

Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20 to 2023/24

Including:
Minimum Revenue Provision
Policy 2018/19 and 2019/20

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

1.1.1. The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which means that cash raised through the year will meet its cash expenditure. The Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) has four fundamental roles:

- Manage external investments - security, liquidity and yield
- Ensure debt is prudent and economic
- Produce and monitor the Prudential Indicators
- To ensure that decisions comply with regulations.

1.1.2. The role of treasury management is to ensure cash flow is adequately planned so that cash is available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties commensurate with the Council's low risk appetite ensuring that security and liquidity are achieved before considering investment return.

1.1.3. 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 the Council 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 Council risk or cost objectives.

1.1.4. 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.

1.1.5. 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.

1.1.6. CIPFA defines treasury management as:

“ The management of the local authority's 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.”

1.1.7. Revised reporting is required for the 2019/20 reporting cycle due to revisions of the MHCLG Investment Guidance, the MHCLG Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Guidance, the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code. The primary reporting changes include the introduction of a capital strategy, to provide a longer-term focus to the capital plans, and greater reporting requirements surrounding any commercial activity undertaken under the Localism Act 2011. The capital strategy is being reported separately.

1.2. Reporting Requirements

1.2.1. Capital Strategy

1.2.2. The CIPFA revised 2017 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes require, for 2019/20, all local authorities to prepare an additional report, 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;

1.2.3. The aim of this Capital Strategy is to ensure that all elected members on the full council fully understand the overall long-term policy objectives and resulting capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

1.2.4. This Capital Strategy is reported separately from the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and non-treasury investments will be reported through the former. This ensures the separation of the core treasury function under security, liquidity and yield principles, and the policy and commercialism investments usually driven by expenditure on an asset. The Capital Strategy will show:

- the corporate governance arrangements for these types of activities;
- any service objectives relating to the investments;
- the expected income, costs and resulting contribution;
- for non-loan type investments, the cost against the current market value;
- the risks associated with each activity.

1.2.5. Where a physical asset is being bought, details of market research, advisers used, (and their monitoring), ongoing costs and investment requirements and any credit information will be disclosed, including the ability to sell the asset and realise the investment cash.

1.2.6. Where the Council has borrowed to fund any non-treasury investment, there should also be an explanation of why borrowing was required and why the MHCLG Investment Guidance and CIPFA Prudential Code have not been adhered to.

1.2.7. If any non-treasury investment sustains a loss during the final accounts and audit process, the strategy and revenue implications will be reported through the same procedure as the Capital Strategy.

1.3. Treasury Management Reporting

1.3.1. 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.

1.3.2. **Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Treasury Strategy** - The first, and most important report is forward looking and covers:

- the capital plans, (including prudential indicators);
- a 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 investment strategy, (the parameters on how investments are to be managed).

1.3.3. **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.

1.3.4. **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.

1.3.5. **Scrutiny**

1.3.6. The above reports are required to be adequately scrutinised and this role is undertaken by the Audit Committee, Cabinet and full Council.

1.4. **Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20**

1.4.1. The strategy for 2019/20 covers:

Capital issues

- the capital expenditure plans and the associated prudential indicators;
- the MRP policy.

Treasury management issues

- the current treasury position;
- treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- 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.

1.4.2. These elements cover the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Prudential Code 2017, the MHCLG MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code 2017, and the MHCLG Investment Guidance.

1.5. **Training**

1.5.1. The CIPFA Code requires the responsible officer to ensure that Council members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management. This requirement is reviewed annual as part of the annual Performance Development Review (PDR) and monthly supervisions. This requirement also applies to Council members responsible for scrutiny.

1.6. **Treasury Management Advisors**

1.6.1. The Council uses Link Asset Services (previously Capita Asset Services) as its external treasury management advisors who have a contract until September 2021.

1.6.2. The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the Council at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon external advisors.

1.6.3. The Council also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to access 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, documented and subjected to regular review.

- 1.6.4. The scope of investments within the Council's operations may in the near future include 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. The Council uses NPS Group in relation to this activity, and other specialist advisers will be engaged depending upon requirements.

1.7. Treasury Management Policy Statement

- 1.7.1. The Treasury Management Policy Statement sets out the policies and objectives of Treasury Management Activities which is revised annually. It reflects December 2017 guidance.

- 1.7.2. The Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the organisation, and any financial instruments entered into to manage these risks.

- 1.7.3. The Council acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving value for money in treasury management, and to employing suitable comprehensive performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management.

- 1.7.4. Investments using the above definition cover all financial assets of the organisation, as well as other non-financial assets which the organisation holds primarily for financial returns such as investment property portfolios. This may therefore include investments which are not managed as part of normal treasury management or under treasury management delegations. All investments require an appropriate investment management and risk management framework.

- 1.7.5. The Council's high level policies for borrowing and investments are set out below.
- to invest available cash balances with a number of high quality investment counterparties over a spread of maturity dates in accordance with the Council's lending list;
 - to reduce the revenue cost of the Council's debt in the medium term by obtaining financing at the cheapest rate possible;
 - to seek to reschedule or repay debt at the optimum time.

1.8. The Treasury Management Role of the Section 151 Officer

The S151 (responsible) officer must do the following:

- recommend clauses, treasury management policy/practices for approval, reviewing the same regularly, and monitoring compliance;
- submit regular treasury management policy reports;
- submit budgets and budget variations;
- receive and reviewing management information reports;
- review 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. This is done by regular training presentations to the Audit Committee;
- ensuring that the authority has adequate expertise, either in house or externally provided, to carry out the above. This is done by regular attendance at course and conferences and joint working with Link Asset Services;
- creation of Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) 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 to the various committees;
 - Training and qualifications (TMP10 and schedules), including how the relevant knowledge and skills in relation to non-treasury investments will be arranged.

2. Capital Prudential Indicators 2019/20 to 2023/24

2.1. The Council's capital programme is the key driver of the treasury management activity. The output of the capital programme is reflected in the prudential indicators which are designed to assist member's overview and confirm the capital programme.

2.2. **Indicator 1** – Capital Expenditure – this Prudential Indicator is a summary of the Council's estimated capital expenditure for the forthcoming financial year and the following four financial years including how it will be funded either from grants, contributions, or capital receipts with the remaining being the 'net financing requirement'

Capital Expenditure	2017/18 Actual £m	2018/19 Est £m	2019/20 Est £m	2020/21 Est £m	2021/22 Est £m	2022/23 Est £m	2023/24 Est £m
People and Communities	32.9	38.8	33.9	20.1	21.7	22.4	6.5
Invest to Save / Commercial Activities / Cost Avoidance Schemes	13.6	19.8	37.6	30.9	20.1	10.0	0.1
Resources	5.1	17.7	5.4	5.4	5.9	3.5	3.5
Growth and Regeneration	28.7	44.8	37.2	29.2	37.7	33.1	31.0
Total	80.3	121.1	114.1	85.6	85.4	69.0	41.1
Financed by:							
Capital receipts	1.1	1.5	23.2	15.0	-	-	-
Capital grants contributions	36.5	42.3	26.8	29.8	28.1	32.5	16.9
Net financing requirement	42.7	77.3	64.1	40.8	57.3	36.5	24.2
Total	80.3	121.1	114.1	85.6	85.4	69.0	41.1

2.3. The capital receipts shown in the tables for future years relate to the following:

- 2018/19 - Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) capital loan - £1m and Axiom Housing Association Loan Repayment - £0.5m
- 2019/20 - ECS Peterborough 1LLP – capital loan - £23.2m
- 2020/21 - Hotel – capital loan - £15m

2.4. The Invest to Save / Commercial Activities / Cost Avoidance schemes are included in total capital expenditure and the funding resources to be used. However, these schemes will either generate income or generate savings on revenue budgets elsewhere in the Council's services. Therefore the borrowing costs associated with these projects will have a minimal impact on the Council's MTFS position.

2.5. **Indicator 2** – Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) – the CFR is the total historical capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing requirement. Any capital expenditure which has not immediately been paid for will increase the CFR.

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

- 2.7. The CFR includes any other long-term liabilities (e.g. PFI schemes, finance leases) included on the Council's balance sheet. Whilst this increases the CFR, and therefore the Council's borrowing requirement, these types of schemes include a borrowing facility and so the Council is not required to separately borrow for these schemes. The following table shows the CFR estimates for the next five financial years for Council approval:

Capital Financing Requirement	2017/18 Actual £m	2018/19 Est £m	2019/20 Est £m	2020/21 Est £m	2021/22 Est £m	2022/23 Est £m	2023/24 Est £m
CFR brought forward	509.8	540.1	606.3	654.5	678.3	719.4	739.0
Borrowing / Repayment	16.7	49.0	10.6	3.8	21.1	9.6	7.0
Invest to Save	13.6	1.5	17.6	-	-	-	-
Commercial Activities	-	-	20.0	20.0	20.0	10.0	-
Lease Liability	-	15.7	-	-	-	-	-
CFR carried forward	540.1	606.3	654.5	678.3	719.4	739.0	746.0
Movement in CFR	30.4	66.2	48.2	23.8	41.1	19.6	7.0
Net financing requirement	42.7	77.3	64.1	40.8	57.3	36.5	24.3
Less MRP & other financing	(12.3)	(11.1)	(15.9)	(17.0)	(16.2)	(16.9)	(17.3)
Movement in CFR	30.4	66.2	48.2	23.8	41.1	19.6	7.0

- 2.8. **Indicator 3** – Actual and estimates of the ratio of financing costs to net revenue budget. This indicator identifies the proportion of the revenue budget which is taken up in financing capital expenditure i.e. the net interest cost and the provision to repay debt.

Ratio of Gross Financing Costs to Net Revenue Budget	2017/18 Actual £m	2018/19 Est £m	2019/20 Est £m	2020/21 Est £m	2021/22 Est £m	2022/23 Est £m	2023/24 Est £m
Total Ratio	3.7%	6.4%	8.9%	9.5%	9.4%	9.4%	9.4%

3. Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement

- 3.1. Capital expenditure is generally expenditure on assets which have a life expectancy of more than one year e.g. buildings, vehicles, equipment, etc. Such expenditure is spread over several years in order to try to match the years over which such assets benefit the local community through their useful life. The manner of spreading these costs is through an annual MRP.
- 3.2. MHCLG Regulations require full Council to approve an MRP statement in advance of each year. A variety of options are provided to Councils to calculate this revenue charge and the Council must satisfy itself that the provision is prudent.
- 3.3. A change introduced by the revised MHCLG MRP Guidance was the allowance that any charges made over the statutory MRP, voluntary revenue provision (VRP) or overpayments, can, if needed, be reclaimed in later years if deemed necessary or prudent. In order for these sums to be reclaimed for use in the budget, this policy must disclose the cumulative overpayment made each year. Up until the 31 March 2019 the total overpayments was £3.8m and this will be fully utilised per the 2018/19 MTFS.
- 3.4. Councils are allowed by statute to use capital receipts for the repayment of any borrowing previously incurred. The application of capital receipts to repay debt would reduce the level of MRP chargeable to revenue, but statutory guidance does

not address how such a reduction should be calculated. When the Council uses its capital receipts to redeem borrowing, the value of the MRP which would otherwise have been set aside for that year will be reduced by the amounts which have instead been repaid from capital receipts. This results in a prudent level of MRP, as there will be no reduction in the overall level of funding set aside to redeem debt.

- 3.5. The Council previously participated in the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) to support first time buyers through the provision of an indemnity. Such deposits were treated as capital expenditure, as a loan to a third party. The associated deposits have now matured, and the funds have been returned to the Council and have been classed as a capital receipt which has reduced the CFR. The second advance of £1m was returned in July 2018 and the indemnity of £0.8m remains in place for a fixed five year period or until the individual mortgage advances have been repaid.
- 3.6. Repayments for the PFI scheme and finance leases are applied as MRP, and the associated amounts are included in these Prudential Indicators.
- 3.7. Below is a table summarising the MRP Policy.

