

## Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24

### 1. Introduction

#### **2021 revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code and Prudential Code – changes which will impact on future Treasury Management Strategy Statement/Annual Investment Strategy reports and the risk management framework**

CIPFA published the revised Codes on 20th December 2021 and has stated that revisions need to be included in the reporting framework from the 2023/24 financial year. The Council, therefore, has to have regard to these Codes of Practice when it prepares the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy, and also related reports during the financial year, which are taken to Full Council for approval.

**The revised Treasury Management Code requires all investments and investment income to be attributed to one of the following three purposes: -**

#### **Treasury management**

Arising from the organisation's cash flows or treasury risk management activity, this type of investment represents balances which are only held until the cash is required for use. Treasury investments may also arise from other treasury risk management activity which seeks to prudently manage the risks, costs or income relating to existing or forecast debt or treasury investments.

#### **Service delivery**

Investments held primarily and directly for the delivery of public services including housing, regeneration and local infrastructure. Returns on this category of investment which are funded by borrowing are permitted only in cases where the income is "either related to the financial viability of the project in question or otherwise incidental to the primary purpose".

#### **Commercial return**

Investments held primarily for financial return with no treasury management or direct service provision purpose. Risks on such investments should be proportionate to an authority's financial capacity – i.e., that 'plausible losses' could be absorbed in budgets or reserves without unmanageable detriment to local services. An authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return.

**The revised Treasury Management Code will require an authority to implement the following: -**

1. **Adopt a new liability benchmark treasury indicator** to support the financing risk management of the capital financing requirement; this is to be shown in chart form for a minimum of ten years, with material differences between the liability benchmark and actual loans to be explained;
2. **Long-term treasury investments**, (including pooled funds), are to be classed as commercial investments unless justified by a cash flow business case;
3. **Pooled funds** are to be included in the indicator for principal sums maturing in years beyond the initial budget year;

4. Amendment to the **knowledge and skills register** for officers and members involved in the Treasury Management function - to be proportionate to the size and complexity of the treasury management conducted by each authority;
5. **Reporting to members is to be done quarterly.** Specifically, the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is required to establish procedures to monitor and report performance against all forward-looking prudential indicators at least quarterly. The CFO is expected to establish a measurement and reporting process that highlights significant actual or forecast deviations from the approved indicators. However, monitoring of prudential indicators, including forecast debt and investments, is not required to be taken to Full Council and should be reported as part of the authority's integrated revenue, capital and balance sheet monitoring;
6. **Environmental, social and governance (ESG)** issues to be addressed within an authority's treasury management policies and practices (TMP1).

**The main requirements of the Prudential Code relating to service and commercial investments are: -**

1. The risks associated with service and commercial investments should be proportionate to their financial capacity – i.e. that plausible losses could be absorbed in budgets or reserves without unmanageable detriment to local services;
2. An authority must not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of commercial return;
3. It is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the Capital Financing Requirement, and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the authority, and where any commercial returns are either related to the financial viability of the project in question or otherwise incidental to the primary purpose;
4. An annual review should be conducted to evaluate whether commercial investments should be sold to release funds to finance new capital expenditure or refinance maturing debt;
5. A prudential indicator is required for the net income from commercial and service investments as a proportion of the net revenue stream;
6. Create new Investment Management Practices to manage risks associated with non-treasury investments, (similar to the current Treasury Management Practices).

**An authority's Capital Strategy or Annual Investment Strategy should include: -**

7. The authority's approach to investments for service or commercial purposes (together referred to as non-treasury investments), including defining the authority's objectives, risk appetite and risk management in respect of these investments, and processes ensuring effective due diligence;
8. An assessment of affordability, prudence and proportionality in respect of the authority's overall financial capacity (i.e. whether plausible losses could be absorbed in budgets or reserves without unmanageable detriment to local services);
9. Details of financial and other risks of undertaking investments for service or commercial purposes and how these are managed;
10. Limits on total investments for service purposes and for commercial purposes respectively (consistent with any limits required by other statutory guidance on investments);

11. Requirements for independent and expert advice and scrutiny arrangements (while business cases may provide some of this material, the information contained in them will need to be periodically re-evaluated to inform the authority's overall strategy);
12. State compliance with paragraph 51 of the CIPFA Prudential Code in relation to investments for commercial purposes, in particular the requirement that an authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return;

As this TMSS and AIS deals solely with treasury management investments, the categories of service delivery and commercial investments should be addressed as part of the Capital Strategy report.

However, as investments in commercial property have implications for cash balances managed by the Treasury team, it will be for each authority to determine whether to add a high level summary of the impact that commercial investments have, or may have, if it is planned to liquidate such investments within the three year time horizon of this report, (or a longer time horizon if that is felt appropriate).

- **Background**

The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low-risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.

The second main function of the Treasury Management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning, to ensure that it can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans or using longer-term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, when it is prudent and economic, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet risk or cost objectives.

The contribution the Treasury Management function makes to the Council is critical, as the balance of debt and investment operations ensure liquidity or the ability to meet spending commitments as they fall due, either on day-to-day revenue or for larger capital projects. The treasury operations will see a balance of the interest costs of debt and the investment income arising from cash deposits affecting the available budget. Since cash balances generally result from reserves and balances, it is paramount to ensure adequate security of the sums invested, as a loss of principal will in effect result in a loss to the General Fund Balance.

CIPFA defines treasury management as:

*"The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."*

Whilst any commercial initiatives or loans to third parties will impact on the treasury function, these activities are generally classed as non-treasury activities, (arising usually from capital expenditure), and are separate from the day-to-day treasury management activities.

- **Reporting requirements**

### **1.2.1 Capital Strategy**

The CIPFA 2021 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes require all local authorities to prepare a Capital Strategy report which will provide the following: -

1. a high-level long-term overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services
2. an overview of how the associated risk is managed
3. the implications for future financial sustainability

The aim of the strategy is to ensure that all the Council's elected members fully understand the overall long-term policy objectives and resulting Capital Strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

### **1.2.2 Treasury Management reporting**

The Council is currently required to receive and approve, as a minimum, three main treasury reports each year, which incorporate a variety of policies, estimates and actuals.

**Prudential and treasury indicators and treasury strategy** (this report) - The first, and most important report is forward looking and covers:

- 1 the capital plans (including prudential indicators);
- 2 a minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time);
- 3 the treasury management strategy (how the investments and borrowings are to be organised) including treasury indicators; and
- 4 an annual investment strategy (the parameters on how investments are to be managed).

**A mid-year treasury management report** – This is primarily a progress report and will update members on the capital position, amending prudential indicators as necessary, and whether any policies require revision.

**An annual treasury report** – This is a backward-looking review document and provides details of a selection of actual prudential and treasury indicators and actual treasury operations compared to the estimates within the strategy.

#### **Scrutiny**

The above reports are required to be adequately scrutinised before being recommended to the Council. This role is undertaken at Gloucester by the Audit and Governance Committee.

**Quarterly reports** – In addition to the three major reports detailed above, from 2023/24 quarterly reporting (end of June/end of December) is also required. However, these additional reports do not have to be reported to Full Council/Board but do require to be adequately scrutinised. This role is undertaken by the Audit and Governance Committee.

