

# **Treasury Management Strategy Statement**

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and  
Annual Investment Strategy

2023/24

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## 1.1 Background

The Authority is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low-risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the 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 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. **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. In addition, this Authority will receive quarterly update reports.
- c. **An annual treasury report** – This is a backward-looking review document and provides details of a selection of actual prudential and treasury indicators and actual treasury operations compared to the estimates within the strategy.

### **Scrutiny**

The above reports are required to be adequately scrutinised before being recommended to the Full Council. This role is undertaken by the Cabinet.

**Quarterly reports** – In addition to the three major reports detailed above, from 2023/24 quarterly reporting (end of June/end of December) is also required. However, these additional reports do not have to be reported to Full Council but do require to be adequately scrutinised. This role is undertaken by the Cabinet. (The reports, specifically, should comprise updated Treasury/Prudential Indicators.).

## **1.3 Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24**

The strategy for 2023/24 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 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.

#### **1.5 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.

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

The scale and nature of this will depend on the size and complexity of the organisation's treasury management needs. Organisations should consider how to assess whether treasury management staff and board/ council members have the required knowledge and skills to undertake their roles and whether they have been able to maintain those skills and keep them up to date.

As a minimum, authorities should carry out the following to monitor and review knowledge and skills:

- Record attendance at training and ensure action is taken where poor attendance is identified;
- Prepare tailored learning plans for treasury management officers and board/council members;

- Require treasury management officers and board/council members to undertake self-assessment against the required competencies (as set out in the schedule that may be adopted by the organisation);
- Have regular communication with officers and board/council members, encouraging them to highlight training needs on an ongoing basis.

In further support of the revised training requirements, CIPFA's Better Governance Forum and Treasury Management Network have produced a 'self-assessment by members responsible for the scrutiny of treasury management', which is available from the CIPFA website to download.

In July 2022 the Council's Treasury Consultants provided training to all Members as part of a Member refresher programme.

The training needs of treasury management officers are periodically reviewed with officers regularly attending seminars and conferences to keep informed of current issues and new starters receiving introductory training as required.

### **1.6 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 2023/24 – 2025/26

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 and Financing

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</b>	<b>2021/22 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Estimate</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>
Great Council	130	195	38	0	12
People	229	82	345	345	345
Place	200	1,349	632	75	585
<b>Total General Expenses</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>1,626</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>942</b>
HRA	1,949	5,444	2,592	2,223	4,140
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,508</b>	<b>7,070</b>	<b>3,607</b>	<b>2,643</b>	<b>5,082</b>

Other long-term liabilities - the above financing need excludes other long-term liabilities, 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 £'000</b>	<b>2021/22 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Estimate</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>
Capital receipts	986	2,713	1,133	325	346
Capital grants	264	786	684	345	345
Reserves	97	3,037	-	58	80
Repairs and Renewals Fund	18	195	73	75	97
Contribution from third parties	32	43	-	-	-
Revenue	1,111	46	1,717	1,840	3,714
<b>Net financing need for the year</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500</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 £54k of such schemes within the CFR.

The Authority is asked to approve the CFR projections below:

<b>Capital Financing requirement £'000</b>	<b>2021/22 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Estimate</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>
General Expenses	66	304	293	282	771
Housing	31,484	31,484	31,484	31,484	31,484
<b>Total CFR</b>	<b>31,550</b>	<b>31,788</b>	<b>31,777</b>	<b>31,766</b>	<b>32,255</b>
<b>Movement in CFR</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>489</b>

<b>Movement in CFR represented by:</b>					
Net financing need for the year (above)	0	250	0	0	500
Less MRP/VRP and other financing movements	-11	-12	-11	-11	-11
<b>Movement in CFR</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>489</b>

