



THE THREE RIVERS & WATFORD
SHARED SERVICES

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

2013/2014

CONTENTS

	Page
STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS	2
<p>This statement sets out the respective responsibilities of the Joint Committee and its Finance Officer for the Statement of Accounts.</p>	
EXPLANATORY FOREWORD	3
<p>The foreword gives a brief explanation of what is included within the Statement of Accounts, as well as providing a summary of the main financial results for 2013/14.</p>	
ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT	6
<p>This statement is required by <i>The Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2011</i>.</p>	
CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	
Statement of Movement in Reserves	13
<p>Each council raises council tax on a different accounting basis to the way financial performance is measured in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account. In each council's accounts, this Statement shows the movement in the year on different reserves held by the Council and which contribute to their General Fund balances. There are no adjustments needed to the shared services income and expenditure account before consolidation into the accounts of the two councils, therefore there is nothing to record in this account.</p>	
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	13
<p>This statement summarises the resources that have been generated and consumed in providing and managing the shared services during the last year. It includes all day-to-day expenses and related income on an accruals basis, as well as transactions measuring the value of fixed assets actually consumed and the real projected value of retirement benefits earned by employees in the year.</p>	
Balance Sheet	14
<p>Balance Sheet represents the overall financial position of Shared Services. In addition to containing the revenue balances and reserves at the Council's disposal, it shows its long-term indebtedness and the fixed and net current assets employed in its operations.</p>	
Cash Flow Statement	14
<p>The Cash Flow Statement summarises the inflows and outflows of cash arising from transactions with third parties for revenue and capital purposes.</p>	
NOTES TO THE CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	15
<p>These include the Statement of Accounting Policies which explains the basis upon which the figures in the accounts have been prepared. Further explanatory notes explain in more detail the contents of the core financial statements.</p>	
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	19
INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT AND CERTIFICATE	21

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in The United Kingdom reflects the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2011. The Authority must provide a Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts which sets out the responsibilities of the Authority and the Chief Financial Officer for the Accounts.

The Councils' Responsibilities

The Councils are required:

- (a) To make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers had the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. For the Shared Services Joint Committee the Finance Officer was the Head of Finance for Shared Services.
- (b) To manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.
- (c) To approve this Statement of Accounts.

Signed:

Councillor Ian Brown
Chairman of Watford Borough Council Audit Committee
Date: 29 September 2014

Signed:

Councillor Sarah Nelmes
Chairman of Three Rivers District Council Audit Committee
Date: 29 September 2014

The Finance Officer's Responsibilities

The Joint Committee's Finance Officer was responsible for the preparation of the Joint Committee's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Code of Practice.

In preparing this Statement of Accounts the Head of Finance Shared Services had:

- (a) Selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- (b) Made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent;
- (c) Complied with the Code of Practice (except where disclosed otherwise);
- (d) Kept proper accounting records which were up to date; and
- (e) Taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

CERTIFICATE OF THE FINANCE OFFICER

I certify that this Statement of Accounts gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the Joint Committee at 31 March 2014 and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2014.

Signed:

Joanne Wagstaffe CPFA
Director of Finance Shared Services
Date: 29 September 2014

EXPLANATORY FOREWORD

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Statement of Accounts was to give information to interested parties on how the Joint Committee had used the resources available to it to provide services to Three Rivers and Watford councils. The Shared Services arrangement commenced on the 1 April 2009 for the provision of Finance, Human Resources, ICT and Revenues & Benefits services. From April 2014, the Governance arrangements for Shared Services has changed. A new agreement between Watford Borough Council and Three Rivers District Council has introduced a lead authority model.

This foreword gives a brief explanation of what is included within the Statement of Accounts, as well as providing a summary of the main financial results for 2013/14.

The Joint Committee were required to prepare 'group accounts' where there were significant interests in other organisations. A review was carried out and it was determined that no other organisations exist that would require group accounts to be prepared.