- **Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24**

The strategy for 2023/24 covers two main areas:

#### **Capital issues**

1. the capital plans and the associated prudential indicators;

2. the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy.

### **Treasury management issues**

1. the current treasury position;
2. treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
3. prospects for interest rates;
4. the borrowing strategy;
5. policy on borrowing in advance of need;
6. debt rescheduling;
7. the investment strategy;
8. creditworthiness policy; and
9. the policy on use of external service providers.

These elements cover the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, DLUHC Investment Guidance, DLUHC MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management.

### **1.4 Training**

The CIPFA Code requires the responsible officer to ensure that members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management. This especially applies to members responsible for scrutiny.

Furthermore, pages 47 and 48 of the CIPFA Code state that they expect “all organisations to have a formal and comprehensive knowledge and skills or training policy for the effective acquisition and retention of treasury management knowledge and skills for those responsible for management, delivery, governance and decision making.

Finance training for members, including Treasury Management, featured in the member development programme during 2022/23 and further training will be arranged as required

The training needs of Treasury Management officers are periodically reviewed and staff have attended training and seminars during 2022/23 and will continue to do so in the upcoming year.

### **1.5 Treasury management consultants**

The Council uses Link Group, Link Treasury Services Limited as its external treasury management advisors.

The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon the services of our external service providers. All decisions will be undertaken with regards to all available information, including, but not solely, our treasury advisers.

It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented and subjected to regular review.

The scope of investments within the Council’s operations now includes both conventional treasury investments, (the placing of residual cash from the Council’s functions), and more commercial type investments, such as investment properties. The commercial type investments require specialist advisers, and the Council uses such advisors on a case by case basis in relation to this activity.

- **THE CAPITAL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2023/24 – 2025/26**

The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

- **Capital expenditure**

This prudential indicator is a summary of the Council's capital expenditure plans, both those agreed previously, and those forming part of this budget cycle. Members are asked to approve the capital expenditure forecasts.

<b>Capital expenditure £m</b>	<b>2021/22 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Estimate</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>
Policy & Resources	3.166	0.936	0.150	0.150	0.150
Place	15.141	15.474	59.363	9.260	0.260
Communities	5.661	1.584	1.445	1.297	1.297
Culture & Trading	0.000	0.000	0.400	0.083	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.968</b>	<b>17.994</b>	<b>61.358</b>	<b>10.791</b>	<b>1.707</b>

The table below summarises the above capital expenditure plans and how these plans are being financed by capital or revenue resources. Any shortfall of resources results in a borrowing need.

<b>Financing of capital expenditure £m</b>	<b>2021/22 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Estimate</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>
Capital receipts	0.236	0.000	0.482	0.275	0.230
Capital grants	2.521	1.081	5.676	1.316	1.277
Capital reserves	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Revenue	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Net borrowing need for the year</b>	<b>21.211</b>	<b>16.913</b>	<b>55.200</b>	<b>9.200</b>	<b>0.200</b>

- **The Council's borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement)**

The second prudential indicator is the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's indebtedness and so its underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure above, which has not immediately been paid for, will increase the CFR.

The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the indebtedness in line with each asset's life, and so charges the economic consumption of capital assets as they are used.

The CFR includes any other long-term liabilities (e.g. PFI schemes, finance leases). Whilst these increase the CFR, and therefore the Council's borrowing requirement, these types of scheme include a borrowing facility by the PFI, PPP lease provider and so the Council is not required to separately borrow for these schemes.

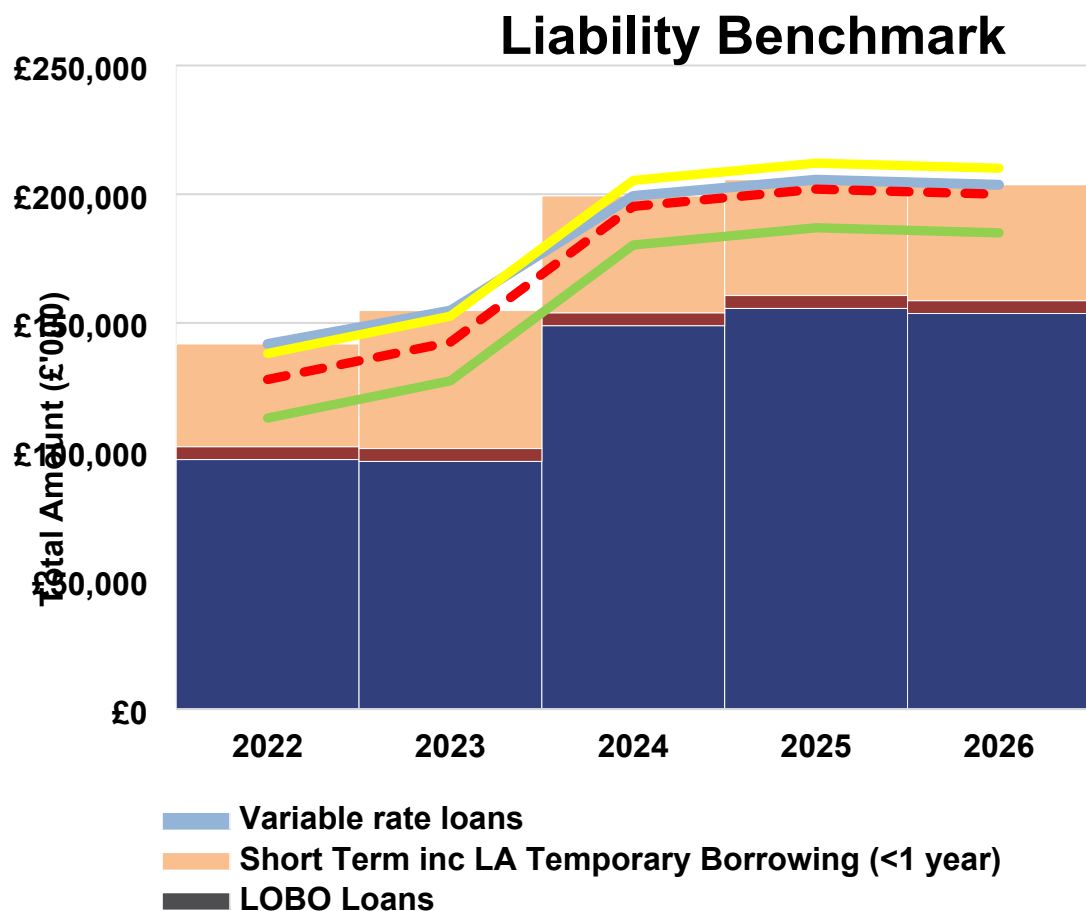
The Council is asked to approve the CFR projections below:

£m	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
<b>Capital Financing Requirement</b>					
<b>Total CFR</b>	<b>138.185</b>	<b>152.703</b>	<b>205.426</b>	<b>212.127</b>	<b>225.542</b>
<b>Movement in CFR</b>	<b>19.228</b>	<b>14.518</b>	<b>52.734</b>	<b>6.701</b>	<b>(1.981)</b>

<b>Movement in CFR represented by</b>					
Net financing need for the year (above)	21.211	16.913	55.200	9.200	0.200
Less MRP/VRP and other financing movements	(1.983)	(2.406)	(2.466)	(2.499)	(2.181)
<b>Movement in CFR</b>	<b>19.228</b>	<b>14.507</b>	<b>52.734</b>	<b>6.701</b>	<b>(1.981)</b>

○ **Liability Benchmark**

A third and new prudential indicator for 2023/24 is the Liability Benchmark (LB). The Council is required to estimate and measure the LB for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years, as a minimum.