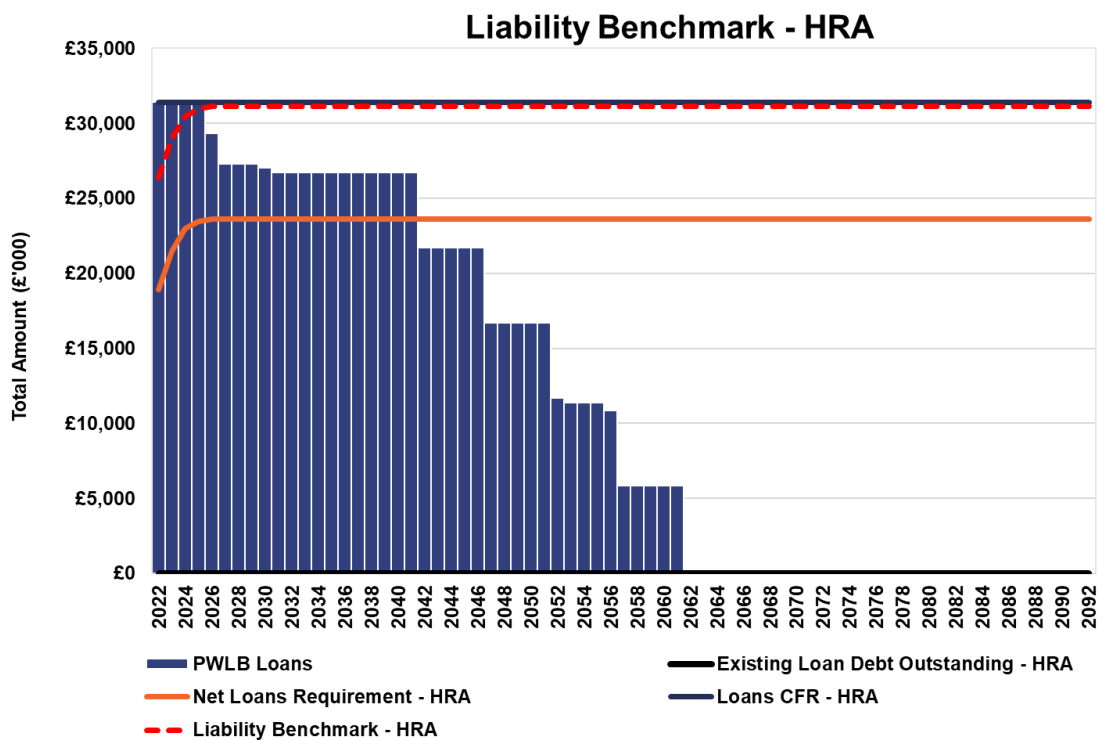
## 2.3 Liability Benchmark

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

There are four components to the LB: -

1. **Existing loan debt outstanding:** the Authority's existing loans that are still outstanding in future years.
2. **Loans CFR:** this is calculated in accordance with the loans CFR definition in the Prudential Code and projected into the future based on approved prudential borrowing and planned MRP.
3. **Net loans requirement:** this will show the Authority's gross loan debt less treasury management investments at the last financial year-end, projected into the future and based on its approved prudential borrowing, planned MRP and any other major cash flows forecast.
4. **Liability benchmark** this equals net loans requirement plus short-term liquidity allowance.

The HRA graph below shows that the Council's HRA borrowing is below the CFR and will reduce over time, however it should be noted this is a snapshot at this current point and when the debt matures those loans will need to be refinanced. The graph below shows the net loan requirement is expected to remain below the liability benchmark after any refinancing.