2. Accounting Framework

The *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* defines the proper accounting practices for local authorities in England. The Code has been published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2011 define the Three Rivers and Watford Shared Services Joint Committee as a Larger Relevant Body.

3. Changes in Functions

In May 2013, ICT Shared Services were outsourced to Capita Secure Information Solutions Limited.

4. Revenue Activities

Revenue Out-turn 2013/14

Revenue expenditure is the day-to-day expenditure incurred by the Councils to deliver shared services. Total revenue expenditure amounted to £7.43m. The Three Rivers and Watford Shared Services Joint Committee was not a separate legal entity and did not have capacity to enter into contracts of employment or contracts for goods and services. The Joint Committee had no employees, assets or liabilities - these were the responsibility of the constituent councils. Shared Services costs and incomes were reported separately to the Joint Committee for management, performance and accounting purposes.

EXPLANATORY FOREWORD

Comparison of the original budget with the out-turn for each of the shared services:-

	2013/14 Original Estimate £000s	2013/14 Out-turn £000s	2013/14 Variance £000s
ICT	1,411	1,957	546
Finance	1,556	1,332	(224)
Human Resources	744	635	(109)
Revenues & Benefits	2,947	3,510	563
	6,658	7,434	776

Comparison of the original budget with the out-turn analysed against the CIPFA subjective classification:-

	2013/14 Original Estimate £000s	2013/14 Out-turn £000s	2013/14 Variance £000s
Employees	5,640	4,720	(920)
Transport	49	27	(22)
Supplies and Services	982	2,694	1,712
Premises	0	0	0
Income	(13)	(7)	6
	6,658	7,434	776

Comparison of the income from the partner councils in the original budget with the out-turn:-

	2013/14 Original Estimate £000s	2013/14 Out-turn £000s	2013/14 Variance £000s
Three Rivers District Council	2,639	2,963	324
Watford Borough Council	4,019	4,471	452
	6,658	7,434	776

During the year the provision of ICT Services were outsourced to Capita for five years. The result of this change was to reduce the ICT employee budgets by £732k and increase the ICT services budgets by £1,282k, a net increase of £550k. The contract costs were frontloaded in 2013/14 to improve service levels. Over the five years of the contract for ICT, the councils will make overall savings.

For Revenues and Benefits, additional costs of £215k were incurred for agency staff to cover vacant posts, £135k to upgrade the Academy Software (New Burdens funding £73k received to offset against this cost) and £225k for printing and stationery, consultancy, licences, postage and legal fees due to increased demand on services.

EXPLANATORY FOREWORD

5. Future Revenue Expenditure & Its Funding

Expenditure on the services was under the control of the partner councils. The Joint Committee received quarterly financial and performance monitoring reports. Arrangements were in place to refer variances to the councils.

6. Governance

This Statement of Accounts was one way in which the Three Rivers and Watford Shared Services Joint Committee tried to demonstrate that it was making good use of public funds and providing value for money. The Councils were constantly looking to improve financial management and internal control within the Shared Services arrangement. The External Auditor carries out value for money reviews in partner councils as part of their reporting.

7. Further Information

Further information on the joint service accounts is available from the Head of Finance (Shared Services) based at Three Rivers Council Offices, Northway, Rickmansworth, Herts., WD3 1RL. Information on both councils' policies and their Statements of Accounts can be found on their websites or in hard copy by request. Please visit www.threerivers.gov.uk and www.watford.gov.uk

***Joanne Wagstaffe CPFA
Director of Finance
Shared Services
29 September 2014***

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

1. Scope of Responsibility

The Three Rivers and Watford Shared Services Joint Committee was responsible for ensuring that its business was conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money was safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Joint Committee also had a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Joint Committee was responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council have approved and adopted codes of corporate governance, which are consistent with the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) / Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. Copies of both codes can be found on the websites:

for Three Rivers: <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk/Default.aspx/Web/CorporateGovernance>

for Watford: <http://www.watford.gov.uk/ccm/content/finance/local-code-of-corporate-governance.en>
or be obtained from the councils.