- **Core funds and expected investment balances**

The application of resources (capital receipts, reserves etc.) to either finance capital expenditure or other budget decisions to support the revenue budget will have an ongoing impact on investments unless resources are supplemented each year from new sources (asset sales etc.). Detailed below are estimates of the year-end balances for each resource and anticipated day-to-day cash flow balances.

<b>Year End Resources £m</b>	<b>2021/22 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Estimate</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>
Fund balances / reserves	1.127	1.127	1.023	1.263	1.395
Capital receipts	0.000	0.366	0.000	1.500	2.500
Provisions	1.600	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500
Other (Grants)	2.000	2.000	2.000	2.000	2.000
<b>Total core funds</b>	<b>4.727</b>	<b>4.993</b>	<b>4.523</b>	<b>6.263</b>	<b>7.395</b>
Working capital*	14.000	10.000	10.000	10.000	10.000
Under/over borrowing**	(9.333)	(12.633)	(12.633)	(12.633)	(12.633)
<b>Expected investments</b>	<b>9.394</b>	<b>2.360</b>	<b>1.890</b>	<b>3.630</b>	<b>4.762</b>

\*Working capital balances shown are estimated year-end; these will vary in year

- **Minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy statement**

The Council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year (the CFR) through a revenue charge (the minimum revenue provision - MRP), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments if required (voluntary revenue provision - VRP).

DLUHC regulations have been issued which require the full Council to approve **an MRP Statement** in advance of each year. A variety of options are provided to councils, so long as there is a prudent provision. The Council is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement):

For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 or which in the future will be Supported Capital Expenditure, the MRP policy will be:

1. **Existing practice** - MRP will follow the existing practice outlined in former DLUHC regulations (option 1) This option provides for an approximate 4% reduction in the borrowing need (CFR) each year.

From 1 April 2008 for all unsupported borrowing (including finance leases) the MRP policy will be

2. **Asset life method** – MRP will be based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with the regulations

These options provide for a reduction in the borrowing need over approximately the asset's life.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2022/23 will not be subject to an MRP charge until 2023/24, or in the year after the asset becomes operational.

The Council will apply the asset life method for any expenditure capitalised under a Capitalisation Direction.

Repayments included in finance leases and loan principal are applied as MRP.



For capital expenditure on loans to third parties where the principal element of the loan is being repaid in annual instalments, the capital receipts arising from the principal loan repayments will be used to reduce the CFR instead of MRP.

**MRP Overpayments** - Under the MRP guidance, any charges made in excess of the statutory MRP can be made, known as voluntary revenue provision (VRP).

VRP can be reclaimed in later years if deemed necessary or prudent. In order for these amounts to be reclaimed for use in the budget, this policy must disclose the cumulative overpayment made each year.

Cumulative VRP overpayments made to date are £1.359m.

- **BORROWING**

The capital expenditure plans set out in Section 2 provide details of the service activity of the Council. The Treasury Management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet this service activity and the Council's capital strategy. This will involve both the organisation of the cash flow and, where capital plans require, the organisation of appropriate borrowing facilities. The strategy covers the relevant treasury / prudential indicators, the current and projected debt positions and the annual investment strategy.

- **Current portfolio position**

The overall treasury management portfolio as at 31 March 2022 and for the position as at 01 January 2023 are shown below for both borrowing and investments.

<b>TREASURY PORTFOLIO</b>				
	actual <b>31.3.22</b>	actual <b>31.3.22</b>	current <b>01.01.23</b>	current <b>01.01.23</b>
	£000	%	£000	%
<b>Treasury investments</b>				
Banks	5,600	32%	9,500	27%
Building societies - unrated	0	0%	0	0%
Building societies - rated	0	0%	0	0%
Local authorities	0	0%	0	0%
DMADF (H.M.Treasury)	0	0%	3,000	9%
Money Market Funds	1,975	11%	11,975	35%
Certificates of Deposit	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total managed in house</b>	<b>7,575</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>24,475</b>	<b>71%</b>
Bond Funds	5,000	28%	4,711	14%
Property Funds	5,000	28%	5,474	16%
<b>Total managed externally</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>10,185</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Total treasury investments</b>	<b>17,575</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>34,660</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Treasury external borrowing</b>				
Local Authorities	33,400	33%	53,600	34%
PWLB	62,015	62%	96,921	62%
LOBOs	5,000	5%	5,000	3%
<b>Total external borrowing</b>	<b>100,415</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>155,521</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Net treasury investments / (borrowing)</b>	<b>-82,840</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-120,861</b>	<b>0</b>

The Council's treasury portfolio position at 31 March 2022 with forward projections, is summarised below. The table shows the actual external debt (the treasury management operations), against the underlying capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement - CFR), highlighting any over or under borrowing.

£m	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
<b>External Debt</b>					
Debt at 1 April	100.913	107.100	118.028	170.501	176.960
Expected change in Debt	6.187	10.928	52.473	6.459	(2.204)
<i>Other long-term liabilities (OLTL)</i>	<i>21.436</i>	<i>21.752</i>	<i>22.031</i>	<i>22.292</i>	<i>22.534</i>
<i>Expected change in OLTL</i>	<i>0.316</i>	<i>0.279</i>	<i>0.261</i>	<i>0.242</i>	<i>0.223</i>
Actual gross debt at 31 March	<b>128.852</b>	<b>140.059</b>	<b>192.793</b>	<b>199.494</b>	<b>197.513</b>
The Capital Financing Requirement	<b>138.185</b>	<b>152.692</b>	<b>205.426</b>	<b>212.127</b>	<b>210.146</b>
Under / (over) borrowing	<b>9.333</b>	<b>12.633</b>	<b>12.633</b>	<b>12.633</b>	<b>12.633</b>

Within the prudential indicators there are a number of key indicators to ensure that the Council operates its activities within well-defined limits. One of these is that the Council needs to ensure that its gross debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2023/24 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years, but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue or speculative purposes.

The Director of Policy and Resources reports that the Council complied with this prudential indicator in the current year and does not envisage difficulties for the future. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in this budget report.

○ **Treasury Indicators: limits to borrowing activity**

**The operational boundary.** This is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. In most cases, this would be a similar figure to the CFR, but may be lower or higher depending on the levels of actual debt and the ability to fund under-borrowing by other cash resources.

Operational boundary £m	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
Debt	170	210	215	210
Other long term liabilities	30	30	30	30
Total	200	240	245	240

**The authorised limit for external debt.** A further key prudential indicator represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by the full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term.

(1) This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all councils' plans, or those of a specific council, although this power has not yet been exercised.

