

Audit Committee

24 July 2014

**Statement of Accounts for the year ended
31 March 2014**



Don McLure, Corporate Director Resources

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present to Members the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014 and raise any significant issues arising from the accounts.

Background

- 2 The 'Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011' introduced a two stage approval process for the Statement of Accounts; the first stage is in June each year. The Regulations require that the responsible financial officer, by no later than 30 June 2014, signs and certifies that the Statement of Accounts presents a "true and fair view" of the financial position of the Council for the year to 31 March previous, subject to the views of the External Auditor. This stage was completed on 27 June 2014.
- 3 The second stage, as set out in the Regulations, requires that on or before the 30 September, approval needs to be given to the Statement of Accounts by resolution of a committee, which for Durham County Council is the Audit Committee. This approval will take into account the views of the External Auditor. This is done so that the Statement of Accounts can then be formally published.
- 4 The Statement of Accounts is currently subject to audit by Mazars LLP. The audit of the accounts is ongoing. On completion, the Auditor's report will be incorporated into the published version of the document.
- 5 The attached Statement of Accounts is available for inspection by the public from 7 July 2014 to 1 August 2014 in line with the Regulations and has been published on our website.

Statement of Accounts

- 6 The Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2013/14 is prepared in accordance with the 'Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003', as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006 and 2009, the 'Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 and the 'Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting 2013/14' (the Code) as

published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

- 7 The Code is based on approved accounting standards. In England and Wales, the local authority Code constitutes 'proper accounting practice' under the terms of section 21(2) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Council is therefore legally required to follow this Code of Practice. Explanatory notes are included in the document to assist in the interpretation of the accounts, which unfortunately are unavoidably technical and complex.
- 8 To help Members in reading and interpreting the contents, Appendix 2 to this report briefly explains the purpose of each section of the Statement.

Key information from the Statement of Accounts

- 9 Page numbers used in this report refer to the page numbers on the Statement of Accounts document and not those on the full pack of reports.
- 10 There are six core statements that provide fundamental information on the financial activities and position of the Council:
 - Movement in Reserves Statement (page 50)
 - Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account (page 52)
 - Balance Sheet (page 53)
 - Cash Flow Statement (page 54)
 - Housing Revenue Account (page 130) and
 - Collection Fund (page 135).
- 11 The Statement of Accounts also includes the accounts for Durham County Council Pension Fund (page 142) for which the Council is the Administering Authority.
- 12 The Statement of Accounts shows that the Council's 'net worth' has fallen in 2013/14 by £220.446m to £652.694. This is due, in the main, to a decrease in pension scheme liabilities for its employees as calculated by the Pension Fund's Actuary under International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19. Although the benefits are not payable until the employees retire, the Council has a commitment to make the payments which it must disclose at the time the employees earn their future entitlement.
- 13 The Council has increased its usable reserves during 2013/14.
 - a) The general reserve has increased by £3.724m to £28.134m. This reserve is held to cushion the impact of uneven cash flows, unexpected events or emergencies.
 - b) Earmarked Reserves have increased by £60.078m to £165.952m. Earmarked reserves are held for specific future purposes.

- 14 The Pension Fund accounts show that its net assets as at 31 March 2014 have increased by £45.395m to £2.131bn. Although there was a withdrawal of £30.807m as a result of payments to pensioners exceeding the contributions received, there was a £76.202m return on the Pension Fund's investments. Further information on the Pension Fund is contained within the Pension Fund's Annual Report, which will be published following the approval of the Accounts.

Audit of Accounts

- 15 The final audit of the Statement of Accounts is now underway. At the end of this process, the Auditor will provide an Audit Completion Report detailing their comments and recommendation for improvements, based on the position at 31 March 2014.

Recommendation

- 16 It is recommended that the Audit Committee:
- a. consider the attached Statement of Accounts for the County Council for the financial year ended 31 March 2014.

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

This report details the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2014.

Staffing -

None

Risk -

None

Equality and Diversity -

None

Accommodation -

None

Crime and Disorder -

None

Human Rights -

None

Consultation -

None

Procurement -

None

Disability -

None

Legal Implications -

None

Appendix 2: Statement of Accounts - Summary and Explanation

Item	Pages	Explanation of Purpose and Content
Explanatory Foreword	3 - 44	Summary of the most significant matters reported in the accounts, and the overall financial position of the Council.
Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts	45	Sets out the responsibilities of the Council and the Corporate Director Resources for the Statement of Accounts.
Independent Auditor's Report to Durham County Council	46 - 49	Once the Audit is completed the Auditor's report will be included.
Durham County Council Core Financial Statements		
Movement in Reserves Statement	50 – 51	This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Council analysed into 'usable' reserves and other reserves
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account (CIES)	52	This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation.
Balance Sheet	53	The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date (31 March 2014) of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. The net assets of the Council (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Council.
Cash Flow Statement	54	The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Council generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities.
Notes to the Core Financial Statements	55 - 129	The notes are important in the presentation of a true and fair view. They aim to assist in understanding by presenting information about the basis of preparation of the core financial statements; by disclosing information required by the Code that is not presented elsewhere; and by providing information that is not provided elsewhere but is relevant to the understanding of the accounts and shows the policies and procedures adopted in compiling the Accounts.
The Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	130 - 134	The HRA Income and Expenditure Statement shows the economic cost in the year of providing housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from rents and government grants. Authorities charge rents to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. The increase or decrease in the year, on the basis of which rents are raised, is shown in the Movement on the HRA Statement.

Item	Pages	Explanation of Purpose and Content
Collection Fund	135 - 141	The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities, such as the Council, to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers and distribution to local authorities and the Government of council tax and non-domestic rates.
Durham County Council Pension Fund Accounts	142 – 173	Shows the operation and membership of the Pension Fund, the expenditure and income during the year and its financial position at 31 March 2014. Following the Accounts are notes providing further information.
Annual Governance Statement	174 - 185	Gives assurance that appropriate mechanisms are in place for the maintenance of good governance across the activities of the Council.
Glossary of Terms used in the Accounts	186 - 197	To help the reader understand terminology used in the Statement of Accounts.