# Annual Report & Summary Statement of Accounts



For the year ending 31 March 2012

Cambridge City Council



This document is available on our website at <u>www.cambridge.gov.uk</u>

# Annual Report 2011/2012

Cambridge City Council provides a wide range of services to people that live in, work in and visit Cambridge.

The services provided by the City Council include:

- Keeping the streets and public open spaces clean.
- Emptying refuse and recycling bins.
- Providing a range of leisure facilities, including swimming pools and community centres, and providing entertainment in the City's parks and at the Corn Exchange.
- Awarding a wide range of grants to support local organisations and community groups.
- Offering planning advice, progressing planning applications and making sure that new buildings and alterations are safe.
- Providing housing advice and support, and working with partners to meet peoples' housing needs.
- Acting as landlord to over 7,300 council-owned properties.
- Processing housing benefit and council tax benefit applications.
- Monitoring and enforcing food and drink hygiene standards, together with the control of pests and disease, noise and air pollution.
- Licensing food premises, street traders and entertainment venues.
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour, in partnership with the Police and other agencies.
- Managing council run car parks.
- Organising and managing elections and the electoral register.

The City Council serves a population of about 119,800 residents in an almost entirely urban area in an otherwise mainly rural county. Cambridge is a sub-regional centre with high levels of inward travel to work and for shopping and leisure activities, which adds significantly to the day-time population. The Council provides many services that are used by people who live outside of the city as well as residents, which places additional pressure on our resources.

The city is at the centre of a housing growth region, with many new homes planned for sites on the southern and north-west fringes of Cambridge. The provision of good quality affordable and sustainable housing is a priority for the Council and it has set a target for developers of 40% affordable housing to be provided on the larger growth sites. The City Council will be consulting during 2012/13 on a range of issues and options that need to be considered as part of the development of the new Cambridge Local Plan, and which are important for the future planning and development of the city.

## What we want to achieve

Cambridge City Council has a clear vision for the future of the city, a vision which is shared with Cambridge citizens and with partner organisations.

#### Vision Statement

#### Cambridge - where people matter

- A city which celebrates its diversity, unites in its priority for the disadvantaged and strives for shared community wellbeing
- A city whose citizens feel they can influence public decision making and are equally keen to pursue individual and community initiatives
- A city where people behave with consideration for others and where harm and nuisance are confronted wherever possible without constraining the lives of all

#### *Cambridge - a good place to live, learn and work*

- A city which recognises and meets needs for housing of all kinds close to jobs and neighbourhood facilities
- A city which draws inspiration from its iconic historic centre and achieves a sense of place in all of its parts with generous urban open spaces and well-designed buildings
- A city with a thriving local economy that benefits the whole community and builds on its global pre-eminence in learning and discovery
- A city where getting around is primarily by public transport, bike and on foot

#### Cambridge - caring for the planet

• A city in the forefront of low carbon living and minimising its impact on the environment from waste and pollution.

#### Priorities

The national economic situation and the government's plans to tackle the national debt will be a challenge for the City Council because over the next few years we will have less money to spend. As we plan for the future our aim will be to:

- protect services for vulnerable individuals and communities
- protect the basic services that keep our city looking good and working well
- make sure that we get right the things we only have one chance to get right such as planning new communities.

# How we will achieve our vision for Cambridge

#### **Portfolio Plans**

The Executive is made up of the Leader of the Council and six Executive Councillors. Each Executive Councillor is responsible for a specific group of services, known as a portfolio, and they can make decisions about the services they are responsible for. For 2011/12 Portfolio Plans were prepared for the following portfolios:

- Arts and Recreation
- Community Development and Health
- Customer Services and Resources
- Environmental and Waste Services
- Housing
- Climate Change and Growth, and
- Strategy.

Each Executive Councillor has a plan that sets out how the services they are responsible for will contribute to the achievement of the council's vision for Cambridge.

The following pages outline what we achieved over the past year as a result of the 2011/12 portfolio plans, and what our plans are for 2012/13.