## 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.

<b>Year End Resources £'000</b>	<b>2021/22 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Estimate</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>
Fund balances/reserves	15,240	12,666	10,691	10,017	9,480
Capital Receipts	5,019	2,311	1,345	1,075	785
Provisions	1,610	1,610	1,610	1,610	1,610
<b>Total Core Funds</b>	<b>21,869</b>	<b>16,587</b>	<b>13,646</b>	<b>12,702</b>	<b>11,875</b>
Working Capital*	2,560	2,560	2,560	2,560	2,560
Under borrowing	71	321	321	321	821
<b>Expected investments</b>	<b>24,500</b>	<b>19,468</b>	<b>16,527</b>	<b>15,583</b>	<b>15,256</b>

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

## 2.4 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

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 2022/23 will not be subject to an MRP charge until 2023/24, 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. The Council has not made any VRP to date.

### 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 31.3.22 and for the position as at 31.12.22 are shown below for both borrowing and investments.

<b>TREASURY PORTFOLIO</b>				
	<b>actual</b>	<b>actual</b>	<b>current</b>	<b>current</b>
	<b>31.3.22</b>	<b>31.3.22</b>	<b>31.12.22</b>	<b>31.12.22</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Treasury investments</b>				
banks	21,000	79%	21,500	75%
money market funds	3,500	13%	5,340	19%
<b>Total managed in house</b>	<b>24,500</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>26,840</b>	<b>93%</b>
property funds	2,000	8%	2,000	7%
<b>Total managed externally</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total treasury investments</b>	<b>26,500</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>28,840</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Treasury external borrowing</b>				
PWLB	31,413	100%	31,413	100%
<b>Total external borrowing</b>	<b>31,413</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>31,413</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Net treasury investments / (borrowing)</b>	<b>-4,913</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-2,573</b>	<b>0</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.

External Debt £'000	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	Actual	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Debt at 1 April	31,413	31,413	31,413	31,413	31,413
Expected change in Debt	0	0	0	0	0
Other long-term liabilities (OLTL)	77	66	54	43	32
Expected change in OLTL	-11	-12	-11	-11	-11
<b>Actual gross debt at 31 March</b>	<b>31,479</b>	<b>31,467</b>	<b>31,456</b>	<b>31,445</b>	<b>31,434</b>
<b>The Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<b>31,550</b>	<b>31,788</b>	<b>31,777</b>	<b>31,766</b>	<b>32,255</b>
<b>Under / (over) borrowing</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>821</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 2023/24 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue or speculative purposes.

The Director of Corporate Services 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	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Debt	31,413	31,413	31,413	31,413
Other long-term liabilities	54	43	32	21
Headroom	2,533	2,544	2,555	2,566
Total	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000

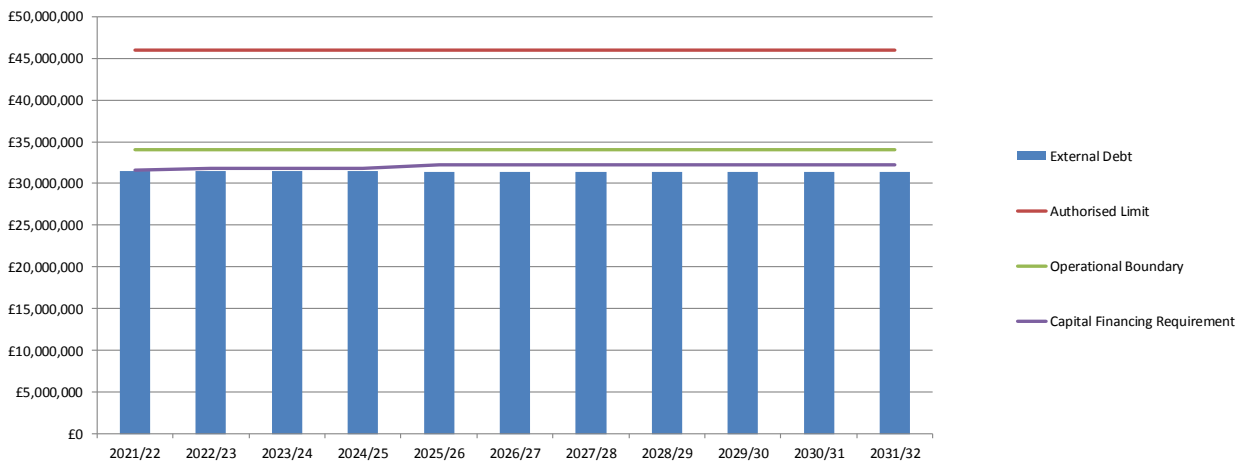
**The Authorised Limit for external debt.** This is a key prudential indicator and represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a legal limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by the Full Council. It reflects the level of external 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>2022/23 Estimate</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate</b>
Debt	45,940	45,950	45,960	45,970
Other long-term liabilities	60	50	40	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,000</b>	<b>46,000</b>	<b>46,000</b>	<b>46,000</b>