(2) The Council is asked to approve the following authorised limit:

Authorised limit £m	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
Debt	185	225	230	225
Other long term liabilities	35	35	35	35
Total	220	260	265	260

### 3.3 Prospects for interest rates

The Council has appointed Link Group as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. Link provided the following forecasts on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022. These are forecasts for certainty rates, gilt yields plus 80 bps:

Link Group Interest Rate View	08.11.22												
	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
BANK RATE	3.50	4.25	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.25	3.00	2.75	2.50	2.50
3 month ave earnings	3.60	4.30	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.00	3.80	3.30	3.00	3.00	2.80	2.50	2.50
6 month ave earnings	4.20	4.50	4.60	4.50	4.20	4.10	3.90	3.40	3.10	3.00	2.90	2.60	2.60
12 month ave earnings	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.00	3.50	3.20	3.10	3.00	2.70	2.70
5 yr PWLB	4.30	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.10
10 yr PWLB	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20
25 yr PWLB	4.70	4.70	4.60	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.50
50 yr PWLB	4.30	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.20

*Additional notes by Link on this forecast table: -*

Our central forecast reflects a view that the MPC will be keen to demonstrate its anti-inflation credentials by delivering a succession of rate increases. This has happened throughout 2022, but the new Government's policy of emphasising fiscal rectitude will probably mean Bank Rate does not now need to increase to further than 4.5%.

Further down the road, we anticipate the Bank of England will be keen to loosen monetary policy when the worst of the inflationary pressures have lessened – but that timing will be one of fine judgment: cut too soon, and inflationary pressures may well build up further; cut too late and any downturn or recession may be prolonged.

The CPI measure of inflation will peak at close to 11% in Q4 2022. Despite the cost-of-living squeeze that is still taking shape, the Bank will want to see evidence that wages are not spiralling upwards in what is evidently a very tight labour market. Wage increases, excluding bonuses, are currently running at 5.7%.

Regarding the plan to sell £10bn of gilts back into the market each quarter (Quantitative Tightening), this has started but will focus on the short to medium end of the curve for the present. This approach will prevent any further disruption to the longer end of the curve following on from the short-lived effects of the Truss/Kwarteng unfunded dash for growth policy.

In the upcoming months, our forecasts will be guided not only by economic data releases and clarifications from the MPC over its monetary policies and the Government over its fiscal policies, but the on-going conflict between Russia and Ukraine. (More recently, the heightened tensions between China/Taiwan/US also have the potential to have a wider and negative economic impact.)

On the positive side, consumers are still estimated to be sitting on over £160bn of excess savings left over from the pandemic so that will cushion some of the impact of the above challenges. However, most of those are held by more affluent people whereas lower income families already spend nearly all their income on essentials such as food, energy and rent/mortgage payments.

## **PWLB RATES**

Yield curve movements have become less volatile under the Sunak/Hunt government. PWLB 5 to 50 years Certainty Rates are, generally, in the range of 3.75% to 4.50%. The medium to longer part of the yield curve is currently inverted (yields are lower at the longer end of the yield curve compared to the short to medium end).

We view the markets as having built in, already, nearly all the effects on gilt yields of the likely increases in Bank Rate and the poor inflation outlook but markets are volatile and further whipsawing of gilt yields across the whole spectrum of the curve is possible.

### **The balance of risks to the UK economy: -**

1. The overall balance of risks to economic growth in the UK is to the downside. Indeed, the Bank of England projected two years of negative growth in their November Quarterly Monetary Policy Report.

### **Downside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates include: -**

2. **Labour and supply shortages** prove more enduring and disruptive and depress economic activity (accepting that in the near-term this is also an upside risk to inflation and, thus, rising gilt yields).
3. **The Bank of England** acts too quickly, or too far, over the next two years to raise Bank Rate and causes UK economic growth, and increases in inflation, to be weaker than we currently anticipate.

4. **UK / EU trade arrangements** – if there was a major impact on trade flows and financial services due to complications or lack of co-operation in sorting out significant remaining issues.
5. **Geopolitical risks**, for example in Ukraine/Russia, China/Taiwan/US, Iran, North Korea and Middle Eastern countries, which could lead to increasing safe-haven flows.

#### **Upside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates: -**

1. The **Bank of England is too slow** in its pace and strength of increases in Bank Rate and, therefore, allows inflationary pressures to build up too strongly and for a longer period within the UK economy, which then necessitates an even more rapid series of increases in Bank Rate faster than we currently expect.
2. **The Government** acts too slowly to increase taxes and/or cut expenditure to balance the public finances, in the light of the cost-of-living squeeze.
3. **The pound weakens** because of a lack of confidence in the UK Government's fiscal policies, resulting in investors pricing in a risk premium for holding UK sovereign debt.
4. Longer term **US treasury yields** rise strongly, if inflation numbers disappoint on the upside, and pull gilt yields up higher than currently forecast.

**Borrowing advice:** Our long-term (beyond 10 years) forecast for Bank Rate stands at 2.5%. As all PWLB certainty rates are now above this level, borrowing strategies will need to be reviewed in that context. Better value can generally be obtained at the shorter end of the curve and short-dated fixed Local Authority to Local Authority monies should be considered. Temporary borrowing rates are likely, however, to remain near Bank Rate and may also prove attractive whilst the market waits for inflation, and therein gilt yields, to drop back later in 2023.

### **3.4 Borrowing strategy**

The Council aims to maintain an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This strategy is prudent as medium and longer dated borrowing rates are expected to fall from their current levels once prevailing inflation concerns are addressed by tighter near-term monetary policy. That is, Bank Rate increases over the remainder of 2022 and the first half of 2023.

Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will be adopted with the 2023/24 treasury operations. The Director of Policy and Resources will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances:

1. *if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in borrowing rates*, then borrowing will be postponed.
2. *if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in borrowing rates than that currently forecast*, fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates are lower than they are projected to be in the next few years.

Any decisions will be reported to the appropriate decision-making body at the next available opportunity.

### **3.5 Policy on borrowing in advance of need**

The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates, and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.

Risks associated with any borrowing in advance activity will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism.

### **3.6 Rescheduling**

Rescheduling of current borrowing in our debt portfolio is unlikely to occur as there is still a very large difference between premature redemption rates and new borrowing rates.

All rescheduling will be reported to Cabinet at the earliest meeting following its action. The Council has recently taken long term loans and there is no current rescheduling planned.

### **3.7 New financial institutions as a source of borrowing and / or types of borrowing**

Currently the PWLB Certainty Rate is set at gilts + 80 basis points for both HRA and non-HRA borrowing. However, consideration may still need to be given to sourcing funding from the following sources for the following reasons:

1. Local authorities (primarily shorter dated maturities out to 3 years or so – still cheaper than the Certainty Rate).
2. Financial institutions (primarily insurance companies and pension funds but also some banks, out of forward dates where the objective is to avoid a “cost of carry” or to achieve refinancing certainty over the next few years).

Our advisors will keep us informed as to the relative merits of each of these alternative funding sources.