These statements explain how the Councils have complied with the Code and also meet the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 in relation to the publication of a statement on internal control.

2. The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Joint Committee was directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounted to, engaged with and leads the community. It enabled the Joint Committee to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The system of internal control was a significant part of that framework and was 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 the Joint Committee'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.

The governance frameworks described in the reports to Audit Committees for Three Rivers and for Watford have been in place at the Councils for the year ended 31 March 2014 and up to the date of approval of the statement of accounts.

3. The Governance Framework

The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Joint Committee's governance arrangements are:-

- Identifying and communicating the vision of the Shared Services Joint Committee's purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users.
- Reviewing the councils' vision and its implications for the governance arrangements of the Shared Services Joint Committee.
- Measuring the quality of services for users and ensuring they are delivered in accordance with the Joint Committee's objectives for ensuring they represent the best use of resources.
- Defining and documenting roles and responsibilities of the Joint Committee and officer functions with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication.
- Developing, communicating and embedding codes of conduct for standards of behaviour for members and staff.
- Reviewing and updating standing orders, standing financial instructions, a scheme of delegation and supporting procedure notes which clearly define how decisions are taken and the process and controls to manage risks.
- Undertaking the core functions of an audit committee as identified in CIPFA's Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful.
- Whistle-blowing and arrangements for receiving and investigating complaints from the public.
- Identifying the development needs of members and senior officers.
- Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community.
- Incorporating good governance arrangements in respect of partnerships.

4. Review of Effectiveness

The Joint Committee had 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 the executive managers who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Internal Auditor's annual report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

The Councils have procedures in place to ensure the maintenance and review of the effectiveness of the governance frameworks which includes reports to and reviews by the following:-

- The Audit Committee of Three Rivers, the Audit Committee of Watford and the Standards Committee of each Council.
- Internal Audit and External Audit.
- Other review / assurance mechanisms.

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

5. Significant Governance Issues

5.1 Three Rivers District Council

Over the coming year the Council proposes to take steps to address the matters shown in the table below to further enhance its governance arrangements. It is satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in its review of effectiveness. It will monitor their implementation and operation through regular reporting to the Audit Committee.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Officer Responsibility</i>	<i>Action to date / Action Required</i>	<i>Resolved</i>	<i>Original Implementation Date</i>
Monitor the performance of the out-sourced ICT service to ensure it is achieving service and budgetary targets. The disaster recovery plan should be tested.	High	Shared Director of Finance	The ICT service is being monitored monthly and has a range of PIs against which performance is measured. In addition there are fortnightly meetings to discuss ongoing issues. Backup solution architect is currently assessing ability to recover. This is all feeding into the data centre migration project. The disaster recovery test is scheduled prior to the data centre move	✘	September 2014
The housing service should develop action plans to address significant unmitigated risks.	High	Head of Community Services	Strategic, Service and Financial Planning for 2014 – 2017 has considered these and potential risks in line with the Risk Management Framework.	✔	March 2014
Monitor the transition to 39 councillors and a revision to a traditional committee system with effect from May 2014 to ensure sound governance arrangements are maintained.	High	Management Board	New Constitution and committee system was reported to and agreed by Council in February 2014. Elections to thirty-nine seats will take place in May 2014.	✔	March 2014