### CAPITAL FINANCING REQUIREMENTS

	Actual 2021/22	Estimated 2022/23	Estimated 2023/24	Estimated 2024/25	Estimated 2025/26	Estimated 2026/27	Estimated 2027/28	Estimated 2028/29	Estimated 2029/30	Estimated 2030/31	Estimated 2031/32
<b>CFR (including PFI and finance leases)</b>											
HRACFR	£31,484,000	£31,484,000	£31,484,000	£31,484,000	£31,484,000	£31,484,000	£31,484,000	£31,484,000	£31,484,000	£31,484,000	£31,484,000
GFCFR	£66,000	£304,000	£293,000	£282,000	£771,000	£760,000	£750,000	£750,000	£750,000	£750,000	£750,000
<b>Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<b>£31,550,000</b>	<b>£31,788,000</b>	<b>£31,777,000</b>	<b>£31,766,000</b>	<b>£32,255,000</b>	<b>£32,244,000</b>	<b>£32,234,000</b>	<b>£32,234,000</b>	<b>£32,234,000</b>	<b>£32,234,000</b>	<b>£32,234,000</b>
<b>External Borrowing</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>
Deferred Liabilities	£66,000	£54,000	£43,000	£32,000	£21,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>External Debt</b>	<b>£31,479,000</b>	<b>£31,467,000</b>	<b>£31,456,000</b>	<b>£31,445,000</b>	<b>£31,434,000</b>	<b>£31,423,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>	<b>£31,413,000</b>
Authorised Limit	£46,000,000	£46,000,000	£46,000,000	£46,000,000	£46,000,000	£46,000,000	£46,000,000	£46,000,000	£46,000,000	£46,000,000	£46,000,000
Operational Boundary	£34,000,000	£34,000,000	£34,000,000	£34,000,000	£34,000,000	£34,000,000	£34,000,000	£34,000,000	£34,000,000	£34,000,000	£34,000,000



### 3.3 Prospects for Interest Rates

The Council has appointed Link Group as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. Link provided the following forecasts on 08.11.22. These are forecasts for certainty rates, gilt yields plus 80 bps.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## PWLB RATES

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

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

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

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

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

- **Labour and supply shortages** prove more enduring and disruptive and depress economic activity (accepting that in the near-term this is also an upside risk to inflation and, thus, rising gilt yields).
- **The Bank of England** acts too quickly, or too far, over the next two years to raise Bank Rate and causes UK economic growth, and increases in inflation, to be weaker than we currently anticipate.
- **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, China/Taiwan/US, Iran, North Korea and Middle Eastern countries, which could lead to increasing safe-haven flows.

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

- The **Bank of England is too slow** in its pace and strength of increases in Bank Rate and, therefore, allows inflationary pressures to build up too strongly and for a longer period within the UK economy, which then necessitates an even more rapid series of increases in Bank Rate faster than we currently expect.
- **The Government** acts too slowly to increase taxes and/or cut expenditure to balance the public finances, in the light of the cost-of-living squeeze.



- **The pound weakens** because of a lack of confidence in the UK Government's fiscal policies, resulting in investors pricing in a risk premium for holding UK sovereign debt.
- Longer term **US treasury yields** rise strongly, if inflation numbers disappoint on the upside, and pull gilt yields up higher than currently forecast.