#### Arts and Recreation Portfolio Plan

- Installed a new piece of public art at Logan's Meadow Nature Reserve, which will be followed by further projects such as the Snowy Farr Memorial Artwork and a piece at Mill Road Cemetery in 2012/13.
- Continued to invest in and make improvements to our open spaces, for example refurbishing the skate park and installing barbeque stones in Jesus Green.
- Reviewed our leisure grants policy and priorities to focus on improving access to leisure activities, enhancing the City's cultural offer and supporting local neighbourhood and sports activities.
- Delivered a major refurbishment of the changing facilities and provision for disabled people at Parkside Pools.
- Engaged and involved local communities in shaping arts and recreation activities. For example consultations were held on the improvements to the Parkside Pool changing facilities, the leisure grants review and the Arts Strategy Action Plan.
- Implemented a staffing restructure of the Cambridge Corn Exchange and the Arts and Recreation Service to achieve a reduction in the subsidy of these services of £350,000.

#### Our plans for 2012/13 in the Arts, Sports & Public Places portfolio include:

- Improving access to arts, sports and public places for all city residents, through the new contract for the management of the Council's leisure facilities, the leisure grants programme and by engaging with groups of people that do not currently use these services.
- Celebrating the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, including by hosting the Olympic Torch Relay and Evening Celebration on the 7th of July.
- Improving the quantity and quality of provision of recycling, litter and dog waste bins on our open spaces.
- Making improvements to our open spaces, sports, recreation and public art provision through a range of projects funded by developers.
- Continuing to work with all parties to explore proposals for a community stadium for Cambridge.
- Identifying ways in which the Council can promote public access to public open space not directly maintained by the City Council.
- Protecting the environment and tackling the causes and consequences of climate change by establishing a plan and priorities to enhance local environmental quality, biodiversity and sustainability.

#### Climate Change and Growth Portfolio Plan

- Prepared an evidence base for the new Cambridge Local Plan. The final document will set out the planning framework to guide the future development of Cambridge. The plan will aim to protect the character of the city and make provision for housing and jobs, along with all the necessary infrastructure.
- Granted permission to build the first 1,200 homes on the new developments on the Southern fringe of the city. Work has commenced on site and the new homes will start to be occupied in late 2012.
- Worked with developers to ensure that all the new developments on the fringe sites allow local communities to achieve high standards of sustainability and minimise their carbon emissions, with all new homes being built at level 4 and above of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Worked with the County Council to ensure that the impact of new developments is mitigated, through the review of area transport plans and the development of new projects and funding bids.
- Received and determined 10% more planning applications than in the previous year.

#### Our plans for 2012/13 in the Planning & Sustainable Transport portfolio include:

- Consulting on a range of issues and options which need to be considered as part of the development of the new Cambridge Local Plan and that are important for the future planning and development of the city.
- Working with the County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council on the review of the Local Plan, and other planning matters, to ensure a co-operative and coordinated approach to planning for the Cambridge sub-region.
- Updating our Planning Enforcement Policy and making enforcement action a higher priority for the Planning Service.
- Delivering new transport measures to improve facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, including in the new developments around the city.
- Reducing traffic speeds and increasing road safety for all users by establishing new 20mph zones in Cambridge.

#### **Community Development and Health Portfolio Plan**

- Asked residents living in the North Area of the city what their priorities were for the local area, so that we could use our resources to make improvements that matter to them. Nearly 700 people told us their views, including many young people, and the City Council has made a number of improvements, particularly to the local environment, as a result.
- Promoted and managed grant funding so that voluntary groups are able to access grant aid and other support to help them build their knowledge, skills and confidence as partners with the City Council sustaining vibrant localities and neighbourhoods.
- Reviewed the Children and Young People's Participation Service (ChYpPS) so that in the future it focuses on open access play for 9-13 year olds, takes a more entrepreneurial approach, makes the best use of the skills of the staff, uses volunteers to increase capacity and generates income.
- Supported events and programmes to celebrate diversity, such as Black History Month, Cambridge Celebrates Age, Disability History Month, Inter-Faith Week, Refugee Week, LGBT History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day and International Women's Day.
- Engaged more actively with black and minority ethnic and other communities who feel vulnerable, to provide them with opportunities to express their concerns and have them addressed.
- Worked to integrate existing and new communities in the Southern Fringe and North West of Cambridge by establishing forums to communicate with residents and ensuring that all are involved in community activities.