### **3.8 Approved Sources of Long and Short term Borrowing**

<b>On Balance Sheet</b>	<b>Fixed</b>	<b>Variable</b>
PWLB	●	●
Municipal bond agency	●	●
Local authorities	●	●
Banks	●	●
Pension funds	●	●
Insurance companies	●	●
UK Infrastructure Bank	●	●
Market (long-term)	●	●

Market (temporary)	●	●
Market (LOBOs)	●	●
Stock issues	●	●
Local temporary	●	●
Local Bonds	●	
Local authority bills	●	●
Overdraft		●
Negotiable Bonds	●	●
Internal (capital receipts & revenue balances)	●	●
Commercial Paper	●	
Medium Term Notes	●	
Finance leases	●	●



- **ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

- **Investment policy**

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC - this was formerly the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)) and CIPFA have extended the meaning of 'investments' to include both financial and non-financial investments. This report deals solely with treasury (financial) investments, (as managed by the Treasury Management team). Non-financial investments, essentially the purchase of income yielding assets, are covered in the Capital Strategy, (a separate report).

The Council's investment policy has regard to the following: -

1. DLUHC's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance")
2. CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2021 ("the Code")
3. CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance Notes 2021

The Council's investment priorities will be security first, portfolio liquidity second and then yield, (return). The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity and with the Council's risk appetite.

The above guidance from the DLUHC and CIPFA place a high priority on the management of risk. This Council has adopted a prudent approach to managing risk and defines its risk appetite by the following means: -

1. Minimum acceptable **credit criteria** are applied in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties. This also enables diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the short term and long-term ratings.
2. **Other information:** ratings will not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution; it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To achieve this consideration the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as "**credit default swaps**" and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.
3. **Other information sources** used will include the financial press, share price and other such information pertaining to the banking sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.
4. This Council has defined the list of **types of investment instruments** that the Treasury Management team are authorised to use. There are two lists in appendix 5.4 under the categories of 'specified' and 'non-specified' investments.
  1. **Specified investments** are those with a high level of credit quality and subject to a maturity limit of one year.
  2. **Non-specified investments** are those with less high credit quality, may be for periods in excess of one year, and/or are more complex instruments which require greater consideration by members and officers before being authorised for use.

5. **Lending limits**, (amounts and maturity), for each counterparty will be set through applying the matrix table in paragraph 4.2.
6. **Transaction limits** are set for each type of investment in 4.2.
7. This Council will set a limit for the amount of its investments which are invested for **longer than 365 days**, (see paragraph 4.4).
8. Investments will only be placed with counterparties from countries with a specified minimum **sovereign rating**, (see paragraph 4.3).
9. This Council has engaged **external consultants**, (see paragraph 1.5), to provide expert advice on how to optimise an appropriate balance of security, liquidity and yield, given the risk appetite of this Council in the context of the expected level of cash balances and need for liquidity throughout the year.
10. All investments will be denominated in **sterling**.
11. As a result of the change in accounting standards for 2022/23 under IFRS 9, the Council will consider the implications of investment instruments which could result in an adverse movement in the value of the amount invested and resultant charges at the end of the year to the General Fund. (In November 2018, the MHCLG, concluded a consultation for a temporary override to allow English local authorities time to adjust their portfolio of all pooled investments by announcing a statutory override to delay implementation of IFRS 9 for five years ending 31.3.23. At the current juncture it has not been determined whether a further extension to the over-ride will be agreed by Government.

However, this authority will also pursue **value for money** in treasury management and will monitor the yield from investment income against appropriate benchmarks for investment performance, (see paragraph 4.5). Regular monitoring of investment performance will be carried out during the year.

#### **Changes in risk management policy from last year.**

The above criteria are unchanged from last year

#### ○ **Creditworthiness policy**

This Council applies the creditworthiness service provided by the Link Group. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:

- "watches" and "outlooks" from credit rating agencies;
- CDS spreads that may give early warning of changes in credit ratings;
- sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

This modelling approach combines credit ratings, and any assigned Watches and Outlooks in a weighted scoring system which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads. The end product of this is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the suggested duration for investments. The Council will, therefore, use counterparties within the following durational bands:

1. Yellow 5 years \*
2. Dark pink 5 years for Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.25
3. Light pink 5 years for Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.5
4. Purple 2 years
5. Blue 1 year (only applies to nationalised or semi nationalised UK Banks)
6. Orange 1 year
7. Red 6 months
8. Green 100 days
9. No colour not to be used

The Link creditworthiness service uses a wider array of information other than just primary ratings. Furthermore, by using a risk weighted scoring system, it does not give undue preponderance to just one agency's ratings.

Typically, the minimum credit ratings criteria the Council use will be a short-term rating (Fitch or equivalents) of F1 and a long-term rating of A-. There may be occasions when the counterparty ratings from one rating agency are marginally lower than these ratings but may still be used. In these instances, consideration will be given to the whole range of ratings available, or other topical market information, to support their use.

All credit ratings will be monitored daily. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of the Link creditworthiness service.

- if a downgrade results in the counterparty / investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.
- in addition to the use of credit ratings the Council will be advised of information in movements in Credit Default Swap spreads against the iTraxx European Financials benchmark and other market data on a daily basis via its Passport website, provided exclusively to it by Link. Extreme market movements may result in downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council's lending list.

Sole reliance will not be placed on the use of this external service. In addition, this Council will also use market data and market information, as well as information on any external support for banks to help support its decision-making process.

Y	Pi1	Pi2	P	B	O	R	G	N/C
1	1.25	1.5	2	3	4	5	6	7
Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 2yrs	Up to 1yr	Up to 1yr	Up to 6mths	Up to 100days	No Colour
				Colour (and long term rating where applicable)	Money and/or % Limit	Time Limit		
<b>Banks *</b>				<b>yellow</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>5yrs</b>		
<b>Banks</b>				<b>purple</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>2 yrs</b>		
<b>Banks</b>				<b>orange</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>1 yr</b>		

<b>Banks – part nationalised</b>	<b>blue</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>1 yr</b>
<b>Banks</b>	<b>red</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>6 mths</b>
<b>Banks</b>	<b>green</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>100 days</b>
<b>Banks</b>	<b>No colour</b>	<b>Not to be used</b>	
<b>Limit 3 category – Council’s banker (where “No Colour”)</b>	<b>Barclays Bank</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>1 day</b>
<b>Other institutions limit</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>6 months</b>
<b>DMADF</b>	<b>UK sovereign rating</b>	<b>unlimited</b>	<b>6 months</b>
<b>Local authorities</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1yrs</b>
	<b>Fund rating</b>	<b>Money and/or % Limit</b>	<b>Time Limit</b>
<b>Money Market Funds CNAV</b>	<b>AAA</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>liquid</b>
<b>Money Market Funds LVNAV</b>	<b>AAA</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>liquid</b>
<b>Money Market Funds VNAV</b>	<b>AAA</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>liquid</b>
<b>Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.25</b>	<b>Dark pink / AAA</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>liquid</b>
<b>Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.50</b>	<b>Light pink / AAA</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>liquid</b>

### **Creditworthiness.**

Significant levels of downgrades to Short- and Long-Term credit ratings have not materialised since the crisis in March 2020. In the main, where they did change, any alterations were limited to Outlooks. However, more recently the UK sovereign debt rating has been placed on Negative Outlook by the three major rating agencies in the wake of the Truss/Kwarteng unfunded tax-cuts policy. Although the Sunak/Hunt government has calmed markets, the outcome of the rating agency reviews is unknown at present, but it is possible the UK sovereign debt rating will be downgraded.

Accordingly, when setting minimum sovereign debt ratings, the Council will not set a minimum rating for the UK

### **CDS prices**

Although bank CDS prices, (these are market indicators of credit risk), spiked upwards during the days of the Truss/Kwarteng government, they have returned to more average levels since then. However, sentiment can easily shift, so it will remain important to undertake continual monitoring of all aspects of risk and return in the current circumstances. Link monitor CDS prices as part of their creditworthiness service to local authorities and the Council has access to this information via its Link-provided Passport portal.

### **County limits**

The Council has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA- from Fitch or equivalent. The list of countries that qualify using this credit criteria as at the date of this report are shown in Appendix 6.4. This list will be added to, or deducted from, by officers should ratings change in accordance with this policy.

## **4.4 Investment strategy**

**In-house funds.** Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e. rates for investments up to 12 months). Greater returns are usually obtainable by investing for longer periods. The current shape of the yield curve suggests that is the case at present, but there is the prospect of Bank Rate peaking in the first half of 2023 and possibly reducing as early as the latter part of 2023 so an agile investment strategy would be appropriate to optimise returns.

Accordingly while most cash balances are required in order to manage the ups and downs of cash flow, where cash sums can be identified that could be invested for longer periods, the value to be obtained from longer term investments will be carefully assessed.

### **Investment returns expectations.**

The current forecast shown in paragraph 3.3, includes a forecast for the Bank Rate to reach 4.5% in Q2 2023.

The suggested budgeted investment earnings rates for returns on investments placed for periods up to about three months during each financial year , are as follows.:

<b>Average earnings in each year</b>	
2022/23 (remainder)	3.95%
2023/24	4.40%
2024/25	3.30%
2025/26	2.60%
2026/27	2.50%
Years 6 to 10	2.80%

Years 10+	2.80%
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As there are so many variables at this time, caution must be exercised in respect of all interest rate forecasts.

**Investment treasury indicator and limit** - total principal funds invested for greater than 365 days. These limits are set with regard to the Council's liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment, and are based on the availability of funds after each year-end.

The Council is asked to approve the following treasury indicator and limit:

<b>Upper limit for principal sums invested for longer than 365 days</b>			
<b>£m</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
Principal sums invested over 365 days	£30m	£30m	£30m

#### 4.5 Investment risk benchmarking

These benchmarks are simple guides to maximum risk, so they may be breached from time to time, depending on movements in interest rates and counterparty criteria. The purpose of the benchmark is that officers will monitor the current and trend position and amend the operational strategy to manage risk as conditions change. Any breach of the benchmarks will be reported, with supporting reasons in the mid-year or Annual Report.

Security - The Council's maximum security risk benchmark for the current portfolio, when compared to these historic default tables, is:

##### 1. 5% historic risk of default when compared to the whole portfolio.

Liquidity – in respect of this area the Council seeks to maintain:

1. Bank overdraft - £0m
2. Liquid short term deposits of at least £5m available with a week's notice.
3. Weighted average life benchmark is expected to be 25 years, with a maximum of 40 years.

Yield - local measures of yield benchmarks are:

4. Investments – internal returns above the 7 day SONIA rate
5. Investments – external fund managers - returns 110% above 7 day compounded SONIA.

And in addition that the security benchmark for each individual year is:

	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years
<b>Maximum</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>

Note: This benchmark is an average risk of default measure, and would not constitute an expectation of loss against a particular investment.

#### 4.6 End of year investment report

At the end of the financial year, the Council will report on its investment activity as part of its Annual Treasury Report.

### 5.1 THE CAPITAL PRUDENTIAL AND TREASURY INDICATORS 2023/24 – 2025/26

The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

### 5.1.1 Capital expenditure

Capital expenditure £m	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
Policy & Resources	3.166	0.936	0.150	0.150	0.150
Place	15.141	15.474	59.363	9.260	0.260
Communities	5.661	1.584	1.445	1.297	1.297
Culture & Trading	0.000	0.000	0.400	0.083	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.968</b>	<b>17.994</b>	<b>61.358</b>	<b>10.791</b>	<b>1.707</b>

### 5.1.2 Affordability prudential indicators

The previous sections cover the overall capital and control of borrowing prudential indicators, but within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances. The Council is asked to approve the following indicators:

#### 1. Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream

This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term obligation costs net of investment income) against the net revenue stream.

%	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
	21.02%	22.16%	21.31%	21.58%	20.41%

The estimates of financing costs include current commitments and the proposals in this budget report.

The current figures are largely the result of the Kings Walk and St Oswalds investments. Rental payments received from retailers within Kings Walk and St Oswalds will cover these financing costs.

The increases from 2022/23 are related to sums borrowed for the regeneration of the City including Kings Square and Kings Quarter – The Forum.

### 5.1.3 Maturity structure of borrowing

Maturity structure of borrowing. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing, and are required for upper and lower limits.

The Council is asked to approve the following treasury indicators and limits:

Maturity structure of fixed and variable interest rate borrowing 2023/24		
	Lower	Upper
Under 12 months	0%	100%
12 months to 2 years	0%	100%

2 years to 5 years	0%	100%
5 years to 10 years	0%	100%
10 years and above	0%	100%

#### **5.1.4. Control of interest rate exposure**

Please see paragraphs 3.3, 3.4 and 4.4.



## 6 APPENDICES

1. Interest rate forecasts
2. Economic background
3. Treasury management practice 1 – credit and counterparty risk management (option 1)
4. Approved countries for investments
5. Treasury management scheme of delegation
6. The treasury management role of the section 151 officer

### 6.1 INTEREST RATE FORECASTS 2022 – 2025

Link Group Interest Rate View	08.11.22												
	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
<b>BANK RATE</b>	3.50	4.25	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.25	3.00	2.75	2.50	2.50
3 month ave earnings	3.60	4.30	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.00	3.80	3.30	3.00	3.00	2.80	2.50	2.50
6 month ave earnings	4.20	4.50	4.60	4.50	4.20	4.10	3.90	3.40	3.10	3.00	2.90	2.60	2.60
12 month ave earnings	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.00	3.50	3.20	3.10	3.00	2.70	2.70
5 yr PWLB	4.30	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.10
10 yr PWLB	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20
25 yr PWLB	4.70	4.70	4.60	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.50
50 yr PWLB	4.30	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.20

PWLB forecasts are based on PWLB certainty rates.

### 6.2 ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Against a backdrop of stubborn inflationary pressures, the easing of Covid restrictions in most developed economies, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and a range of different UK Government policies, it is no surprise that UK interest rates have been volatile right across the curve, from Bank Rate through to 50-year gilt yields, for all of 2022.

Market commentators' misplaced optimism around inflation has been the root cause of the rout in the bond markets with, for example, UK, EZ and US 10-year yields all rising by over 200bps since the turn of the year. The table below provides a snapshot of the conundrum facing central banks: inflation is elevated but labour markets are extra-ordinarily tight, making it an issue of fine judgment as to how far monetary policy needs to tighten.

	UK	Eurozone	US
<b>Bank Rate</b>	3.0%	1.5%	3.75%-4.00%
<b>GDP</b>	-0.2%q/q Q3 (2.4%y/y)	+0.2%q/q Q3 (2.1%y/y)	2.6% Q3 Annualised
<b>Inflation</b>	11.1%y/y (Oct)	10.0%y/y (Nov)	7.7%y/y (Oct)
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	3.6% (Sep)	6.6% (Sep)	3.7% (Aug)

Q2 of 2022 saw UK GDP revised upwards to +0.2% q/q, but this was quickly reversed in the third quarter, albeit some of the fall in GDP can be placed at the foot of the extra Bank Holiday in the wake of the Queen's passing. Nevertheless, CPI inflation has picked up to what should be a peak reading of 11.1% in October, although with further increases in the gas and electricity price caps pencilled in for April 2023, and the cap potentially rising from an average of £2,500 to £3,000 per household, there is still a possibility that inflation will spike higher again before dropping back slowly through 2023.

The UK unemployment rate fell to a 48-year low of 3.6%, and this despite a net migration increase of c500k. The fact is that with many economic participants registered as long-term sick, the UK labour force actually shrunk by c£500k in the year to June. Without an increase in the labour force participation rate, it is hard to see how the UK economy will be able to grow its way to prosperity, and with average wage increases running at 5.5% - 6% the MPC will be concerned that wage inflation will prove just as sticky as major supply-side shocks to food and energy that have endured since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 22nd February 2022.

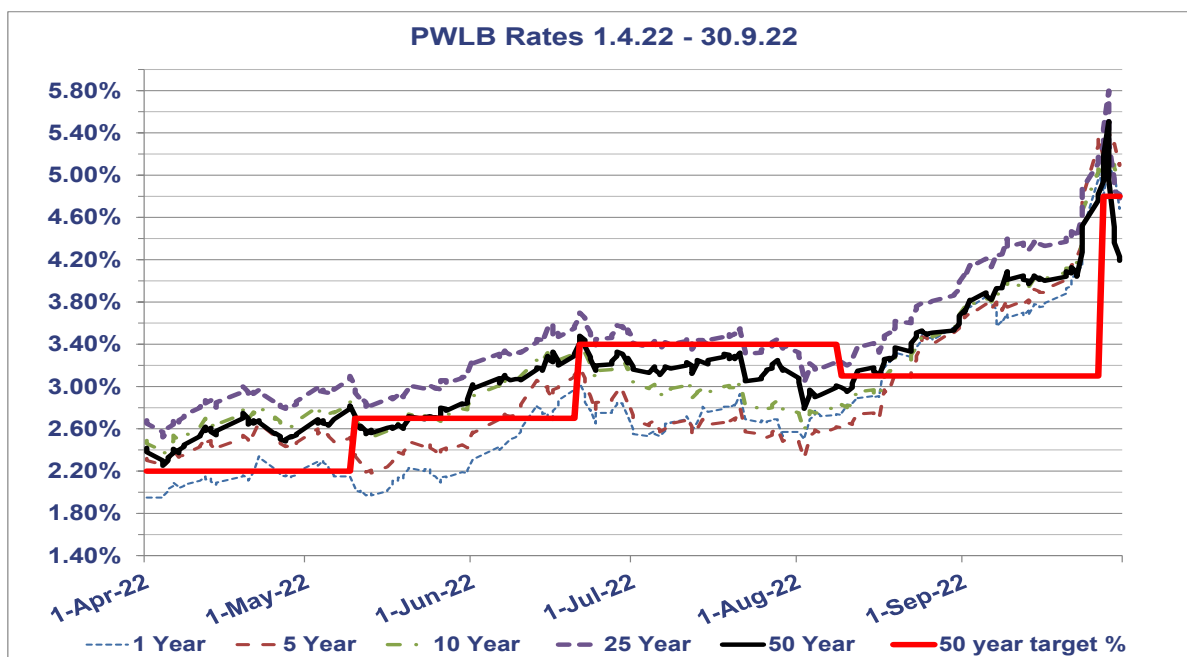
Throughout Q3 Bank Rate increased, finishing the quarter at 2.25% (an increase of 1%). Q4 has seen rates rise to 3% in November and the market expects Bank Rate to hit 4.5% by May 2023.

Following a Conservative Party leadership contest, Liz Truss became Prime Minister for a tumultuous seven weeks that ran through September and December 2022. Put simply, the markets did not like the unfunded tax-cutting and heavy spending policies put forward by her Chancellor, Kwasi Kwarteng, and their term lasted barely seven weeks before being replaced by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Chancellor Jeremy Hunt. Their Autumn Statement of 17 November 2022 gave rise to a net £55bn fiscal tightening, although much of the "heavy lifting" has been left for the next Parliament to deliver. However, the markets liked what they heard, and UK gilt yields have completely reversed the increases seen under the previous tenants of No10/11 Downing Street.

Globally, though, all the major economies are expected to struggle in the near term. The fall below 50 in the composite Purchasing Manager Indices for the UK, US, EZ and China all point to at least one if not more quarters of GDP contraction. In November 2022, the MPC projected eight quarters of negative growth for the UK lasting throughout 2023 and 2024, but with Bank Rate set to peak at lower levels than previously priced in by the markets and the fiscal tightening deferred to some extent, it is not clear that things will be as bad as first anticipated by the Bank.

The £ has strengthened of late, recovering from a record low of \$1.035, on the Monday following the Truss government's "fiscal event", to \$1.20. Notwithstanding the £'s better run of late, 2023 is likely to see a housing correction of some magnitude as fixed-rate mortgages have moved above 5% and affordability has been squeezed despite proposed Stamp Duty cuts remaining in place.

In the table below, the rise in gilt yields, and therein PWLB rates, through the first half of 2022/23 is clear to see.



However, the peak in rates on 28 September 2022 as illustrated in the table covering April to September 2022 below, has been followed by the whole curve shifting ever lower. PWLB rates at the front end of the curve are generally over 1% lower now whilst the 50 years is over 1.75% lower.

	1 Year	5 Year	10 Year	25 Year	50 Year
<b>Low</b>	1.95%	2.18%	2.36%	2.52%	2.25%
<b>Date</b>	01/04/2022	13/05/2022	04/04/2022	04/04/2022	04/04/2022
<b>High</b>	5.11%	5.44%	5.35%	5.80%	5.51%
<b>Date</b>	28/09/2022	28/09/2022	28/09/2022	28/09/2022	28/09/2022
<b>Average</b>	2.81%	2.92%	3.13%	3.44%	3.17%
<b>Spread</b>	3.16%	3.26%	2.99%	3.28%	3.26%

After a shaky start to the year, the S&P 500 and FTSE 100 have climbed in recent weeks, albeit the former is still 17% down and the FTSE 2% up. The German DAX is 9% down for the year.