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

Our suggested budgeted earnings rates for investments up to about three months' duration in each financial year are as follows: -

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

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 increases over the first half of 2023.

Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will be adopted with the 2023/24 treasury operations. The Director for Corporate Services 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 to the appropriate decision-making body at the next available opportunity.

### **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.

### **3.6 Rescheduling**

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

If rescheduling is to be undertaken, it will be reported to Cabinet, 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 Authority'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 Authority's investment priorities will be security first, portfolio liquidity second and then yield (return). The Authority will aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity and with regard to the Authority'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 Authority 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 Authority 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 £10m.
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. This Authority 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. This Authority 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 2022/23 under IFRS 9, this Authority will consider the implications of investment instruments which could result in an adverse movement in the value of the amount invested and resultant charges at the end of the year to the General Fund. (In November 2018, the MHCLG, concluded a consultation for a temporary override to allow English local authorities time to adjust their portfolio of all pooled investments by announcing a statutory override to delay implementation of IFRS 9 for five

years ending 31.3.23. At the current juncture it has not been determined whether a further extension to the over-ride will be agreed by Government.

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

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

The above criteria are unchanged from last year.

## **4.2 Creditworthiness Policy**

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

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

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

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

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

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

All credit ratings will be monitored on a regular basis. The Authority is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of the Link creditworthiness service.

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

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

Y	Pi1	Pi2	P	B	O	R	G	N/C
1	1.25	1.5	2	3	4	5	6	7
Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 2yrs	Up to 1yr	Up to 1yr	Up to 6mths	Up to 100days	No Colour

An institution with any colour coding from blue or orange (up to 1 year) to green (up to 100 days) can be used for fixed term investments for up to 1 year in duration.

### Creditworthiness.

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

### CDS prices

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

### Limits

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

- Non-specified treasury management investment limit.** The Authority has determined that it will limit the maximum total exposure of treasury management investments to non-specified treasury management investments as being 25% of the total treasury management investment portfolio.

- b. **Country limit.** The Authority 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.

**Other limits.** In addition: -

- No more than 50% with any one country outside of the UK
- limits in place above will apply to a group of companies/institutions;
- sector limits will be monitored regularly for appropriateness.

### 4.3 Investment Strategy

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

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

#### **Investment returns expectations.**

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

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

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



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

For its cash flow generated balances, the Authority will seek to utilise its business reserve instant access and notice accounts, Money Market Funds and short-dated deposits, (overnight to 100 days), in order to benefit from the compounding of interest.

**Investment treasury indicator and limit** - total principal funds invested for greater than 365 days. These limits are set with regard to the Authority'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 Authority is asked to approve the following treasury indicator and limit: -

<b>Upper limit for principal sums invested for longer than 365 days</b>			
<b>£m</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
Principal sums invested for longer than 365 days	£10m	£10m	£10m
Current investments as at 31/12/22 in excess of 1 year maturing in each year	£0m	£0m	£0m

#### **4.4 Investment Performance / Risk Benchmarking**

This Authority will use an investment benchmark to assess the investment performance of its investment portfolio of overnight, 7 day SONIA.

#### **4.5 End of Year Investment Repo**

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

#### **4.6 External Fund Managers**

£2m of the Council's funds is externally managed on a discretionary / pooled basis by CCLA. In addition to this, the Council uses Money Market Funds of which there was £5.34m invested as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

The Council fully appreciates the importance of monitoring the activity and resultant performance of its appointed external fund manager. In order to aid this assessment, the Council is provided with a suite of regular reporting from its manager. For the property fund, this includes receipt of monthly updates and quarterly statements on fund performance and annual meetings with the external fund manager to review CCLA performance in the current market. Money Market Funds are used as short term cashflow investments, of which all are made are at the decision of the treasury officer in accordance with the treasury strategy. Statements are received on a regular basis.