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

<p>Continue to monitor the following risks for their impact on the budget and quality of service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continued reductions in central government funding • employer's pension contributions • the implications of the local scheme of support to council tax • the retention of business rates • the introduction of universal credit 	<p>High</p>	<p>Management Board</p>	<p>The medium term financial plan is updated each month. Planning takes into consideration known information and forecasts for government funding, pay and pension increases.</p> <p>Regular monitoring processes are in place for forecasting the council tax base, the council tax support scheme and the non-domestic rates tax base.</p> <p>The introduction of universal credit is regularly monitored and reported to Management Board where risks are identified and reviewed.</p> <p>The September Executive Committee received a report commencing the process for Strategic, Service and Financial Planning for 2014–2018</p> <p>Strategic, Service and Financial Planning for 2014–2017 has considered these and potential risks in line with the Risk Management Framework.</p> <p>Reductions in government funding have been allowed for in each of the next three years.</p> <p>Increases in pension contributions have been included in budgets and the three year medium term financial strategy.</p> <p>The council tax support scheme remains unchanged for 2014/15.</p> <p>The localisation of business rates and its impacts are regularly monitored.</p> <p>The Government's progress with the introduction of the Universal Credit scheme is regularly monitored.</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>March 2014</p>
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ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The financial procedure rules and contracts procedure rules should be reviewed and updated. Specifically, they should be amended for the lessons learned from the William Penn project.	High	Shared Director of Finance	Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules have been reviewed, revised and adopted.	✓	March 2014
Put in place compensating controls to mitigate risks arising from reduced staffing levels and separation of duties.	Medium	Heads of Service	Strategic, Service and Financial Planning for 2014 – 2017 has considered these and potential risks in line with the Risk Management Framework. The Shared Internal Audit Service and Grant Thornton, the external auditors, have not identified staffing as a risk concern in Reports received during the year.	✓	March 2014
Monitor the capacity of the shared Director of Finance.	Medium	Chief Executive and Managing Director (Watford BC)	The position of Shared Director of Finance has been regularly monitored over the last nine months and there are no capacity concerns to be addressed.	✓	December 2013

5.2 Watford Borough Council

The 'normal' running of Council business has and can be controlled through the governance framework detailed at sections 4 to 9 of this report. Specific issues identified within the 2012/2013 Governance Statement have been resolved as below:

No.	Issue	Action	Resolved	Lead	Update
1	Continued reductions in Central Government funding will place pressures upon the delivery of services	The MTFS will be updated quarterly and planned efficiencies through the Council's Road Map will be monitored	✓	Shared Director of Finance and Leadership Team	Central Government funding changes have been allowed for and included in the updated Medium Terms Financial Strategy. The position is continuously monitored and reported to Leadership Team and Council.

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

2	The outsourcing of ICT and waste, street cleansing, recycling, parks and open spaces can result in an unacceptable fall in levels of service.	Detailed key performance indicators have been included within contract documentation and need to be rigorously monitored	✓	Head of Cultural and Client Services	<p>Audit report received and an overall moderate assurance that there are effective controls in operation was awarded. Of the 7 recommendations made 4 were in the “medium” category and 3 in the “merits attention” category. None were in the “high” category. One of the recommendations has been completed and 2 will be ongoing in relation to reducing the number of PIs over the life of the contract and building relationships with other councils contract managers. The remainder have target dates set which will be monitored quarterly.</p> <p>An Audit on the ICT Capita contract management will be undertaken in 2014/15.</p>
3	Welfare Benefit changes and the preparation for Universal Credit needs to ensure no unacceptable impact upon benefit recipients	Monitoring of existing client base needs to identify where distortions occur. Testing of current ICT systems need to ensure a seamless transfer of caseloads to central government	✓	Head of Shared Services Revenues and Benefits	The Minister has announced that only 40,000 claims will be out into Universal Credit this year and there are further exemptions. We are undertaking no further planning work on this until we are provided with a proper timeline from central government and clarity about what cases are and are not included. We are simply maintaining a watching brief.
4	Deletion of senior management posts may result in a breakdown in governance processes.	Transfer of responsibilities to named officers should ensure future accountability	✓	Managing Director and Leadership Team	The constitution has been amended to reflect the new council structure. Policies have also been amended as necessary.