- Providing local residents with more opportunities to influence decisions about their local area by using the learning from the North Area Committee pilot to support area working across the city's other three areas.
- Reviewing how the City Council's community facilities are managed, taking account of the proposed facilities in the growth sites and the opportunities presented in the Localism Bill.
- Working with the YMCA and young people to explore different options for providing a new facility for young people in the centre of Cambridge.
- Continuing to support the integration of new communities with existing residents through the provision of community activities.
- Working with partners to make significant progress towards delivering new community infrastructure in the North West and Southern fringes of Cambridge, including the Trumpington Meadows Primary School and the new community facility at Clay Farm.
- Establishing an effective Local Health Partnership to improve public health in Cambridge.
- Developing a model of Restorative Justice, which focuses on the needs of victims and encourages offenders to take responsibility for their actions and to repair the harm they've done, in order to reduce re-offending, anti-social behaviour and low-level crime in Cambridge.
- Working with our partners to reduce the presence of street drinkers and the associated anti-social behaviour.

#### **Customer Services and Resources Portfolio Plan**

- Implemented changes to the Council's own systems to implement the national welfare reforms and liaised with partners such as the Department of Work and Pensions and advocacy and support agencies. This has included providing briefing sessions for local welfare support groups, elected Members and colleagues.
- Provided debt advice and information, minimising the number of people who, as a result of welfare reforms, are at risk of becoming homeless or whose financial circumstances could be exploited by others. This work includes administering Discretionary Housing Payments to support those in most financial need or those in danger of defaulting on their rent payments.
- Achieved savings and efficiencies to ensure that the City Council is equipped to deliver the Council's vision for the city within the resources available.

- Worked with our partners to provide more joined-up customer services, for example a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Cambridge Citizens Advice Bureau (CCAB) to ensure greater clarity and closer working between the two organisations. The Customer Service Centre has installed a CCAB self help advice kiosk in the reception at Mandela House.
- Improved our services to make sure that they are focused on meeting the needs of our customers, for example we designed a new process that will significantly reduce customer waiting times and provide a more efficient housing repairs service.
- Started to explore the opportunities for establishing one or more Business Improvement Districts in Cambridge to support the appropriate involvement and financial input from the city's business community to the future development of the city.

- Working with partner organisations to agree a common approach to the management of public sector owned property assets, to deliver the maximum possible benefit to the citizens of Cambridge.
- Making the optimum use of the Council's accommodation and providing support to enable our staff to work smarter and more flexibly.
- Obtaining greater value for money from the Council's spending on procurement.
- Ensuring that the welfare reforms are efficiently and effectively planned for and implemented, and support is given to the most vulnerable in the city, with action being taken to mitigate hardship where possible.
- Preparing for the retention of local business rates as part of the Local Government Resource Review.
- Continuing to explore how we as an organisation, and with our partners, can provide more joined-up customer services.
- Developing and consulting upon a business plan to support the development of a bid or bids for a Business Improvement District within Cambridge, in order to enable the appropriate involvement and financial input from the city's business community to the future development of the city.

#### **Environment and Waste Portfolio Plan**

- Carried out a major review of the routes taken by our vehicles to collect waste and materials for recycling in order to significantly reduce the cost of the Waste Service.
- Provided new facilities for 'recycling on the go', and improved the range of materials that can be recycled at the 23 recycling banks around the city, for example to include plastic pots, tubs and trays.

- Increased our income from trade waste collection by making our offer more competitive and more attractive, and worked with businesses to improve their waste management and increase recycling.
- Maintained high standards of street cleansing and responded to residents' priorities about their local environment, by carrying out targeted litter picks and clean-up campaigns, assisted by the Probation Service.
- Made it easier for residents to make representations about licensing matters by enabling them to do it online.

- Taking steps to increase recycling in Cambridge beyond 45%, by providing customers with more new facilities for 'recycling on the go', encouraging the recycling of particular materials that aren't consistently recycled by residents across the city and by targeting particular groups.
- Exploring how we can better work with partners to improve the efficiency of our waste services.
- Addressing the impact that excessive noise has on residents, by mapping noise complaints across Cambridge, educating communities and enforcing change when necessary.
- Improving the health of Cambridge residents by working with our partners to implement the new public health arrangements, and by working to reduce the health impact of alcohol and the night-time economy.
- Planning for the introduction of the new licensing legislation, in particular the late night levy, which together with the Business Improvement District will result in cleaner, safer streets in the city centre.
- Making it easier for people to report litter, graffiti and fly tipping online and by text.
- Working with the County Council to improve air quality and reduce emissions, by seeking emission improvements from public transport vehicles and by promoting alternatives to the private car.