Capital Expenditure Incurred	MRP Policy Update 2018/19 & 2019/20
Expenditure funded by unsupported borrowing reflected within the debt liability after the 31 March 2010	<p>Asset Life, annuity method – MRP will be based on the prevailing PWLB interest rate for a loan with a term equivalent to the estimated life of the project.</p> <p>If capital receipts have been used to repay borrowing for the year then the value of MRP which would have otherwise been set aside to repay borrowing will be reduced by the amounts which have instead been repaid from capital receipts. The level of capital receipts to be applied to redeem borrowing will be determined annually by the Acting Corporate Director Resources, taking into account forecasts for future expenditure and the generation of further receipts.</p> <p>The same process will apply for S106, POIS and CIL receipts.</p>
Private Finance Initiative (PFI) - Finance Lease	Use the annuity method of calculation over the remaining asset life
Other Finance Leases	Charged in relation to asset life on the annuity method
Secured Loans to third parties repaid in bullet form.	No MRP will be charged each year as reliance can be placed on the capital receipt that will be generated when the loan is repaid or, in the event of a default, the realisation of the security. If realisation of the security does not equate to the original loaned amount the Council will recognise the associated impairment and will charge MRP for the outstanding loan amount over the next MTFS periods.

4. Current Treasury Position

- 4.1. 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.

4.2. The overall treasury management portfolio as at 31 March 2018 and for the position as at 18 January 2019 are shown in the following table for both borrowing and investment.

Treasury Portfolio	Actual 31.03.18 £'000	Actual 31.03.18 %	Current 18.01.19 £'000	Current 18.01.19 %
Treasury Investments				
Banks	5,000	56	2,500	14
Local Authorities	-	-	-	-
DMADF (HM Treasury)	-	-	6,000	32
Money Market Funds	4,000	44	10,000	54
Total Treasury Investments	9,000	100	18,500	100
Treasury External Borrowing				
Local Authorities	(72,500)	17	(50,500)	12
PWLB	(329,587)	79	(359,587)	84
LOBOs	(17,500)	4	(17,500)	4
Total External Borrowing	(419,587)	100	(427,587)	100
Net Treasury Investments/(Borrowing)	(410,587)		(409,087)	

4.3. **Indicator 4** - The Council's treasury position at 31 March 2019, with estimates for future years, is summarised below. The table below shows the actual external borrowing (Gross Debt) against the CFR

Gross debt & capital financing requirement	2017/18 Actual £m	2018/19 Est £m	2019/20 Est £m	2020/21 Est £m	2021/22 Est £m	2022/23 Est £m	2023/24 Est £m
External Borrowing							
Market Borrowing	395.4	419.6	470.1	518.3	542.1	583.2	602.9
Repayment of borrowing	(18.8)	(22.0)	(28.0)	(17.5)	(9.5)	(7.1)	-
Expected change in borrowing	43.0	72.5	76.3	41.3	50.6	26.8	7.0
Other long-term liabilities	35.1	52.6	52.0	51.4	50.7	49.9	49.1
Gross Debt at 31 March	454.7	522.7	570.4	593.5	633.9	652.8	659.0
CFR	540.1	606.3	654.5	678.3	719.4	739.0	746.1
% of Gross Debt to CFR	84.2%	86.2%	87.1%	87.5%	88.1%	88.3%	88.3%

4.4. Based on the prudential indicators there are a number of key measures to ensure that the Council operates its activities within defined limits. One of these is that the Council needs to ensure that its total borrowing does not, except in the short-term, exceed the total of the CFR in the year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2019/20 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 purposes.

4.5. The Acting Corporate Director: 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 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

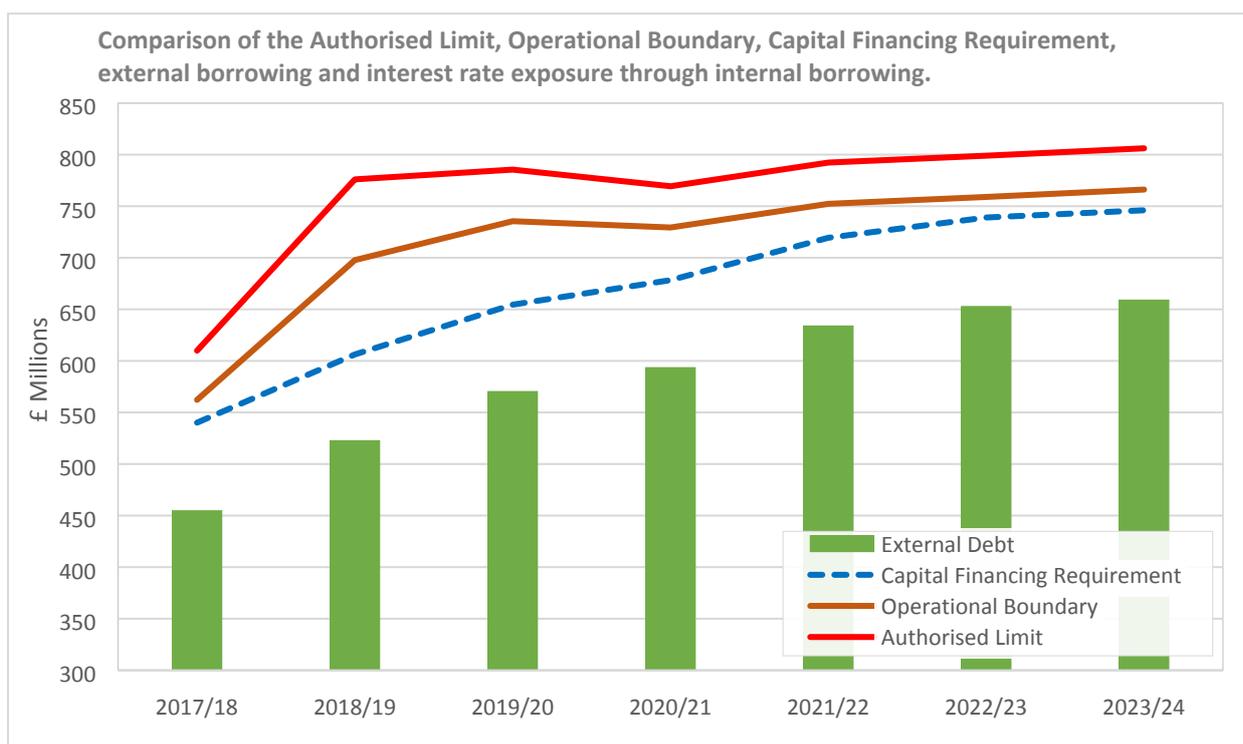
4.6. **Indicator 5** - The Operational Boundary - external borrowing is not normally expected to exceed this limit. If the operational boundary was exceeded this would be reported immediately to the members of the Audit Committee with a full report taken to the next committee meeting. In the current year it has not been exceeded. The Operational Boundary is set out below:

Operational Boundary	2017/18 Actual £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m
Borrowing	419.6	573.1	618.6	617.3	675.0	682.4	686.0
Other long-term liabilities	35.1	52.6	52.0	51.4	50.7	49.9	49.1
Total	454.7	625.7	670.6	668.7	725.7	732.3	735.1

4.7. **Indicator 6** - The Authorised Limit for external borrowing - this represents a limit beyond which external borrowing is prohibited. This limit is set and revised by full Council.

Authorised Limit	2017/18 Actual £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m
Borrowing	419.6	723.4	733.5	718.0	741.6	749.1	757.0
Other long-term liabilities	35.1	52.6	52.0	51.4	50.7	49.9	49.1
Total	454.7	776.0	785.5	769.4	792.3	799.0	806.1

4.8. This is a statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003. Government under sections 4(1) and 4(2) may limit either the total of all Council borrowing, or those of a specific Council, although this power has not yet been exercised.



5. Prospects for Interest Rates

- 5.1. The Council utilises the treasury services of Link Asset Services and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates to assist with borrowing and investment decisions.
- 5.2. The Link Asset Services forecast for bank base rate (as at November 2018) and PWLB new borrowing (as at November 2018) is as follows (note that the PWLB Borrowing Rate includes the Certainty Rate adjustment):

Interest Rate (All rates shown as %)	Bank Rate View	5yr PWLB Rate	10yr PWLB Rate	25yr PWLB Rate	50yr PWLB Rate	Budget Assumption
Dec-18	0.75	2.00	2.50	2.90	2.70	2.70
Mar 19	0.75	2.10	2.50	2.90	2.70	
Jun 19	1.00	2.20	2.60	3.00	2.80	2.90
Sep 19	1.00	2.20	2.70	3.10	2.90	
Dec 19	1.00	2.30	2.70	3.10	2.90	
Mar 20	1.25	2.30	2.80	3.20	3.00	3.15
Jun 20	1.25	2.40	2.90	3.30	3.10	
Sep 20	1.25	2.50	2.90	3.30	3.10	
Dec 20	1.50	2.50	3.00	3.40	3.20	
Mar 21	1.50	2.60	3.00	3.40	3.20	3.35
Jun 21	1.75	2.60	3.10	3.50	3.30	
Sep 21	1.75	2.70	3.10	3.50	3.30	
Dec 21	1.75	2.80	3.20	3.60	3.40	
Mar 22	2.00	2.80	3.20	3.60	3.40	

- 5.3. The Council successfully applied to be one of the principal local authorities that would qualify for the Certainty Rate, during the period 1 November 2018 to 31 October 2019. This results in the Council being able to benefit from reduced interest rates on PWLB loans by 20 basis points (0.20%). The Council is assuming that there will be a similar scheme in place when this scheme expires. The Council will submit a new application to ensure it qualifies.
- 5.4. The MTFS assumes borrowing is taken at the 50 year period with an average taken across the quarters for that year but then adjusted with a range of borrowing periods and associated interest rates. The Chief Finance Officer believes this prudent as it mitigates some of the risk of PWLB rate rise.
- 5.5. The interest rate forecasts provided by Link Asset Services in paragraph 5.2 are predicated on an assumption of an agreement being reached on Brexit between the UK and the EU. In the event of an orderly non-agreement exit, Link Asset Services think it is likely that the Bank of England would take action to cut Bank Rate from 0.75% in order to help economic growth deal with the adverse effects of this situation. This is also likely to cause short to medium term gilt yields to fall. If there was a disorderly Brexit, then any cut in Bank Rate would be likely to last for a longer period and also depress short and medium gilt yields correspondingly. It is also possible that the government could act to protect economic growth by implementing fiscal stimulus.
- 5.6. The balance of risks to the UK:
- the overall balance of risks to economic growth in the UK is probably neutral.
 - the balance of risks to increases in Bank Rate and shorter term PWLB rates, are probably also even and are broadly dependent on how strong GDP growth turns out, how slowly inflation pressures subside, and how quickly the Brexit negotiations move forward positively.

- 5.7. One risk that is both an upside and downside risk, is that all central banks are now working in very different economic conditions than before the 2008 financial crash as there has been a major increase in consumer and other debt due to the exceptionally low levels of borrowing rates that have prevailed for ten years since 2008. This means that the neutral rate of interest in an economy, (i.e. the rate that is neither expansionary nor deflationary), is difficult to determine definitively in this new environment, although central banks have made statements that they expect it to be much lower than before 2008. Central banks could therefore either over or under do increases in central interest rates.
- 5.8. Link Asset Services interest rate forecasts, detailed above, are based on their views of the future economic climate, and below are some extracts taken from their economic forecasts:
- The flow of positive economic statistics since the end of the first quarter of 2018 has shown that pessimism was overdone about the poor growth in quarter 1 when adverse weather caused a temporary downward blip. Quarter 1 at 0.1% growth in GDP was followed by a return to 0.4% in quarter 2 and by a strong performance in quarter 3 of +0.6%. However, growth in quarter 4 is expected to weaken significantly.
 - At their November quarterly Inflation Report meeting, the MPC repeated their well-worn phrase that future Bank Rate increases would be gradual and would rise to a much lower equilibrium rate, (where monetary policy is neither expansionary or contractionary), than before the crash; indeed they gave a figure for this of around 2.5% in ten years' time, but declined to give a medium term forecast. However, with so much uncertainty around Brexit, they warned that the next move could be up or down, even if there was a disorderly Brexit. While it would be expected that Bank Rate could be cut if there was a significant fall in GDP growth as a result of a disorderly Brexit, so as to provide a stimulus to growth, they warned they could also raise Bank Rate in the same scenario if there was a boost to inflation from a devaluation of sterling, increases in import prices and more expensive goods produced in the UK replacing cheaper goods previously imported, and so on. In addition, the Chancellor could potentially provide fiscal stimulus to support economic growth, though at the cost of increasing the budget deficit above currently projected levels.
 - It is unlikely that the MPC would increase Bank Rate in February 2019, ahead of the deadline in March for Brexit. Getting parliamentary approval for a Brexit agreement on both sides of the Channel will take well into spring 2019. However, in view of the hawkish stance of the MPC at their November meeting, the next increase in Bank Rate is now forecast to be in May 2019, (on the assumption that a Brexit deal is agreed by both the UK and the EU). The following increases are then forecast to be in February and November 2020 before ending up at 2.0% in February 2022.
 - Inflation. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation has been falling from a peak of 3.1% in November 2017 to 2.1% in December 2018. In the November Bank of England quarterly Inflation Report, inflation was forecast to still be marginally above its 2% inflation target two years ahead, (at about 2.1%), given a scenario of minimal increases in Bank Rate.
 - As for the labour market figures in October, unemployment at 4.1% was marginally above a 43 year low of 4% on the Independent Labour Organisation measure. A combination of job vacancies hitting an all-time high, together with negligible growth in total employment numbers, indicates that employers are now having major difficulties filling job vacancies with suitable staff. It was therefore

unsurprising that wage inflation picked up to 3.3%, (3 month average regular pay, excluding bonuses). This meant that in real terms, (i.e. wage rates less CPI inflation), earnings are currently growing by about 1.2%, the highest level since 2009. This increase in household spending power is likely to feed through into providing some support to the overall rate of economic growth in the coming months. This tends to confirm that the MPC was right to start on a cautious increase in Bank Rate in August as it views wage inflation in excess of 3% as increasing inflationary pressures within the UK economy.

- In the political arena, the Brexit deal put forward by the Conservative minority government was defeated on 15 January. It is unclear at the time of writing, how this situation will move forward. (Officers are likely to need to verbally update members as events are constantly evolving.) However, our central position is that Prime Minister May's government will endure, despite various setbacks, along the route to reaching an orderly Brexit though the risks are increasing that it may not be possible to get full agreement by the UK and EU before 29 March 2019, in which case this withdrawal date is likely to be pushed back to a new date. If, however, the UK faces a general election in the next 12 months, this could result in a potential loosening of monetary and fiscal policy and therefore medium to longer dated gilt yields could rise on the expectation of a weak pound and concerns around inflation picking up.

6. Investment and Borrowing Rates

- 6.1. Investment returns are likely to remain low during 2019/20 but will be on a rising trend over the next few years.
- 6.2. Borrowing interest rates increased sharply after the result of the general election in June 2017 and then also after the September 2017 MPC meeting when financial markets reacted by accelerating their expectations for the timing of Bank Rate increases. Apart from that, there has been little change in rates during the current financial year. The policy of avoiding new borrowing by running down spare cash balances has served well over the last few years. However, this needs to be carefully reviewed to avoid incurring higher borrowing costs in the future when authorities may not be able to avoid new borrowing to finance capital expenditure and/or the refinancing of maturing debt.
- 6.3. Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will be adopted with the 2019/20 treasury operations. The Acting Corporate Director: Resources will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances.
- 6.4. There will remain a cost of carry to any new long-term borrowing that temporarily increases cash balances. This revenue cost is the difference between borrowing costs and investment returns.

7. Borrowing Strategy

- 7.1. The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position, where the CFR balance is greater than gross debt, see Indicator 2, and chart on page 11. This is in line with the agreed strategy that the Council's cash balances be used to fund capital expenditure before additional borrowing is undertaken. This strategy is prudent as investment returns are low and counterparty risk is still an issue that needs to be considered.
- 7.2. The capital programme consists of three main types of capital projects:
 - Invest to Save – Self Funding Schemes
 - Specific Schemes – eg School Extensions

- Rolling Capital Projects eg Enhancing current assets
- 7.3. Any borrowing decisions will be reported to the appropriate decision making body at the next available opportunity.
- 7.4. The MTFS is based on the following borrowing strategy for the next three years. The borrowing strategy is under constant review throughout the year monitoring changes in interest rates and borrowing opportunities. The proposed strategy for 2019/20 financial year is:
- a) To consider the rescheduling (early redemption and replacement) of loans to maximise interest rate savings and possible redemption discounts.
 - b) Significant risk of a sharp fall in long and short term rates may arise. This might be due to a marked increase of risks around relapse into recession or of risks of deflation. In this case long-term borrowings will be postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short-term borrowing will be considered.
 - c) Significant risk of a much sharper rise in long and short-term rates than currently forecast may arise. This may arise due to a greater than expected increase in world economic activity or a sudden increase in inflation risks. In this case the portfolio position will be re-appraised with the likely action that fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates were still relatively cheap.
 - d) Loans will primarily be arranged from the PWLB and other Local Authorities.
 - e) To maintain an appropriate balance between PWLB, Local Authority and other market debt in the debt portfolio and a balance in the maturity profile of debt.
 - f) To give full consideration to other debt instruments e.g. Local Authority Bonds as an alternative to PWLB borrowing. Due regard will be given to money laundering regulations. The Council is monitoring the development of the scheme and may participate if this proves beneficial.

8. New Borrowing Approaches to Be Considered

- 8.1. To achieve a more even spread of loan maturities so that there is not an exceptional borrowing requirement in any future year. Rebalancing the current uneven profile will potentially allow interest savings given the current yield curve. Currently under 10 year money and over 35 year money is historically at a low interest cost.
- 8.2. Maturing long-term debt is replaced by new borrowing. To achieve long-term financial sustainability the Council should aim to reduce its overall debt and the associated financing costs including interest. A high value of outstanding debt represents a financial risk because of potential interest rate changes.
- 8.3. The use of Capital receipts or S106 receipts to make MRP is a one-off revenue saving. Using these funds in this way means they are not available to fund Capital assets and reduce the overall borrowing requirement.
- 8.4. Interest rates are liable to change. In the event of significant changes the Council seeks to avoid an increased revenue cost on its capital financing charges.
- 8.5. The Treasury Management Strategy uses the planned Capital Programme to calculate the borrowing requirement. Typically the Council does not spend at the planned level in any financial year.
- 8.6. Link Asset Services have a product that will allow the Council to borrow from the market at current interest rates with a small premium but not draw down the funds until they are required - 'forward borrow'.

9. Treasury Debt Prudential Indicators

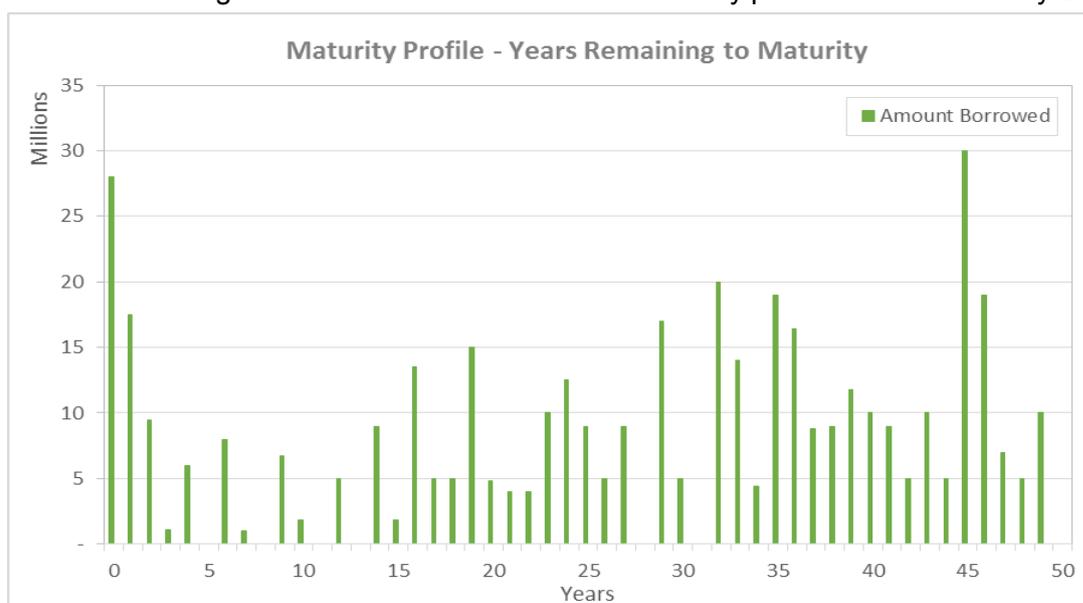
- 9.1. There are three debt treasury indicators which ensure debt structure remains within appropriate limits. This manages risk and reduces the impact of any adverse movement in interest rates.
- 9.2. **Indicator 7** – Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposure. This identifies a maximum limit for fixed interest rates based upon the debt position net of investments. This has been set at 100% of the borrowing requirement.
- 9.3. **Indicator 8** - Upper limit on variable rate exposure. This identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rates based upon the debt position net of investments. This has been set at 25% of the borrowing requirement.

Interest Rate Exposure (Upper Limits)	2017/18 Actual £m	2018/19 Est £m	2019/20 Est £m	2020/21 Est £m	2021/22 Est £m	2022/23 Est £m	2023/24 Est £m
(7) Limits on fixed interest rate net debt	419.6	761.0	777.3	735.8	792.7	756.1	729.7
% of fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(8) Limits on variable interest rate on net debt	-	190.3	194.3	184.0	198.2	189.0	182.4
% of variable interest rate exposure	0%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%

- 9.4. **Indicator 9** - Maturity structure of borrowing. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's immediate exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing.

Maturity Structure of borrowing	Upper Limit	As at 18 January 2019
Under 12 months	40%	7%
12 months to 2 years	40%	6%
2 years to 5 years	80%	2%
5 years to 10 years	80%	4%
10 years and above	100%	82%

- 9.5. The following chart shows the Council's debt maturity profile as at 18 January 2019:



10. Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need (Future Capital Expenditure)

- 10.1. The Council will not borrow more than it requires, or in advance of its needs, purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. However, at any time the Council may obtain a loan or other financing at what are considered advantageous terms in anticipation of future capital expenditure. The money borrowed will be invested temporarily. The Council may also borrow in the day-to-day management of its cash flow operations or as an alternative to redeeming higher yielding investments.
- 10.2. The Council will ensure there is a clear link between the capital programme across the future years and the maturity profile of the existing debt portfolio which supports the need to take funding in advance of capital expenditure.
- 10.3. The Council will ensure the ongoing revenue liabilities created, and the implications for the future plans and budgets have been considered and factored into the MTFS.
- 10.4. Consideration will be given to the alternative interest rate bases available, the most appropriate periods to fund and repayment profiles to use.

11. Debt Rescheduling on Existing Debt Portfolio

- 11.1. Short-term borrowing rates are forecast to be considerably cheaper than longer term fixed interest rates. There may be potential to generate savings by switching existing long-term debt to short-term debt. However, these savings will need to be considered in the light of the current treasury position and the cost of debt repayment (premiums incurred). Debt rescheduling will only be carried out on the existing debt portfolio. Future borrowing will be carried out as per this strategy and over shorter periods of time.

12. Investment Strategy Principles

- 12.1. The Council's investment priorities will be security first, portfolio liquidity second and then yield, (return).
- 12.2. The Council's investment policy has regard to the following: -
 - MHCLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance")
 - CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2017 ("the Code")
 - CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance Notes 2018
- 12.3. The MHCLG and CIPFA have extended the meaning of 'investments' to include both financial and non-financial investments. This report deals solely with 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).

13. Investment Counterparty Selection Criteria and Financial Investment Strategy

- 13.1. As the Council has run down its cash balances, surplus cash will be generated from cash flow movements e.g. a grant received in advance of spend or from borrowing in advance of need. Therefore investment activity will be kept to a minimum.
- 13.2. However, where it is necessary for investments to be undertaken in order to manage the Council's cash flows, the Council's primary principle is for the security of its investments. 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.
 - 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.
- 13.3. The Acting Corporate Director: Resources will maintain a counterparty list in compliance with the set out below. Any revision of the criteria will be submitted to Council for approval as necessary.
- 13.4. The Council's minimum criteria will apply to the lowest rating for any institution according to the type of investment account being used. For instance, the credit rating criteria for the use of the Council's call accounts and Money Market Funds, which are used for short-term investments only, will use the Short-Term credit ratings in the table shown within 13.5. If an institution is rated by the three credit agencies and two meet the Council's criteria and the other one does not, the institution will fall outside the lending criteria. This complies with a CIPFA Treasury Management Panel recommendation in March 2009 and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.
- 13.5. In order to minimise the risk to investing, the Council has clearly stipulated the minimum acceptable credit quality of counterparties for inclusion on the lending list. The Council uses the creditworthiness service provided by Link Asset Services which uses ratings from all three rating agencies, Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's, as well as Credit Default Swap (CDS) spreads. Link Asset Services monitors ratings on a real time basis and notifies clients immediately on any rating changes or possible downgrades. Minimum Credit Ratings Criteria – further explanations are given in Annex 1.

Minimum Credit Ratings for Group 2 Banks		
Agency	Short-Term	Long-Term
Fitch	F1	A
Moody's	P-1	Aa
Standard & Poor's	A-1	A

- 13.6. All credit ratings will be monitored weekly. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three rating agencies by Link Asset Services
- 13.7. The Council does not place sole reliance on the use of Link Asset Service's advice as the Council uses internal expertise and knowledge to make decisions. Market data, market information, information on government support for banks and the credit ratings of that government support are also considered when making treasury decisions.
- 13.8. The criteria for providing a pool of high quality investment counterparties (both Specified and Non-Specified investments), and is shown in the order of use by the Council, all of the following are subject to continuous credit rating reviews:
- Money Market Funds
 - UK Government (including gilts and the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF)).
 - Bank of Scotland call account (part of the Lloyds Banking Group).
 - UK Local Authorities.

- 13.9. The Council also uses Barclays Bank, the Council's own banker. If Barclays fall below the criterion in 13.5 then the following strategy will be followed:
- with regard to the three credit rating agencies, if one reduces its rating but the other two remain the same or improve, the Council will reduce the maximum of £15m in the call account to £5m and a keep a low balance in the current account.
 - if two or more credit rating agencies reduce their ratings below the criteria in 13.5 the Council will still require to use the Barclays accounts for transactional purposes, so maximum balance of £500k will be left overnight in the current account to prevent the account becoming overdrawn and incurring overdraft fees.
 - Seek advice from Link Asset Services
- 13.10. The above action applies to Barclays only due to its status as the Council's banking provider. Use of other bank accounts would be subject to criteria set out in the point 13.5. The above approach to Barclay's Bank has been developed following consideration that the Council needs banking facilities to process daily banking transactions, and such activity presents a lower risk profile compared to investment activity the significant impact, resource requirement, and risk exposure of changing bank provider the possible state and stability of the banking sector and viable alternative suppliers.
- Banks Group 1 - Part nationalised UK banks - Lloyds Banking Group Plc. (Bank of Scotland and Lloyds) and Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc. (National Westminster Bank, The Royal Bank of Scotland and Ulster Bank Ltd). These banks can be included if they continue to be part nationalised and / or they meet the ratings in 14.6.
 - Banks Group 2 – good credit quality - the Council will only use banks which are UK banks and have the minimum credit ratings criteria relating to the type of investment being undertaken.
 - Building Societies – if they meet the ratings above
 - Money Market Funds - AAA rated by Fitch
 - Bill Payment Service – The Council currently has a contract with Santander UK who collect payments of Council Tax through the post office via various methods of payment such as Paypoint. The funds that are collected are transferred to the Council daily thus minimising the risk of Santander UK holding the Council's cash. This arrangement for the bill payment service falls outside the investment criteria for investments therefore any downgrade of Santander UK will not affect this service. However this arrangement will be closely monitored to ensure funds continue to be transferred daily.
- 13.11. The Council's lending list will comprise of the institutions that meet the investment criteria above. Each counterparty on the list is assigned a counterparty limit as per the table in Annex 1. Counterparties that no longer meet the investment criteria due to a credit rating downgrade will be removed from the list and any changes will be approved by Council. Approval will also be required if any new counterparties are added to the lending list.
- 13.12. Link Asset Services approach to assessing creditworthiness of institutions is by combining credit ratings, credit watches and credit outlooks to produce a colour coding system. The Council will use counterparties within the following maximum maturity periods, in order to mitigate the risk of investing in these institutions:

Link Asset Services Banding	Description
Blue	1 year (only applies to nationalised / semi nationalised UK banks)
Orange	1 year
Red	6 months
Green	3 months
No colour	The Council will not invest with these institutions

13.13. The proposed criteria for Specified and Non-Specified investments are shown in Annex 1 for approval.

13.14. **Indicator 11** - Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 365 days excluding loans. This limit is set with regard to the Council's liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for an early sale of an investment, and is based on the availability of funds after each year-end and up-dates are reported to the Audit Committee at midyear.

Overall limit for sums invested over 365 days	2017/18 Actual £m	2018/19 Est £m	2019/20 Est £m	2020/21 Est £m	2021/22 Est £m	2022/23 Est £m	2023/24 Est £m
Principal sums invested 365 days	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0

14. Loans Made to Third Parties

14.1. The Council makes secured loans to third parties to advance the Council's strategic interests.

14.2. Loans are only made after the Council's formal decision making process has been followed. This includes formal approval by the Acting Corporate Director: Resources.

14.3. As part of the formal decision to make the loan, the security for the loan will be assessed as to its adequacy in the event of the third party defaulting on repayment.

14.4. The Council have approved the secured capital loans to third parties which are set about in the following table.

Third Party Details	Current Loan Advanced	Maximum Exposure
Longhurst Housing Association (previously Axiom)	Capital Loan £6.7m	£30.0m
ECS Peterborough 1 LLP	Capital Loan £23.2m	£23.5m
Affordable Housing	Nil	Not Agreed
Hotel Loan	Nil	£15.0m

14.5. Individual loan agreements provide for the recovery of the capital loan in the event of a default.

14.6. An unsecured loan to Peterborough Limited, a Council wholly own company, of £1.5m is due to be advanced at the end of the 2018/19 financial year for a period of five years.

14.7. Further unsecured loans to Council owned Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCo's) only may require to be issued during the financial year and will only be issued in accordance with the governance set out in point 14.2 above.

15. Non-financial Investments

- 15.1. The Council does currently not hold any non-financial investments whose purpose is to generate revenue to support core services. For further information see the Acquisitions Policy.

16. Treasury Management Scheme of Delegation

- 16.1. The following is a list of the main tasks involved in treasury management and who in the Council is responsible for them:

Full Council / Audit Committee

- Receiving and reviewing reports on treasury management policies, practices and activities.
- Approval of the Annual Strategy.

Audit Committee / S151 Officer (Acting Corporate Director: Resources)

- Approval of / amendments to the Council'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.

Section 151 Officer (Acting Corporate Director: Resources) / Service Director Financial Services / Head of Corporate Finance

- Reviewing the Treasury Management Policy and procedures and making recommendations to the responsible body.
- Recommending clauses, treasury management policy/practices and making recommendations to the responsible body.
- Submitting regular treasury management 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 advisors

Specified Investment Credit Criteria and Limits**Specified Investment:**

- Offer high perceived security such as placements with Central Government Agencies, Local Authorities or with organisations that have strong credit ratings
- They offer high liquidity i.e. short-term or easy access to funds
- Are denominated in £ sterling
- Have maturity dates of no more than 1 year
- For an institution scheme to qualify as a 'Specified Investment' it must have a minimum rating (see Section 14.6)

Investment Type	Maximum Maturity Period	Minimum Credit Criteria	Collective Limit £m	Individual Limit £m
Deposit accounts with regulated UK Banks and UK Building Societies	Repayable on call, without notice	Minimum of two short-term rating criteria	100	15
Money Market Funds repayable on call, no notice	Call	Minimum rating – AAA (Fitch)	50	10
Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility	6 months currently	UK Government backed	N/A	75
Term Deposits UK Government & Local Authorities	Maturities of up to 1 year	Sovereign risk high security not credit rated	100	20
Term Deposits & Certificates of Deposit Banks Group 1	Maturities of up to 1 year	Minimum of three short-term rating criteria	100	75
UK Government & Local Authority Stock Issues	Maturities of up to 1 year	Sovereign risk high security not credit rated	100	20
Term deposits & Certificates of Deposit Banks Group 2	6 months	Minimum of three short-term rating criteria	50	10
Forward Term Deposits with Regulated UK Banks	Maturities of up to 1 year	Minimum of three short-term rating criteria	100	15

Non-specified Investment Credit Criteria and Limits

- With the same institutions classified as “specified” investments but have maturity dates in excess of one year, or
- Are offered by organisations that are not credit rated or the credit rating does not meet the criteria set out above
- In the current economic climate the Council has run down its cash balances as an alternative to borrowing and investments have been made short-term and the Council would not consider using investments that fall under the ‘Non-Specified’ Investments category at this time
- If the Council decide to use these investments then Indicator 11 will need to be revised

Investment Type	Maximum Maturity Period	Minimum Credit Criteria	Collective Limit £m	Individual Limit £m
Term deposits with UK Government & Local Authorities	1-5 years	Sovereign risk high security not credit rated	20	20
Term deposits & Certificates of Deposit with Banks Group 1	1-5 years (tradable)	F1(Fitch – short-term) AAA (long-term)	10	10
UK Government & Local Authority Stock Issues	1-10 years (tradable)	Sovereign risk high security not credit rated	10	10
Term deposits & Certificates of Deposit with Banks Group 2	1-5 years (tradable)	F1 (Fitch-short-term) A (long-term)	20	10
Deposit accounts with regulated UK building societies	1 – 5 years	F1 (Fitch short-term) A (long-term)	5	5
Term deposits UK building societies no formal credit rating	Up to 1 year	Financial position assessed by Acting Corporate Director: Resources.	5	5
Bonds issued by financial institution guaranteed by UK Govt	1-10 years (tradable)	UK Govt backed AAA (Fitch, S&P etc.)	5	5

In the current economic climate the Council has run down its cash balances as an alternative to borrowing and investments have been made short-term and the Council would not consider using investments that fall under the ‘Non-Specified’ Investments category at this time.

Explanation of Credit Ratings

Agency	Short-Term	Long-Term
Fitch	F1-Highest short-term credit quality. Indicates the strongest intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments; a “+” may be added to denote any exceptionally strong credit feature.	A-High credit quality. ‘A’ ratings denote expectations of low credit risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.
Moody’s	P-1-superior ability to repay short-term debt obligations	Aa-high quality and are subject to very low credit risk
Standard & Poor’s	A-1-The obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is strong. Within this category, certain obligations are designated with a plus sign (+). This indicates that the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitment on these obligations is extremely strong.	A-more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions. However the obligor’s capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is still strong.

This page is intentionally left blank