## CENTRAL BANK CONCERNS – NOVEMBER 2022

At the start of November, the Fed decided to push up US rates by 0.75% to a range of 3.75% - 4%, whilst the MPC followed a day later by raising Bank Rate from 2.25% to 3%, in line with market expectations. EZ rates have also increased to 1.5% with further tightening in the pipeline.

Having said that, the press conferences in the US and the UK were very different. In the US, Fed Chair, Jerome Powell, stated that rates will be elevated and stay higher for longer than markets had expected. Governor Bailey, here in the UK, said the opposite and explained that the two economies are positioned very differently so you should not, therefore, expect the same policy or messaging.

Regarding UK market expectations, although they now expect Bank Rate to peak within a lower range of 4.5% - 4.75%, caution is advised as the Bank of England Quarterly Monetary Policy

Reports have carried a dovish message over the course of the last year, only for the Bank to have to play catch-up as the inflationary data has proven stronger than expected.

In addition, the Bank's central message that GDP will fall for eight quarters starting with Q3 2022 may prove to be a little pessimistic. Will the £160bn excess savings accumulated by households through the Covid lockdowns provide a spending buffer for the economy – at least to a degree? Ultimately, however, it will not only be inflation data but also employment data that will mostly impact the decision-making process, although any softening in the interest rate outlook in the US may also have an effect (just as, conversely, greater tightening may also).

### 6.3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (TMP1) – CREDIT AND COUNTERPARTY RISK MANAGEMENT OPTION 1

**SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS:** All such investments will be sterling denominated, with **maturities up to maximum of 1 year**, meeting the minimum ‘high’ quality criteria where applicable.

**NON-SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS:** These are any investments which do not meet the specified investment criteria. A maximum of 100% will be held in aggregate in non-specified investment

A variety of investment instruments will be used, subject to the credit quality of the institution, and depending on the type of investment made it will fall into one of the above categories.

The criteria, time limits and monetary limits applying to institutions or investment vehicles are:

	Minimum credit criteria / colour band	** Max % of total investments/ £ limit per institution	Max. maturity period
<b>DMADF – UK Government</b>	N/A	<b>100%</b>	<b>6 months</b>
UK Government gilts	UK sovereign rating	50%	12 months
UK Government Treasury bills	UK sovereign rating	50%	12 months
Bonds issued by multilateral development banks	AAA (or state your criteria if different)	50%	6 months
Money Market Funds (CNAV, LNAV and VNAV)	AAA	100%	Liquid
Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.25	AAA	100%	Liquid
Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.5	AAA	100%	Liquid
Local authorities	N/A	100%	12 months
Gloucestershire Airport	N/A	£7.25m	
Marketing Gloucester	N/A	£0.24m	
Rokeby Merchant	N/A	£0.6m	
Ladybellegate Estates	N/A	£1.8m	

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust	N/A	£0.55m	
Term deposits with banks and building societies	Blue Orange Red Green No Colour	£10m £10m £10m £10m £0	12 months 12 months 6 months 100 days Not for use
CDs or corporate bonds with banks and building societies	Blue Orange Red Green No Colour	£1m £1m £1m £1m £0	12 months 12 months 6 months 100 days Not for use
Gilt funds	UK sovereign rating	Nil	
CCLA Property/DIF Funds		£15m	10 years

**Accounting treatment of investments.** The accounting treatment may differ from the underlying cash transactions arising from investment decisions made by this Council. To ensure that the Council is protected from any adverse revenue impact, which may arise from these differences, we will review the accounting implications of new transactions before they are undertaken.

#### 6.4 APPROVED COUNTRIES FOR INVESTMENTS

This list is based on those countries which have sovereign ratings of AA- or higher, (we show the lowest rating from Fitch, Moody's and S&P) and also, (except - at the time of writing - for Hong Kong, Norway and Luxembourg), have banks operating in sterling markets which have credit ratings of green or above in the Link credit worthiness service.

##### *Based on lowest available rating*

###### AAA

1. Australia
2. Denmark
3. Germany
4. Netherlands
5. Norway
6. Singapore
7. Sweden
8. Switzerland

###### AA+

9. Canada
10. Finland
11. U.S.A.

- AA
12. Abu Dhabi (UAE)
  13. France

- AA-
14. Belgium
  15. Qatar
  16. U.K.

## **6.5 TREASURY MANAGEMENT SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

### **(i) Council**

- receiving and reviewing reports on treasury management policies, practices and activities;
1. approval of annual strategy.

### **(ii) Audit and Governance Committee**

- approval of/amendments to the organisation's adopted clauses, treasury management policy statement and treasury management practices;
- budget consideration and approval;
- approval of the division of responsibilities;
- receiving and reviewing regular monitoring reports and acting on recommendations;
- approving the selection of external service providers and agreeing terms of appointment.

### **(iii) Body/person(s) with responsibility for scrutiny**

- reviewing the treasury management policy and procedures and making recommendations to the responsible body.

## **6.6 THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT ROLE OF THE SECTION 151 OFFICER**

### **The S151 (responsible) officer**

- recommending clauses, treasury management policy/practices for approval, reviewing the same regularly, and monitoring compliance;
- submitting regular treasury management policy reports;
- submitting budgets and budget variations;
- receiving and reviewing management information reports;
- reviewing the performance of the treasury management function;
- ensuring the adequacy of treasury management resources and skills, and the effective division of responsibilities within the treasury management function;
- ensuring the adequacy of internal audit, and liaising with external audit;
- recommending the appointment of external service providers.

- preparation of a capital strategy to include capital expenditure, capital financing, non-financial investments and treasury management, with a long term timeframe ensuring that the capital strategy is prudent, sustainable, affordable and prudent in the long term and provides value for money
- ensuring that due diligence has been carried out on all treasury and non-financial investments and is in accordance with the risk appetite of the authority
- ensure that the authority has appropriate legal powers to undertake expenditure on non-financial assets and their financing
- ensuring the proportionality of all investments so that the authority does not undertake a level of investing which exposes the authority to an excessive level of risk compared to its financial resources
- ensuring that an adequate governance process is in place for the approval, monitoring and ongoing risk management of all non-financial investments and long term liabilities
- provision to members of a schedule of all non-treasury investments including material investments in subsidiaries, joint ventures, loans and financial guarantees
- ensuring that members are adequately informed and understand the risk exposures taken on by an authority
- ensuring that the authority has adequate expertise, either in house or externally provided, to carry out the above
- creation of Treasury Management Practices which specifically deal with how non treasury investments will be carried out and managed, to include the following
  - *Risk management (TMP1 and schedules), including investment and risk management criteria for any material non-treasury investment portfolios;*
  - *Performance measurement and management (TMP2 and schedules), including methodology and criteria for assessing the performance and success of non-treasury investments;*
  - *Decision making, governance and organisation (TMP5 and schedules), including a statement of the governance requirements for decision making in relation to non-treasury investments; and arrangements to ensure that appropriate professional due diligence is carried out to support decision making;*
  - *Reporting and management information (TMP6 and schedules), including where and how often monitoring reports are taken;*
  - *Training and qualifications (TMP10 and schedules), including how the relevant knowledge and skills in relation to non-treasury investments will be arranged.*