#### **Housing Portfolio Plan**

- Implemented the national changes to the way that councils finance their own housing. This included borrowing £214 million to enable us to build new council houses and maintain existing ones, including making them more energy efficient.
- Worked with private sector landlords to improve the condition of private rented housing and the management of houses of multiple-occupation.

- Successfully negotiated with the Homes and Communities Agency that properties let under the new Affordable Rent tenure should be let at or around 65% of local market rents (as opposed to the proposed 'up to 80%').
- Engaged with Cambridge University colleges to help them attain Landlord Accreditation, which is a scheme for private landlords that demonstrate good standards in the condition and management of their properties and their relationship with their tenants.
- Established a shared Home Improvement Agency with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council to support older and vulnerable people to be warm, safe and as independent as possible in their homes.
- Worked with partners to prevent homelessness, for example we secured funding for a project with NHS Cambridgeshire to target vulnerable adults with multiple support needs that are at risk of becoming rough sleepers.
- Launched the HeatSeekers scheme to assist residents to identify and install energyefficiency measures. Thermal imaging is used to identify homes that could most benefit from improved insulation, and free or grant-assisted insulation is offered to address fuel poverty.

- Investing in our existing housing stock and starting to deliver the new council house building programme.
- Working with developers, Registered Providers (housing associations) and planners to ensure that the city's social and market housing stock (including private rented housing) continues to grow, including 40% Affordable Housing in most new developments and the delivery of the Council's own new build programme.
- Increasing the energy efficiency of existing homes; promoting sustainable design and construction methods and promoting high standards of environmental sustainability of new homes and communities, including water management.
- Reviewing our approach to ensure new specialist housing is provided including carrying out an assessment of potential Gypsy and Traveller sites, as part of the local plan development.
- Completing a review of the Council's Letting Policy to ensure that priority for re-housing continues to be given to those who have least opportunity to access market housing.
- Maintaining and promoting services to take action effectively against private sector landlords that do not comply with housing health and safety matters as well as landlord and tenant issues.
- Undertaking a review of empty homes policy in the light of national policy change and take effective action to get vacant homes back into use.
- Improving support to rough sleepers, including the completion of the Jimmy's Assessment Centre project, thereby reducing the incidence of rough sleeping and use

of temporary accommodation as households move more effectively to secure permanent housing.

### Strategy Portfolio Plan

#### During 2011/12 we:

- Adopted a new Single Equality Scheme for 2012 to 2015, which sets out what we will do to challenge discrimination and promote equal opportunity in all aspects of our work.
- Used social media more effectively to ensure that residents are kept informed of important news and service changes.
- Adopted and implemented a Code of Best Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement. This established clear principles to guide council departments on a more structured, proportionate and appropriate approach to consultation.
- Improved how we engage with residents about the issues that matter most to them by training our staff to enhance their customer service skills.
- Reviewed and streamlined the Council's partnership work to ensure that it is clearly aligned with our vision for the city and consistently contributes to achieving it.
- Agreed a cultural and organisational change programme to move us further towards working as "One Council", so we deliver services to our customers more seamlessly and efficiently, and within the resources available.
- Took decisions to give more powers to our Area Committees to make it easier for people to influence the decisions being made about their local area. The powers devolved include decisions about who receives Safer City Grants, and some decisions about projects funded by developer contributions that meet the needs of each area and the priorities agreed with each local community.

#### Our plans for 2012/13 include:

- Adopting a refreshed Climate Change Strategy to set out our strategic approach to climate change over the next five years.
- Implementing our Carbon Management Plan to reduce the City Council's carbon footprint and energy bills, including developing a proposal for a district heating scheme.
- Implementing our Single Equalities Scheme to ensure that we better understand and meet the diverse needs of the city's communities.
- Engaging and consulting with communities on key issues affecting them in appropriate and effective ways, in line with our Code of Best Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement.

- Developing our website so that our customers can conduct even more of their business online, and continuing to identify and adopt innovative and effective uses of social media.
- Ensuring greater transparency and openness about how we conduct our business, by making more information and data about the Council's services and performance available in more accessible ways.
- Working with partners to drive forward the economic development of the city and its surrounding area through the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Ensuring the City Council is equipped to deliver the Council's vision for the city within the resources available, by taking a structured approach to identifying savings and further efficiencies.

