

Assumptions made about the future and other sources of estimation uncertainty

The Statement of Accounts contains figures that are based on assumptions or estimates about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Whilst these take into account historical experience, current trends, professional guidance and other relevant factors, actual results could be different. The main items in the Council's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2021 for which there is a risk of adjustment in future financial years are:

Item	Uncertainty	Effect if Actual Results Differ from Assumptions
Valuation, where required of Property, Plant and Equipment assets, Heritage assets and Investment properties	<p>Valuation of property interests involves assessment of a number of variables such as market conditions, useful life, cost of reconstruction, assessment of condition, use of discount factors for social housing etc. Valuations are undertaken by qualified Chartered Surveyors, or experts in the relevant field, in accordance with the Practice Statements and Guidance notes set out in the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Valuation Standards (The Red Book) and any other relevant guidance. As a result of the impact of Covid-19, valuations on Council Dwellings are reported on the basis of 'material valuation uncertainty' as per the RICS Red Book. Consequently, less certainty and a higher degree of caution should be attached to the valuations. At the current time, it is not possible to accurately predict the longevity and severity of the impact of Covid-19 on the economy. Therefore, values have been based on the situation prior to Covid-19, on the assumption that values will be restored when the real estate market becomes more fluid. The Council's approach to undertaking valuations on a more frequent basis than the minimum 5 year period will ensure that any changes are captured as soon as possible in the next formal valuation.</p> <p>In addition, included within the valuation of Council Dwellings is a Material Uncertainty Clause in relation to high rise residential buildings, the inclusion of which is based on valuer judgement. This does not suggest that the valuation cannot be relied upon; rather, it is used in order to be clear and transparent that, in extraordinary circumstances, less certainty can be attached to the valuation than would otherwise be the case. The balance sheet carrying value and the maximum value affected by this disclosure is £15.750 million pending the implementation of solutions, where required, in respect of remedial works to high rise buildings following fire safety measures.</p>	Any changes to valuations and any associated depreciation charges to services for non-current assets are required to be reversed out in the accounts, so this will not have an impact on Council Tax or rents.
Financial Instrument assets	<p>These are reviewed annually for significant impairment using data such as historic risk of default and other reviews of recoverability.</p> <p>For financial assets not quoted on a recognised exchange or where it is difficult to provide accounting valuations e.g. valuations of the Council's shareholding in Cardiff City Transport Services Ltd. The fair value is deemed to be Net Worth.</p>	Any change in the fair value of Cardiff City Transport Services Ltd has no impact on the level of Council Tax as changes are reflected by a corresponding amendment in the Financial Instrument Revaluation Reserve.

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Provisions	<p>The Council makes a number of provisions for liabilities that it may face where a reasonable estimate of value can be made at the balance sheet date. In most cases these are subject to legal claims, such as those for insurance. Provisions relating to landfill sites are subject to a high level of estimation primarily given the length of period over which they are to be considered. Professional internal and external advice is used to determine the need and value of provisions.</p>	<p>The outcomes of assumptions will have an impact on the Outturn in future years, however due to the uncertain nature of these events, are difficult to quantify</p>
Arrears	<p>The Authority is owed for items such as sundry debtors, Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates (NDR) and rents. After taking into account trends in past collection experience and other relevant changes which may impact on collectability a level of impairment or provision for expected credit losses is assumed. It is not certain however that this impairment allowance would be sufficient as the Council cannot assess with certainty which debts will be collected or not.</p> <p>The economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has made the estimation of debt impairment more difficult as there is more uncertainty about the economic viability of debtors and hence their ability to settle their debts which may, or may not be sufficient.</p>	<p>Improvements in collection will improve future reported Outturn position, however where customers are finding it difficult to pay this will require increases in the level of provisions currently set aside.</p>
Pensions Liability	<p>Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, inflation, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. This also includes market volatility caused by geo-political and macro-economic factors.</p> <p>Professional actuaries are engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.</p>	<p>It is difficult to measure the effects on the net pension liability of changes in individual assumptions, as they can result in multiple variations to the figure. A sensitivity analysis is provided in Note 13.</p>