4.2 Whilst there were complaints and references to the Standards Committee throughout 2014/15 few required full investigation and have reduced which may be due to better behaviour or as a result of the lack of sanctions available under the standards regime. Complaints have been considered at local level and will continue to be governed under the revised Standards regime introduced by the Council under the 2011 Act.
- 4.3 The number of complaints has remained relatively static. The Council's website provides a complaints form and provides a detailed process to deal with breaches of the Codes of Conduct adopted at District and Parish level.

5. Implementation of Action Plans from Strategic Risk Register

- 5.1 All strategic risks are placed on a risk register and reviewed by Corporate Board and Management Board throughout the year. All major risks were considered by individual groups of Officers dealing with particular projects and actions arising from the "red risks" on service risk registers have been reviewed to ensure that the council's risks items are considered at the highest level. Both the Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer sit on the Corporate Board and attend Management Board.

6. Potential Liabilities

- 6.1 Whilst there have been cases considered by various courts during the year, none of these were of significance to warrant particular risks being identified. There have been major cases in the Crown Court and judicial reviews of certain decisions. These cases will be closely monitored by Legal staff and where appropriate referred to the relevant Risk Register. Overall there has been an increase in the number of instructions received by Legal Services from services throughout the Council. The Council commenced two judicial reviews against central government departments

during the year the outcomes of which have potential for impacts on services in planning and communities as well as budgetary implications.

- 6.2 One outstanding case affecting local authorities nationally has been settled.
- 6.3 There are outstanding cases where contingent liabilities have been identified by officers and risks recognised and moderated at Service and Council level by various actions.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 It is the Monitoring Officer's assessment that the Council's governance arrangements are robust and effective. As a result of regular reviews of legislation, changes to processes and procedures are covered off either by Governance and Audit Committee or the Standards Committee. The Constitution and its associated rules are reviewed to ensure they are up to date. There have been no formal reports required by either the Monitoring Officer or S151 Officer to Council under the relevant legislation. Ethical matters relating to probity are being managed on a day to day basis by the Monitoring Officer and the Standards Committee. The Risk Register does not highlight any specific legal or procedural matters which require investigation.

Appendices

There are no Appendices to this report.

Consultees

Local Stakeholders:

Officers Consulted: Andy Day; Ian Priestley; Andy Walker; Corporate Board

Trade Union: