

## Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2023/24 to 2026/27

### 1.1 Background

The Authority is required to operate a balanced revenue 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 Authority'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 Authority's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Authority, 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 Authority 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, including 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.

### 1.2 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: -

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

The aim of the strategy is to ensure that all the Authority'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 Authority 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.

- a. **Prudential and treasury indicators and treasury strategy** (this report)
  - The first, and most important report is forward looking and covers: -
    - the capital plans, (including prudential indicators)
    - a minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy, (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time)
    - the Treasury Management Strategy, (how the investments and borrowings are to be organised), including treasury indicators; and
    - an Annual Investment Strategy, (the parameters on how investments are to be managed)
  
- b. **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.

## 1.2.3 Scrutiny

The above reports are required to be adequately scrutinised before being recommended to the Council. Finance & Performance committee receive quarterly updates on the Council borrowing and lending.

## 1.3 Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25

The strategy for 2024/25 covers two main areas:

### Capital issues

- the capital expenditure plans and the associated prudential indicators.
- the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy

### Treasury management issues

- the current treasury position
- treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Authority
- prospects for interest rates
- the borrowing strategy
- policy on borrowing in advance of need
- debt rescheduling
- the investment strategy
- creditworthiness policy; and
- 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 Code.

## 1.4 Training

The CIPFA Treasury Management 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.

## 1.5 Treasury Management Consultants

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

The Authority 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 Authority 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.

## 2. THE CAPITAL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2024/25 – 2026/27

The Authority'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.

### 2.1 Capital Expenditure

This prudential indicator is a summary of the Authority'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 £000's</b>	<b>2022/23 Actual</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>	<b>2026/27 Estimate</b>
Non-HRA	7,048	9,965	21,971	2,044	1,801
HRA	7,531	12,934	14,520	12,803	10,048
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,579</b>	<b>22,899</b>	<b>36,491</b>	<b>14,847</b>	<b>11,849</b>

Other long-term liabilities - the above financing need excludes other long-term liabilities, such as PFI and leasing arrangements that already include borrowing instruments.

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 funding borrowing need.

<b>Financing of capital expenditure £m</b>	<b>2022/23 Actual</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>	<b>2026/27 Estimate</b>
Capital receipts	1,356	1,785	1,712	1,757	607
Capital grants	2,519	4,380	4,696	1,259	1,048
Capital reserves	5,904	10,584	5,855	4,560	3,569
Revenue	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net financing need for the year</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>6,150</b>	<b>24,228</b>	<b>7,271</b>	<b>6,625</b>

## 2.2 The Authority's Borrowing Need (the Capital Financing Requirement)

The second prudential indicator is the Authority'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 Authority's indebtedness and so its underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure above, which has not immediately been paid for through a revenue or capital resource, 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 Authority's borrowing requirement, these types of schemes include a borrowing facility by the PFI, PPP lease provider and so the Authority is not required to separately borrow for these schemes. The Authority currently has £14.547m of such schemes within the CFR.

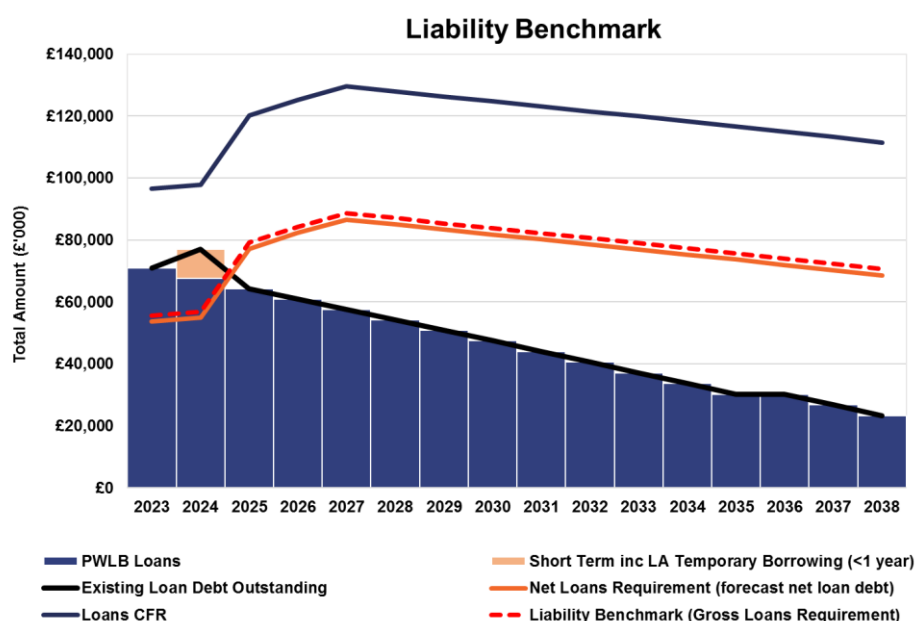
The Authority is asked to approve the CFR projections below:

<b>£000</b>	<b>2022/23 Actual £000</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2026/27 Estimate £000</b>
<b>Capital Financing Requirement</b>					
CFR – non housing	37,797	39,067	61,381	66,425	70,785
CFR – housing	70,320	70,320	70,320	70,320	70,320
Total CFR	108,117	109,387	131,701	136,745	141,105
Movement in CFR	(3,419)	1,270	22,314	5,044	4,360

<b>Movement in CFR represented by</b>					
Net financing need for the year (above)	4,800	6,150	24,228	7,271	6,625
Less MRP/VRP and other financing movements	(1,381)	(4,880)	(1,914)	(2,227)	(2,265)
<b>Movement in CFR</b>	<b>3,419</b>	<b>1,270</b>	<b>22,314</b>	<b>5,044</b>	<b>4,360</b>

## 2.3 Liability Benchmark

This is a new requirement for estimating and measuring the Liability Benchmark. It shows that the Council is currently under-borrowed so it can borrow long term to fund its capital expenditure without increasing in capital financing requirement. The shows the Council has used £20.4 million of internal cash rather than borrow.



## 2.4 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.

Year End Resources £000	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Fund balances / reserves	15,565	8,607	9,431	8,958	7,794
Capital receipts	10,959	6,963	6,276	5,642	5,642
Provisions	650	650	650	650	650
Other	<b>3,056</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,500</b>
<b>Total core funds</b>	<b>30,230</b>	<b>18,220</b>	<b>17,857</b>	<b>16,750</b>	<b>15,586</b>
Working capital*	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,500</b>
Under/over borrowing	<b>24,869</b>	<b>20,338</b>	<b>22,371</b>	<b>23,671</b>	<b>24,953</b>
Additional Borrowing	<b>0</b>	<b>(4,000)</b>	<b>(6,500)</b>	<b>(8,800)</b>	<b>(11,200)</b>
<b>Expected investments</b>	<b>3,861</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>333</b>

\*Working capital balances shown are estimated year-end; these may be higher mid-year

## 2.5 Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement

Under Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, where the Authority has financed capital expenditure by

borrowing it is required to make a provision each year through a revenue charge (MRP).

The Authority is required to calculate a prudent provision of MRP which ensures that the outstanding debt liability is repaid over a period that is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits. The MRP Guidance (2018) gives four ready-made options for calculating MRP, but the Authority can use any other reasonable basis that it can justify as prudent.

The MRP policy statement requires full council approval (or closest equivalent level) in advance of each financial year.

The Authority is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement

For expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 which forms part of supported capital expenditure, the MRP policy will be:

- *Reducing balance over 40 years*

From 1 April 2008 for all unsupported borrowing the MRP policy will be:

- **Asset life method (straight line)** – MRP will be based on the estimated life of the assets.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2023/24 will not be subject to an MRP charge until 2024/25, or in the year after the asset becomes operational.

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

There is no requirement on the HRA to make a minimum revenue provision but there is a requirement for a charge for depreciation to be made.

MRP in respect of assets acquired under Finance Leases or PFI will be charged at an amount equal to the principal element of the annual repayment.

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.

Where no principal repayment is made in a given year, MRP will be charged at a rate in line with the life of the assets funded by the loan.

**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 £0.117m.

### 3. BORROWING

The capital expenditure plans set out in Section 2 provide details of the service activity of the Authority. The treasury management function ensures that the Authority's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet this service activity and the Authority'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.

#### 3.1 Current Portfolio Position

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

<b>TREASURY PORTFOLIO</b>				
	actual	actual	current	current
	<b>31.3.23</b>	<b>31.3.23</b>	<b>31.12.23</b>	<b>31.12.23</b>
	£000	%	£000	%
<b>Treasury investments</b>				
Banks	13,400	81.3%	15,100	88.1%
Building societies - unrated	4,000	18.7%	2,000	11.6%
Westfield Development Community Association	0	0%	50	0.3%
<b>Total treasury investments</b>	<b>17,400</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>17,150</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Treasury external borrowing</b>				
Local Authorities	(3,500)	4.7%	0	0%
PWLB	(70,993)	95.3%	(70,598)	100%
<b>Total external borrowing</b>	<b>(74,493)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(70,598)</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Net treasury investments / (borrowing)</b>	<b>(57,093)</b>	<b>23.36%</b>	<b>(53,448)</b>	<b>24.29%</b>
	actual	actual	current	current
	<b>31.3.23</b>	<b>31.3.23</b>	<b>31.12.23</b>	<b>31.12.23</b>
	£000	%	£000	%
<b>Treasury investments</b>				
Banks	13,400	81.3%	15,100	88.1%
Building societies - unrated	4,000	18.7%	2,000	11.6%
Westfield Development Community Association	0	0%	50	0.3%
<b>Total treasury investments</b>	<b>17,400</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>17,150</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Authority's forward projections for borrowing are summarised below. The table shows the actual external debt, against the underlying capital borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement - CFR), highlighting any over or under borrowing.

£000's	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
<b>External Debt</b>					
Debt at 1 April	75,787	83,248	89,049	109,330	113,074
Expected change in Debt	3,865	3,209	21,286	4,330	3,684
Other long-term liabilities (OLTL)	4,200	3,554	0	0	0
Expected change in OLTL	( 604)	( 962)	(1,005)	( 586)	( 606)
Actual gross debt at 31 March	<b>83,248</b>	<b>89,049</b>	<b>109,330</b>	<b>113,074</b>	<b>116,152</b>
The Capital Financing Requirement	<b>108,117</b>	<b>109,387</b>	<b>131,701</b>	<b>136,745</b>	<b>141,105</b>
Under / (over) borrowing	<b>24,869</b>	<b>20,338</b>	<b>22,371</b>	<b>23,671</b>	<b>24,953</b>

Within the range of prudential indicators there are several key indicators to ensure that the Authority operates its activities within well-defined limits. One of these is that the Authority 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 2024/25 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 Head of Finance reports that the Authority complied with this prudential indicator in the current year and does not envisage difficulties for the future. This view takes account of current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in this budget report.

### 3.2 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 £000	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Debt	95,540	117,859	123,489	128,455
Other long-term liabilities	14,847	14,842	14,256	13,650
Total	110,387	132,701	137,745	142,105

**The Authorised Limit for external debt.** This is a key prudential indicator and represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a legal 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.



- 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 local authority plans, or those of a specific authority, although this power has not yet been exercised.
- The Authority is asked to approve the following Authorised Limit:

<b>Authorised Limit £000</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>	<b>2026/27 Estimate</b>
Debt	97,540	120,859	126,489	131,455
Other long-term liabilities	14,847	14,842	14,256	13,650
<b>Total</b>	<b>112,387</b>	<b>135,701</b>	<b>140,745</b>	<b>145,105</b>

### 3.3 Prospects for Interest Rates

The Authority has appointed Link Group as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Authority to formulate a view on interest rates. Link provided the following forecasts on 07 November 2023. These are forecasts for Bank Rate, average earnings and PWLB certainty rates, gilt yields plus 80 bps.

Link Group Interest Rate View		07.11.23											
	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26
<b>BANK RATE</b>	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
3 month ave earnings	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
6 month ave earnings	5.60	5.50	5.40	5.10	4.60	4.10	3.60	3.40	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10
12 month ave earnings	5.80	5.70	5.50	5.20	4.70	4.20	3.70	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30
5 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.70	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50
10 yr PWLB	5.10	5.00	4.80	4.70	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50
25 yr PWLB	5.50	5.30	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.00	4.00	4.00
50 yr PWLB	5.30	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.80	3.80	3.80

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

- Our central forecast for interest rates was previously updated on 25 September and reflected a view that the MPC would be keen to further demonstrate its anti-inflation credentials by keeping Bank Rate at 5.25% until at least H2 2024. We expect rate cuts to start when both the CPI inflation and wage/employment data are supportive of such a move, and that there is a likelihood of the overall economy enduring at least a mild recession over the coming months, although most recent GDP releases have surprised with their on-going robustness.
- Naturally, timing on this matter will remain 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.
- 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 also international factors such as policy development in the US and Europe, the provision of fresh support packages to support the faltering recovery in China as well as the on-going conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and Gaza and Israel.
- On the positive side, consumers are still anticipated to be sitting on some excess savings left over from the pandemic, which could cushion some of the impact of the above challenges and may be the reason why the economy is performing somewhat better at this stage of the economic cycle than may have been expected. However, as noted previously, most of those excess savings are held by more affluent households whereas lower income families already spend nearly all their income on essentials such as food, energy and rent/mortgage payments.

#### **PWLB RATES**

- Gilt yield curve movements have broadened since our last Newsflash. The short part of the curve has not moved far but the longer-end continues to reflect inflation concerns. At the time of writing there is 60 basis points difference between the 5 and 50 year parts of the curve.

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

- The overall balance of risks to economic growth in the UK is to the downside.

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

- **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, could keep gilt yields high for longer).
- **The Bank of England** has increased Bank Rate too fast and too far over recent months, and subsequently brings about a deeper and longer UK recession than we currently anticipate.
- **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.
- **Geopolitical risks**, for example in Ukraine/Russia, the Middle East, China/Taiwan/US, Iran and North Korea, which could lead to increasing safe-haven flows.

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

- Despite the recent tightening to 5.25%, the **Bank of England proves too timid** in its pace and strength of increases in Bank Rate and, therefore, allows inflationary pressures to remain elevated for a longer period within the UK economy, which then necessitates Bank Rate staying higher for longer than we currently project.
- **The pound weakens** because of a lack of confidence in the UK Government's pre-election fiscal policies, resulting in investors pricing in a risk premium for holding UK sovereign debt.
- Longer-term **US treasury yields** rise strongly if inflation remains more stubborn there than the market currently anticipates, consequently pulling gilt yields up higher. (We saw some movements of this type through October although generally reversed in the last week or so.)
- Projected **gilt issuance, inclusive of natural maturities and QT**, could be too much for the markets to comfortably digest without higher yields compensating.

## LINK GROUP FORECASTS

We now expect the MPC will keep Bank Rate at 5.25% for the remainder of 2023 and the first half of 2024 to combat on-going inflationary and wage pressures. We do not think that the MPC will increase Bank Rate above 5.25%, but it is possible.

### Gilt yields and PWLB rates

The overall longer-run trend is for gilt yields and PWLB rates to fall back over the timeline of our forecasts, as inflation starts to fall through the remainder of 2023 and into 2024.

Our target borrowing rates are set **two years forward** (as we expect rates to fall back) and the current PWLB (certainty) borrowing rates are set out below: -

PWLB debt	Current borrowing rate as at 06.11.23 p.m.	Target borrowing rate now (end of Q3 2025)	Target borrowing rate previous (end of Q3 2025)
5 years	5.02%	3.80%	3.90%
10 years	5.15%	3.80%	3.80%
25 years	5.61%	4.20%	4.10%
50 years	5.38%	4.00%	3.90%

**Borrowing advice:** Our long-term (beyond 10 years) forecast for Bank Rate has increased from 2.75% to 3% and reflects Capital Economics' research that suggests AI and general improvements in productivity will be supportive of a higher neutral interest rate. As all PWLB certainty rates are currently significantly above this level, borrowing strategies will need to be reviewed in that context. Overall, better value can generally be obtained at the shorter end of the curve and short-dated fixed LA to LA monies should be considered. Temporary borrowing rates will remain elevated for some time to come but may prove the best option whilst the market continues to wait for inflation, and therein gilt yields, to drop back later in 2024.

Our suggested budgeted earnings rates for investments up to about three months' duration in each financial year are rounded to the nearest 10bps and set out below. You will note that investment earnings have been revised somewhat higher for all years from 2025/26 as Bank Rate remains higher for longer.

Average earnings in each year	Now	Previously
2023/24 (residual)	5.30%	5.30%
2024/25	4.70%	4.70%
2025/26	3.20%	3.00%
2026/27	3.00%	2.80%
2027/28	3.25%	3.05%
Years 6 to 10	3.25%	3.05%
Years 10+	3.25%	3.05%

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

Our interest rate forecast for Bank Rate is in steps of 25 bps, whereas PWLB forecasts have been rounded to the nearest 10 bps and are central forecasts within bands of + / - 25 bps. Naturally, we continue to monitor events and will update our forecasts as and when appropriate.

### 3.4 Borrowing Strategy

The Authority is currently maintaining 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 Authority'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 remains elevated through to the second half of 2024.

Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will be adopted with the 2024/25 treasury operations. The Head of Finance will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances:

- *if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in borrowing rates, then borrowing will be postponed.*
- *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 in line with the Councils Financial Procedure rules.

### 3.5 Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need

The Authority 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 Authority 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 may be considered whilst premature redemption rates remain elevated but only if there is surplus cash available to facilitate any repayment, or rebalancing of the portfolio to provide more certainty is considered appropriate.

If rescheduling is to be undertaken, it will be reported to Council at the earliest meeting following its action.

### 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. However, consideration may still need to be given to sourcing funding from the following sources for the following reasons:

- Local authorities (primarily shorter dated maturities out to 3 years or so – generally still cheaper than the Certainty Rate).

- 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

On Balance Sheet	Fixed	Variable
PWLB	●	●
UK 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	●	●

## 4 ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

### 4.1 Investment Policy – Management of Risk

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 and service investments, are covered in the Capital Strategy, (a separate report).

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

- DLUHC's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance")
- CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2021 ("the Code")
- 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 regard to the Council's risk appetite.

In the current economic climate, it is considered appropriate to maintain a degree of liquidity to cover cash flow needs but to also consider "laddering" investments for periods up to 12 months with high credit rated financial institutions, whilst investment rates remain elevated, as well as wider range fund options.

The above guidance from the DLUHC and CIPFA places a high priority on the management of risk. This Authority 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 financial sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.

4. This Authority 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.

**Specified investments** are those with a high level of credit quality and subject to a maturity limit of one year or have less than a year left to run to maturity, if originally, they were classified as being non-specified investments solely due to the maturity period exceeding one year.

**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. **Non-specified and loan investment limits.** The Council has determined that it will set a limit to the maximum exposure of the total treasury management investment portfolio to non-specified treasury management investments of 5%.
6. **Lending limits**, (amounts and maturity), for each counterparty will be set through applying the matrix table in paragraph 4.2.
7. **Transaction limits** are set for each type of investment in 4.2.
8. The Council will set a limit for its investments which are invested for **longer than 365 days**, (see paragraph 4.4).
9. Investments will only be placed with counterparties from countries with a specified minimum **sovereign rating**, (see paragraph 4.3).
10. The 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 Authority in the context of the expected level of cash balances and need for liquidity throughout the year.
11. All investments will be denominated in **sterling**.
12. As a result of the change in accounting standards for 2023/24 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. More recently, a further extension to the over-ride to 31.3.25 has been agreed by Government.

However, this Council 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.

## **4.2 Creditworthiness Policy**

The primary principle governing the Council's investment criteria is the security of its investments, although the yield or return on the investment is also a key consideration. After this main principle, the Council will ensure that: -

- It maintains a policy covering both the categories of investment types it will invest in, criteria for choosing investment counterparties with adequate security, and monitoring their security. This is set out in the specified and non-specified investment sections below; and
- It has sufficient liquidity in its investments. For this purpose, it will set out procedures for determining the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed. These procedures also apply to the Council's prudential indicators covering the maximum principal sums invested.

The Head of Finance will maintain a counterparty list in compliance with the following criteria and will revise the criteria and submit them to Full Council for approval as necessary. These criteria are separate to that which determines which types of investment instrument are either specified or non-specified as it provides an overall pool of counterparties considered high quality which the Council may use, rather than defining what types of investment instruments are to be used.

Credit rating information is supplied by Link Group, our treasury advisors, on all active counterparties that comply with the criteria below. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria would be omitted from the counterparty (dealing) list. Any rating changes, rating Watches (notification of a likely change), rating Outlooks (notification of the longer-term bias outside the central rating view) are provided to officers almost immediately after they occur, and this information is considered before dealing. For instance, a negative rating Watch applying to a counterparty at the minimum Authority criteria will be suspended from use, with all others being reviewed in light of market conditions.

The criteria for providing a pool of high-quality investment counterparties, (both specified and non-specified investments) is:

- Banks 1 - good credit quality – the Council will only use banks which:
  - i. are UK banks; and/or
  - ii. are non-UK and domiciled in a country which has a minimum sovereign Long-Term rating of AA-
    - and have, as a minimum, the following Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's credit ratings (where rated):
  - i. Short Term – F1
  - ii. Long Term – A-
- Banks 2 – Part nationalised UK bank – Royal Bank of Scotland ring-fenced operations. This bank can be included provided they continue to be part nationalised or meet the ratings in Banks 1 above.
- Banks 3 – The Council's own banker for transactional purposes if the bank falls below the above criteria, although in this case balances will be minimised in both monetary size and time invested.

- Bank subsidiary and treasury operation -. The Council will use these where the parent bank has provided an appropriate guarantee or has the necessary ratings outlined above.
- Building Societies. The Council will use all societies which:
  - i. Meet the ratings for banks outlined above;
  - or
  - ii. Have assets in excess of £500m;
- Money Market Funds (MMFs) CNAV LNAV VNAV – £11m.
- UK Government (including gilts, Treasury Bills and the DMADF).
- Local authorities, parish councils etc.
- Housing associations.
- Supranational institutions.
- Property funds and corporate Bonds- We may consider these funds if they meet the creditworthiness criteria. No decision will be made on the use of these funds without Council approval.

**Use of additional information other than credit ratings.** Additional requirements under the Code require the Council to supplement credit rating information. Whilst the above criteria rely primarily on the application of credit ratings to provide a pool of appropriate counterparties for officers to use, additional operational market information will be applied before making any specific investment decision from the agreed pool of counterparties. This additional market information (for example Credit Default Swaps, rating Watches/Outlooks) will be applied to compare the relative security of differing investment opportunities.

**Time and monetary limits applying to investments.** The time and monetary limits for institutions on the Council's counterparty list are as follows (these will cover both specified and non-specified investments): -

	Fitch long-term rating (or equivalent)	Money limit	Transaction limit	Time limit
<b>Banks 1 higher quality</b>	<b>AA-</b>	<b>£15m</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>2yrs</b>
<b>Banks 1 medium quality</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>£13m</b>	<b>£7m</b>	<b>2yrs</b>
<b>Banks 1 lower quality</b>	<b>BBB</b>	<b>£11m</b>	<b>£5m</b>	<b>1yr</b>
<b>Banks 2 – part nationalised</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>£11m</b>	<b>£6m</b>	<b>1yr</b>
<b>Limit 3 category – Authority’s banker (not meeting Banks 1)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£13m</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>1yr</b>
<b>Building Societies</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£15m</b>	<b>£2m</b>	<b>2yrs</b>
<b>Other institutions limit*</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£8m</b>	<b>£5m</b>	<b>1yr</b>
<b>DMADF</b>	<b>UK sovereign rating</b>	<b>unlimited</b>	<b>unlimited</b>	<b>1yr</b>
<b>Local authorities</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>£15m</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>5yrs</b>
<b>Housing associations</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£6m</b>	<b>£3m</b>	<b>2yrs</b>
<b>Money Market Funds</b>	<b>AAA</b>	<b>£20m</b>	<b>£11m</b>	<b>liquid</b>

The proposed criteria for specified and non-specified investments are shown in Appendix 5.4 for approval.

### **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.

### **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 Authority has access to this information via its Link-provided Passport portal.

### **4.3 Other limits**

Due care will be taken to consider the exposure of the Council’s total investment portfolio to non-specified investments, countries, groups and sectors.

a) **Non-specified treasury management investment limit.** The Council has determined that it will limit the maximum total exposure of treasury management investments to non-specified treasury management investments as being 5% of the total treasury management investment portfolio.

b) **Country limit.** The Council has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from the UK and 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 5.6. This list will be added to, or deducted from, by officers should ratings change in accordance with this policy.

c) **Other limits.** In addition:

- no more than 20% will be placed with any non-UK country at any time;
- limits in place above will apply to a group of companies;

#### 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 having peaked in the second half of 2023 and possibly reducing as early as the second half of 2024 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 Bank Rate to have peaked at 5.25% in Q4 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: -

Average earnings in each year	
2023/24 (residual)	5.30%
2024/25	4.70%
2025/26	3.20%
2026/27	3.00%
2027/28	3.25%
Years 6 to 10	3.25%
Years 10+	3.25%

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>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
Principal sums invested for longer than 365 days	£2m	£2m	£2m

#### **4.5 Investment Performance / 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:

- **0.05% historic risk of default when compared to the whole portfolio.**

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

- Bank overdraft - £2m if required
- Liquid short-term deposits of at least £1m available with a week's notice.
- Weighted average life benchmark is expected to be 1 month, with a maximum of 1 year.

Yield - local measures of yield benchmark is:-

- Investments – internal returns above the 7-day SONIA compounded rate

#### **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 to FAP.

#### **APPENDICES**

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

## 5 THE CAPITAL PRUDENTIAL & TREASURY INDICATORS 2024/25 – 2026/27

The Authority'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 Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure £000	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Corporate & Support Services	6,138	20,203	855	626
Community Services	3,827	1,768	1,189	1,175
<b>Non-HRA</b>	<b>9,965</b>	<b>21,971</b>	<b>2,044</b>	<b>1,801</b>
<b>HRA</b>	<b>12,934</b>	<b>14,520</b>	<b>12,803</b>	<b>10,048</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,899</b>	<b>36,491</b>	<b>14,847</b>	<b>11,849</b>

### 5.2 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 Authority's overall finances. The Authority is asked to approve the following indicators: -

#### 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.

%	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Non-HRA	8.81	12.26	14.65	15.81
HRA	30.13	27.43	27.11	26.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.94</b>	<b>39.69</b>	<b>41.76</b>	<b>42.52</b>

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

### 5.3 Maturity Structure of Borrowing

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

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

<b>Maturity structure borrowing 2023/24</b>		
	<b>%</b>	<b>£000</b>
Under 12 months	4.17%	2,941
12 months to 2 years	4.17%	2,941
2 years to 5 years	12.50%	8,824
5 years to 10 years	20.83%	14,707
10 years to 20 years	46.58%	32,884
20 years to 30 years	4.67%	3,300
30 years to 40 years	7.08%	5,000
	100%	70,598

### 5.4. Control of Interest Rate Exposure

Please see paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4.

### 5.5 Interest rates forecast 2023-2026

Link Group Interest Rate View	07.11.23												
	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26
<b>BANK RATE</b>	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
3 month ave earnings	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
6 month ave earnings	5.60	5.50	5.40	5.10	4.60	4.10	3.60	3.40	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10
12 month ave earnings	5.80	5.70	5.50	5.20	4.70	4.20	3.70	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30
5 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.70	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50
10 yr PWLB	5.10	5.00	4.80	4.70	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50
25 yr PWLB	5.50	5.30	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.00	4.00	4.00
50 yr PWLB	5.30	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.80	3.80	3.80

PWLB forecasts are based on PWLB certainty rates.

## 5.6 ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

The third quarter of 2023/24 saw:

A 0.3% m/m decline in real GDP in October, potentially partly due to unseasonably wet weather, but also due to the ongoing drag from higher interest rates. Growth for the second quarter, ending 30th September, was revised downwards to -0.1% and growth on an annual basis was also revised downwards, to 0.3%;

A sharp fall in wage growth, with the headline 3myy rate declining from 8.0% in September to 7.2% in October, although the ONS “experimental” rate of unemployment has remained low at 4.2%;

CPI inflation continuing on its downward trajectory, from 8.7% in April to 4.6% in October, then again to 3.9% in November;

Core CPI inflation decreasing from April and May’s 31 years’ high of 7.1% to 5.1% in November, the lowest rate since January 2022;

The Bank of England holding rates at 5.25% in November and December;

A detailed report is available on request.

## 5.7 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (TMP1) – CREDIT AND COUNTERPARTY RISK MANAGEMENT OPTION 2

The DLUHC issued Investment Guidance in 2018, and this forms the structure of the Authority’s policy below. These guidelines do not apply to either trust funds or pension funds which operate under a different regulatory regime.

The key intention of the Guidance is to maintain the current requirement for local authorities to invest prudently, and that priority is given to security and liquidity before yield. In order to facilitate this objective, the Guidance requires this Authority to have regard to the CIPFA publication Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes. In accordance with the Code, the Head of Finance has produced its treasury management practices (TMPs). This part, TMP 1(1), covering investment counterparty policy requires approval each year.

**Annual Investment Strategy** - The key requirements of both the Code and the investment guidance are for the Authority to set an Annual Investment Strategy, as part of its annual treasury strategy for the following year, covering the identification and approval of the following:

- The strategy guidelines for choosing and placing investments, particularly non-specified investments.
- The principles to be used to determine the maximum periods for which funds can be committed.
- Specified investments that the Authority will use. These are high security (*i.e.*, *high credit rating, although this is defined by the Authority, and no guidelines are given*), and high liquidity investments in sterling and with a maturity of no more than a year.



- Non-specified investments, clarifying the greater risk implications, identifying the general types of investment that may be used and a limit to the overall amount of various categories that can be held at any time.

The investment policy proposed for the Authority is:

**Strategy guidelines** – The main strategy guidelines are contained in the body of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement.

**Specified investments** – These investments are sterling investments of not more than one-year maturity, or those which could be for a longer period but where the Authority has the right to be repaid within 12 months if it wishes. They also include investments which were originally classed as being non-specified investments, but which would have been classified as specified investments apart from originally being for a period longer than 12 months once the remaining period to maturity falls to under 12 months.

These are considered low risk assets where the possibility of loss of principal or investment income is small. These would include sterling investments which would not be defined as capital expenditure with: -

- The UK Government (such as the Debt Management Account deposit facility, UK Treasury Bills or a Gilt with less than one year to maturity).
- Supranational Bonds of less than one year's duration.
- A Local Authority, Housing Association, Parish Council or Community Council.
- Pooled investment vehicles (such as Money Market Funds) that have been awarded a high credit rating by a credit rating agency e.g., Standard and Poor's, Moody's and/or Fitch rating agencies.
- A body that is considered of a high credit quality (such as a bank or building society for category 5 this covers bodies with a minimum Short-Term rating of F1 (or the equivalent) as rated by Standard and Poor's, Moody's and / or Fitch rating agencies

Within these bodies, and in accordance with the Code, the Council has set additional criteria to set the time and amount of monies which will be invested in these bodies. These criteria are in the body of the report.

**Non-specified investments** – are any other type of investment (i.e., not defined as specified above). The identification and rationale supporting the selection of these other investments and the maximum limits to be applied are set out below. Non-specified investments would include any sterling investments with: -

	<b>Non-Specified Investment Category</b>	<b>Limit (£)</b>
a.	<b>The Authority's own banker</b> if it fails to meet the basic credit criteria. In this instance balances will be minimised as far as is possible.	£11m
b.	<b>Building Societies not meeting the basic security requirements under the specified investments.</b> The operation of some building societies does not require a credit rating, although in every other respect the security of the society would match similarly sized societies with ratings. The Authority may use such building societies which have a minimum asset size of £500m, but will restrict these types of investments to £9m	£15m
c.	Any <b>Bank or Building Society</b> that has a minimum long-term credit rating of A-, for deposits with a maturity of greater than one	£11m

	year (including forward deals in excess of one year from inception to repayment).	
d.	Any <b>Non-Rated Subsidiary</b> of a credit rated institution included in the specified investment category. These institutions will be included as an investment category subject to a limit of £5m for a period of 6 months.	£9m

NOTE 1. This Authority will seek further advice on the appropriateness and associated risks with investments in these categories.

**The monitoring of investment counterparties** - The credit rating of counterparties will be monitored regularly. The Council receives credit rating information (changes, rating watches and rating outlooks) from Link as and when ratings change, and counterparties are checked promptly. On occasion ratings may be downgraded when an investment has already been made. The criteria used are such that a minor downgrading should not affect the full receipt of the principal and interest. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria will be removed from the list immediately by the Head of Finance, and if required new counterparties which meet the criteria will be added to the list.

## 5.8 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 and Luxembourg), have banks operating in sterling markets which have credit ratings of green or above in the Link creditworthiness service.

### *Based on lowest available rating*

#### **AAA**

- Australia
- Denmark
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Singapore
- Sweden
- Switzerland

#### **AA+**

- Canada
- Finland
- U.S.A.

#### **AA**

- Abu Dhabi (UAE)

#### **AA-**

- Belgium
- France
- Qatar
- U.K.

## **5.9 TREASURY MANAGEMENT SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

### **(i) Council**

- receiving and reviewing reports on treasury management policies, practices and activities.
- approval of annual strategy.
- approval of /amendments to the organisation's adopted clauses, treasury management policy statement and treasury management practices
- budget consideration and approval.

### **(ii) Finance & Performance Committee**

- approval of division of responsibilities.
- receiving and reviewing regular monitoring reports and acting on recommendations.
- reviewing the treasury management policy and procedures and making recommendations to Council.

### **(iii) SLT/ Head of Finance**

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

## **5.10 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.