## How to find out more

Further information about the Council's performance and the Council's priorities for 2012-13 can be found in our Portfolio Plans available on our website.

## Introduction

The services provided by local councils affect everyone's quality of life. Money is needed to carry out the functions and services that the Council provides and the Council's accounts are an important element in demonstrating the stewardship of public money. They show the resources available and how they have been used to deliver everyday services to the City's residents, visitors, businesses and other organisations.

Each year, the Council is legally required to produce a Statement of Accounts that presents the Council's financial activities and gives details of the overall financial position, however, much of the information in the document is of a technical nature in order to satisfy statutory requirements.

The following Summary Accounts are intended to be a more user-friendly version of the detailed publication and to provide a brief overview of the Council's financial position for year ending 31st March 2012.

## **Director of Resources' Statement**

The Council's Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2011/12 based on International Financial Reporting Standards.

The figures in this summary were originally compiled having regard to proper accounting practice. To help make this summary easier to understand we have simplified the presentation of some figures.

The full 2011/12 Statement of Accounts has been audited by the Audit Commission who gave an unqualified audit opinion.

#### **David Horspool CPFA**

A full copy of the Council's 2011/12 audited accounts is available on our website or from:

Head of Accounting Services Cambridge City Council Lion Yard Lion House Cambridge CB2 3NA

The Council can also produce electronic or large print copies. We can arrange for a summary in Braille, on tape or in another language, although this will take longer.

## **Income and Expenditure**

This statement shows the costs of providing services in the year.

The total expenditure incurred in running our services was £337.2 million. Service income, such as fees and charges was £99.2 million. The net cost of each service, totalling £238.0 million, is shown in the table below. Exceptionally, expenditure in the year included a significant one-off payment of £213.6 million to Central Government in relation to new arrangements for the funding of council housing.

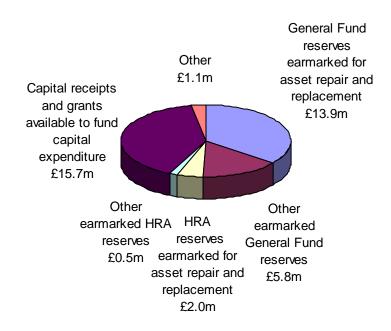
	£m
Central services to the public (elections, land charges and local tax collection)	1.4
Cultural & related services	8.1
Environmental & related services	8.4
Planning services	5.1
Transport	(2.8)
Council housing (Housing Revenue Account) - settlement payment to government for self-financing	213.6
Council housing (Housing Revenue Account)	(3.3)
Other housing services	4.7
Corporate and democratic services	2.6
Non-distributed costs	0.2
Cost of Services	238.0
Payments to the Government Housing Capital Receipts Pool	1.4
Surplus or deficit on the sale of assets	0.4
Interest receivable	(0.8)
Interest payable	0.1
Revision to estimated recovery of Icelandic bank deposits	(0.5)
Net income from commercial and industrial properties and changes in their value	(22.4)
Net pensions interest cost and expected return on pensions assets	1.6
Council tax income	(6.7)
Share of national business rates	(7.3)
Non-ringfenced government grants	(3.3)
Capital grants and contributions	(2.5)
Net Deficit for the year	198.0

## **Movements in Usable Reserves**

The Council's usable reserves increased by  $\pounds$ 1.2 million in 2011/12. Total usable reserves were  $\pounds$ 55.5 million at 31 March 2012, as shown below :

	General Fund Balance £m	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Balance £m	Other Usable Reserves £m	Total Usable Reserves £m
Balance at 1 April 2011	(9.9)	(5.7)	(38.7)	(54.3)
(Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	(11.3)	209.3		198.0
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations	9.3	(210.8)	2.3	(199.2)
Transfers to or (from) earmarked reserves	2.4	0.2	(2.6)	
Decrease or (Increase) in the year	0.4	(1.3)	(0.3)	(1.2)
Balance at 31 March 2012	(9.5)	(7.0)	(39.0)	(55.5)

#### Other usable reserves at 31 March 2012 comprised :



# **Balance Sheet**

At the end of each financial year, we draw up a balance sheet that presents how much the Council's land and buildings are worth, what is owed to others (liabilities), what others owe us (debtors and investments) and how much cash and other reserves we have.