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

5	Ensuring investment partnerships at the Health Campus and Charter Place achieve planned objectives	Detailed development agreements are in place and will be monitored through Partnership Boards	✓	Managing Director and Elected Mayor	<p>Charter Place planning application for redevelopment submitted by Intu to be determined in January.</p> <p>Meeting with Intu regularly to progress land assembly.</p> <p>Watford Health Campus Partnership LLP Boards meet regularly.</p>
6	The effect of demographic changes need to be identified at an early stage	The composition of the Council's client base is kept under continuous review. Pressures upon services such as housing and welfare entitlement will be known	✓	Leadership Team	<p>The council is developing a corporate approach to managing information on its community and clients and bringing together the significant work done to assess / analyse data in this field.</p> <p>Partnerships and Performance Section Head will be leading on an intelligence gathering approach to be developed in 2014.</p>
7	The Council's Pension Fund needs to be adequately funded in order to meet current and future liabilities	In December 2013 the triennial review of the Pension Fund will be reported by the Actuary. The Council will need to respond to the main features of that report	✓	Shared Director of Finance	<p>The Actuary has reported the position following the triennial review. The details will be included in the Financial Planning (Revenue and Capital Estimates 2014 – 16) to Budget Panel, Cabinet and Council in January 2014</p>

Signed

Date: 29 September 2014

Councillor Ian Brown

Chairman of Watford Borough Council Audit Committee

Signed

Date: 29 September 2014

Councillor Sarah Nelmes

Chairman of Three Rivers District Council Audit Committee

STATEMENT OF MOVEMENT IN RESERVES

The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account (I&E) shows the Joint Committee's actual financial performance for the year, measured in terms of the resources consumed and generated over the last twelve months. Each Council is required to raise Council Tax on a different accounting basis.

There are no adjustments required to the Shared Service Income and Expenditure Account before consolidation into the accounts of each Council's General Fund Balances.

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

This statement summarises the resources that have been generated and consumed in providing services and managing the Shared Service during the last year. It includes all day-to-day expenses and related income on an accruals basis.

2012/13 Net Expenditure /Income £000s		2013/14		
		Gross Expenditure £000s	Gross Income £000s	Net Expenditure /(Income) £000s
	Expenditure on Continuing Services			
1,436	Local Tax Collection	1,628	(1)	1,627
1,724	Housing Benefits	1,883	0	1,883
3,576	Central Support Services (HR, Finance & ICT)	3,930	(6)	3,924
6,736	Cost of Services/Operating Expenditure	7,441	(7)	7,434
(2,623)	Income from Three Rivers District Council			(2,963)
(4,113)	Income from Watford Borough Council			(4,471)
0	(Surplus)/Deficit For The Year			0

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2014

31 March 2013 £000s		Note	31 March 2014 £000s	
			£000s	£000s
	Current Assets			
31	Debtors	5	73	
19	Cash & Bank (Three Rivers DC)		14	
77	Cash & Bank (Watford BC)		61	148
127				
	Current Liabilities			
(127)	Creditors	6	(148)	(148)
0	Total Assets Less Liabilities			0
	Financed By			
0	Revenue Fund Balance			0

Signed

Joanne Wagstaffe CPFA
Director of Finance Shared Services

Date: 29 September 2014

Signed

Councillor Sarah Nemes
Chairman of Three Rivers District Council Audit Committee

Date: 29 September 2014

Signed

Councillor Ian Brown
Chairman of Watford Borough Council Audit Committee

Date: 29 September 2014

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

This statement summarises the inflows and outflows of cash arising from transactions with third parties for revenue and capital purposes.

2012/13 £000s		2013/14 £000s
	Revenue Activities	
	Cash Outflows	
6,855	Operating Cash Payments	7,420
	Cash Inflows	
(6,890)	Cash Received for Goods And Services	(7,399)
(35)	(Increase)/Decrease In Cash	21

NOTES TO THE CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. Statement Of Accounting Policies

The Statement of Accounting Policies explains the basis for the recognition, measurement and disclosure of transactions and other events in the Accounts.