	Net Assets at 31 March 2012 £m
Value of land, property, equipment and vehicles	730.9
Long-term debtors and investments	3.3
Cash and short-term cash investments	62.4
Short term debtors	8.1
Stock	0.2
Current liabilities	(16.2)
Long-term liabilities	(295.3)
Net Assets	493.4
Usable reserves	(55.5)
Unusable reserves	(437.9)
Total Reserves	(493.4)

Unusable reserves are not available to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes, for example, amounts which would only become available if the related assets were sold.

# **Cash Movements**

The council handled significant amounts of cash during the year.

	2011/12 £m
Cash at 1 April 2011	2.6
Cash receipts	486.3
Cash payments	(484.1)
Cash at 31 March 2012	4.8

The detailed Statement of Accounts publication includes many notes of explanation and detailed analysis of figures in the main financial statements. A selection of the notes which may be of particular interest to the public have been summarised and are presented below.

# **Employee Remuneration**

The numbers of employees whose remuneration, excluding employer's pension contributions, was £50,000 or more in bands of £5,000 were :

	2011/12	2010/11
£50,000 to £54,999	2	4
£55,000 to £59,999	3	2
£60,000 to £64,999	9	6
£65,000 to £69,999	3	1
£70,000 to £74,999	3	5
£75,000 to £79,999	1	0
£80,000 to £84,999	0	2
£85,000 to £89,999	1	1
£90,000 to £94,999	2	2
£110,000 to £114,999	0	1
£115,000 to £119,999	1	0

The remuneration of senior officers, who are included in the above table, is disclosed in more detail, including employer's pension contributions, below:

## Senior Officers Remuneration 2011/12

Position / Name	Salary £	Allowances & Benefits in Kind £	Pension Contribution £	Total £
Chief Executive (A Jackson)	117,859	47	21,922	139,828
Director of Resources (D Horspool)	91,891	485	17,092	109,468
Director of Environment (S Payne)	88,646	0	16,488	105,134
Director of Customer & Community Services (L Bisset)	91,891	471	17,092	109,454
Head of Corporate Strategy (A Limb)	63,778	0	11,863	75,641

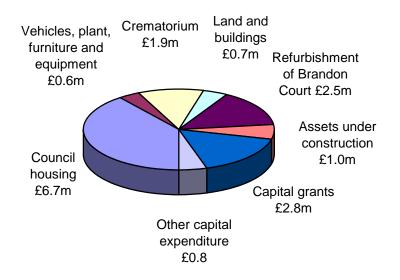
# **Members Allowances**

The total of allowances paid to members during the financial year 2011/12 was £242,910 (£243,694 in 2010/11). Details of payments to individual members are published annually in a local newspaper. Details can also be found on the Councillors pages on our website.

# **Capital Spending**

We also spend money on buying assets and improving our council housing and other assets. We account for this type of expenditure separately from the day-to-day running costs of services.

Capital expenditure totalled £17.0 million in 2011/12.



This capital expenditure was financed as follows:

	£m
Capital receipts (from sale of council houses and other assets)	4.1
Government grants and other contributions	3.2
Revenue and reserves	9.4
Use of cash balances	0.3
Total	17.0

# **Housing Revenue Account**

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) records income and expenditure relating to the management and maintenance of council housing.

During 2011/12 the Council was responsible for an average of 7,325 properties.

	£m
Dwelling rents	(30.4)
Non-dwelling rents	(0.8)
Charges for services and facilities	(2.7)
Other income	(0.7)
Income	(34.6)
Repairs and maintenance	5.9
Supervision and management	6.3
Rents, rates, taxes and other charges	0.3
Depreciation and impairment	5.6
Negative HRA subsidy	12.9
Provision for bad debts	0.2
Share of corporate and democratic core costs	0.3
HRA self-financing settlement payment to government	213.6
Debt management costs	0.1
Expenditure	245.2
Net cost of HRA services	210.6
Surplus on sale on assets	(0.4)
Interest payable	0.1
Other income	(1.0)
Deficit for the year	209.3
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations	(210.8)
Contributions to earmarked reserves	0.2
Net HRA surplus for the year	(1.3)

The HRA surplus for the year of £1.3 million was added to the previously accumulated surplus. The HRA is 'ring-fenced' by law which means its income and reserves cannot be used for any purpose other than the provision and management of Council housing. The accumulated surplus on the HRA at 31 March 2012 was  $\pounds7.0$  million.