1.1 General Principles

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Joint Committee's transactions for the 2013/14 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2014. The Joint Committee is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, which require these to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013/14 and the Service Reporting Code of Practice 2013/14, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The accounting convention adopted in the Statement of Accounts is principally historical cost, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and financial instruments.

1.2 Debtors and Creditors, Income and Expenditure

The accounts of Shared Services are shown on an accruals basis in accordance with the Code of Practice. That is to say, actual expenditure and income incurred during the year is recorded in the accounts, rather than the cash sums paid or received. Where actual costs are not available, accruals are made on a best estimate basis.

1.3 Support Services

The policies adopted for Shared Services by Three Rivers and Watford Councils is to charge costs directly to partner councils.

1.4 Basis of Preparation

No separate accounting records were kept by the Shared Services Joint Committee. As a result the accounts have been prepared from the records maintained by Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council.

1.5 Value Added Tax

Income and expenditure excludes any amounts related to VAT, as all VAT collected is payable to HM Revenues and Customs and all VAT paid is recoverable from them.

VAT has been included in the income and expenditure accounts only to the extent that it is irrecoverable.

NOTES TO THE CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. 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 Best Value Accounting Code of Practice. However decisions about resource allocation are taken by the Joint Committee on the basis of budget reports analysed across services, as below:

2012/13 £000s	SERVICE AREA	2013/14 £000s
1,436	Information Technology	1,957
1,420	Finance	1,332
719	Human Resources	635
3,161	Revenues & Benefits	3,510
6,736	Net Shared Services	7,434
	FUNDING	
(2,623)	Three Rivers District Council Contribution	(2,963)
(4,113)	Watford Borough Council Contribution	(4,471)
(6,736)	Total Funding	(7,434)
0	Net Expenditure Less Funding	0
0	Surplus/Deficit Shared Services	0

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

As the shared service accounts do not include any adjustments under Statute, the figures presented to the Joint Committee agree to those shown on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account, so no reconciliation of the figures is required.

3. Local Authorities Goods and Services Act 1970

The Shared Service provides HR support to the West Herts Crematorium Joint Committee.

NOTES TO THE CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

4. Related Parties

The Shared Service is required to disclose material transactions with related parties - bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Joint Committee or to be controlled or influenced by the Joint Committee. Disclosure of these transactions in this Statement of Accounts allows the readers to assess the extent to which the Joint Committee might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Joint Committee.

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

Related parties to the Joint Committee would include:

- ◆ central government;
- ◆ local authorities and other bodies precepting or levying demands on the council tax;
- ◆ its councillors;
- ◆ its chief officers; and
- ◆ its pension fund.

The Three Rivers and Watford Shared Services Joint Committee was established under the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government Act 2000. The Agreement between the two councils was to establish and facilitate the joint delivery of certain functions in accordance with the terms of the Agreement. The Joint Committee was empowered to arrange for the discharge of these functions. Three Rivers and Watford councils each nominated three Members with full voting rights to the Joint Committee.

5. Debtors

Balance at 31 March 13 £000s		Balance at 31 March 14 £000s
31	Sundry Debtors	73
31		73

There is no provision for bad debts, as all of the debts are less than a year old.

The Shared Service considers that the carrying amount of trade and other debtors approximates to their fair value.

NOTES TO THE CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

6. Creditors

Balance at 31 March 13 £000s		Balance at 31 March 14 £000s
127	Sundry and Other Creditors	148
127		148

Sundry and Other Creditors are the Shared Service's trade creditors and payments in advance.

7. Disclosure of Audit Costs

In 2013/14 the Joint Committee incurred the following Audit Commission fees relating to external audit

2012/13 £000s		2013/14 £000s
10	Audit Fees	10
10		10

8. Authorisation Of The Accounts For Issue

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by Joanne Wagstaffe, the Director of Finance Shared Services, on 29 September 2014.

9. Events After The Balance Sheet Date

There are no post balance sheet events requiring disclosure. In determining if an event requires disclosure consideration has been given to events occurring up to 29 September 2014.

GLOSSARY

Accounting Period

The period of time covered by an authority's accounts, normally twelve months, beginning on 1 April. Also known as the Financial Year.

Accounting Policies

The principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied that specify how the effects of transactions and other events are reflected in the financial statements.

Accrual

A sum included in the final accounts attributable to that accounting period but for which an actual payment is yet to be made or income received. Accruals are made for revenue and capital expenditure and income.

Asset

An item having measurable value in monetary terms. Assets can be defined as fixed or current. A fixed asset has use and value for more than one year where current assets can be readily converted into cash.

Audit Commission

The body responsible for appointing external auditors to local authorities and for setting the standards that those auditors are required to follow. The Commission will also carry out studies designed to promote the effective and efficient provision of local authority services.

Council Tax

A local tax set by local authorities in order to meet their budget requirements. There are eight Council Tax bands (Band A to Band H); the amount of Council Tax each household pays depends on the value of their homes.

Creditors

Amounts owed by an authority for works done, goods received or services rendered before the end of an accounting period, but for which actual payments had not been made by the end of that accounting period.

Debtors

Amounts due to an authority for works done, goods supplied or service rendered before the end of an accounting period, but for which actual payments had not been received by the end of that accounting period.

Exceptional Items

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

External Audit

The auditor is appointed by the Audit Commission and is required to verify that all statutory and regulatory requirements have been met during the production of the authority's accounts. There is also a requirement to review the arrangements in place to ensure the economic and effective use of resources.

Extraordinary Items

Material items that derive from events or transactions that fall outside the ordinary activities of the authority.

GLOSSARY

FRS

A statement of accounting practice issued by the Accounting Standards Board in the UK.

General Fund

The common name for the account which accumulates balances for all services.

IFRS

International Financial Reporting Standards.

Liability

An amount owed by an authority that will be paid at some time in the future.

Outturn

Actual income and expenditure in an accounting period.

Reserves

This is the accumulated surplus income (in excess of expenditure), which can be used to finance future spending.

Revenue Expenditure

Expenditure on day-to-day running costs such as salaries, heating, printing and stationery and debt charges. Revenue items will either be expended immediately, like salaries, or within one year of purchase.

Support Services

These are functions that provide support to service departments. They include accountancy, internal audit, information technology, human resources, general administration and office accommodation.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT AND CERTIFICATE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THREE RIVERS AND WATFORD SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

Opinion on the Authority financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Three Rivers and Watford Shared Services Joint Committee for the year ended 31 March 2014 under the Audit Commission Act 1998. The financial statements comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and Collection Fund and the related notes. 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 2013/14.

This report is made solely to the members of Three Rivers and Watford Shared Services Joint Committee in accordance with Part II of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 48 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by the Audit Commission in March 2010. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Authority and the Authority's Members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Director of Finance and auditor

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

In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the foreword 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.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT AND CERTIFICATE

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of Three Rivers and Watford Shared Services Joint Committee as at 31 March 2014 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2013/14 and applicable law.

Opinion on other matters

In our opinion, the information given in the explanatory foreword for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we report by exception

We report to you if:

- in our opinion the annual governance statement does not reflect compliance with 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: a Framework' published by CIPFA/SOLACE in June 2007;
- we issue a report in the public interest under section 8 of the Audit Commission Act 1998;
- we designate under section 11 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 any recommendation as one that requires the Authority to consider it at a public meeting and to decide what action to take in response; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under the Audit Commission Act 1998.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

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

Respective responsibilities of the Authority and the auditor

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.

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.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT AND CERTIFICATE

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 2014.

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, Three Rivers and Watford Shared Services Joint Committee put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2014.

We certify that we have completed the audit of the financial statements of Three Rivers and Watford Shared Service Joint Committee in accordance with the requirements of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the Audit Commission.

Paul Dossett, Partner
for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Appointed Auditor
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29 September 2014