In addition to formal reports, the Council also meets with representatives of the fund manager on a regular basis. These meetings allow for additional scrutiny of the manager's activity as well as discussions on the outlook for the fund as well as wider markets.

## **5 APPENDICES**

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

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

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.

### 5.1.2 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.

%	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
Non-HRA	-6.93	-5.07	-8.08	-7.60	-8.18
HRA	33.43	31.91	29.33	29.72	29.48

Interest receivable has increased from 2022/23 alongside Business Rates income reflecting rising interest rates and resulting in a temporary fall in the Non-HRA indicator above.

The HRA indicator falls gradually over time as a result of an increase in housing rents exceeding net costs however these resulting surpluses are transferred into the reserve to help fund the capital programme.

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

#### HRA Ratios

	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
HRA Debt (£'000)	31,413	31,413	31,413	31,413	31,413
HRA Revenues (£'000)	7,717	8,139	8,795	8,849	9,093
Ratio of Debt to Revenues (%)	25%	26%	28%	28%	29%
Interest Cover (Ideally over 1.10)	0.59	0.24	0.49	0.51	0.66

Two new HRA ratios have been included (Ratio of Debt Revenues and interest cover) which were agreed as part of the updated HRA Business Plan. These will be used to evaluate the impact and affordability of any future borrowing proposals.

	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
HRA Debt (£'000)	31,413	31,413	31,413	31,413	31,413
Number of HRA Dwellings	1,798	1,791	1,786	1,781	1,776
Debt per Dwelling (£)	17.47	17.54	17.59	17.64	17.69

### Commercial and Service Investment Income to Net Revenue Stream

This Indicator is aimed at showing the financial exposure of the Authority to the loss of its non-treasury investment income. The higher the ratio, the more reliant the Authority is on income from commercial and service investments which represents a potential affordability risk should those investments perform badly or fail.

Authorities without commercial and service investments need not report this indicator which is the case for Melton as it does not hold any commercial investments that are held for purely financial return. Where assets generate income, these are long standing assets held for historic or regeneration benefit such as Kings Street, Industrial Units and the Cattle market.

#### 5.1.3 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 of fixed interest rate borrowing 2023/24</b>		
	<b>Lower</b>	<b>Upper</b>
Under 12 months	0%	50%
12 months to 2 years	0%	50%
2 years to 5 years	0%	50%
5 years to 10 years	0%	50%
10 years to 20 years	0%	50%
20 years to 30 years	0%	50%
30 years to 40 years	0%	50%
40 years to 50 years	0%	50%
<b>Maturity structure of variable interest rate borrowing 2023/24</b>		
	<b>Lower</b>	<b>Upper</b>
Under 12 months	0%	50%
12 months to 2 years	0%	50%
2 years to 5 years	0%	50%
5 years to 10 years	0%	50%
10 years to 20 years	0%	50%
20 years to 30 years	0%	50%
30 years to 40 years	0%	50%
40 years to 50 years	0%	50%

### 5.1.4. Control of Interest Rate Exposure

Please see paragraphs 3.3, 3.4 and 4.4.

### 5.2 INTEREST RATE FORECASTS 2022-2025

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

PWLB forecasts are based on PWLB certainty rates.

### 5.3 ECONOMIC BACKGROUND (commentary provided by LINK)

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

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

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

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

The UK unemployment rate fell to a 48-year low of 3.6%, and this despite a net migration increase of c500k. The fact is that with many economic participants registered as long-term sick, the UK labour force actually shrunk by c£500k in the year

to June. Without an increase in the labour force participation rate, it is hard to see how the UK economy will be able to grow its way to prosperity, and with average wage increases running at 5.5% - 6% the MPC will be concerned that wage inflation will prove just as sticky as major supply-side shocks to food and energy that have endured since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 22nd February 2022.

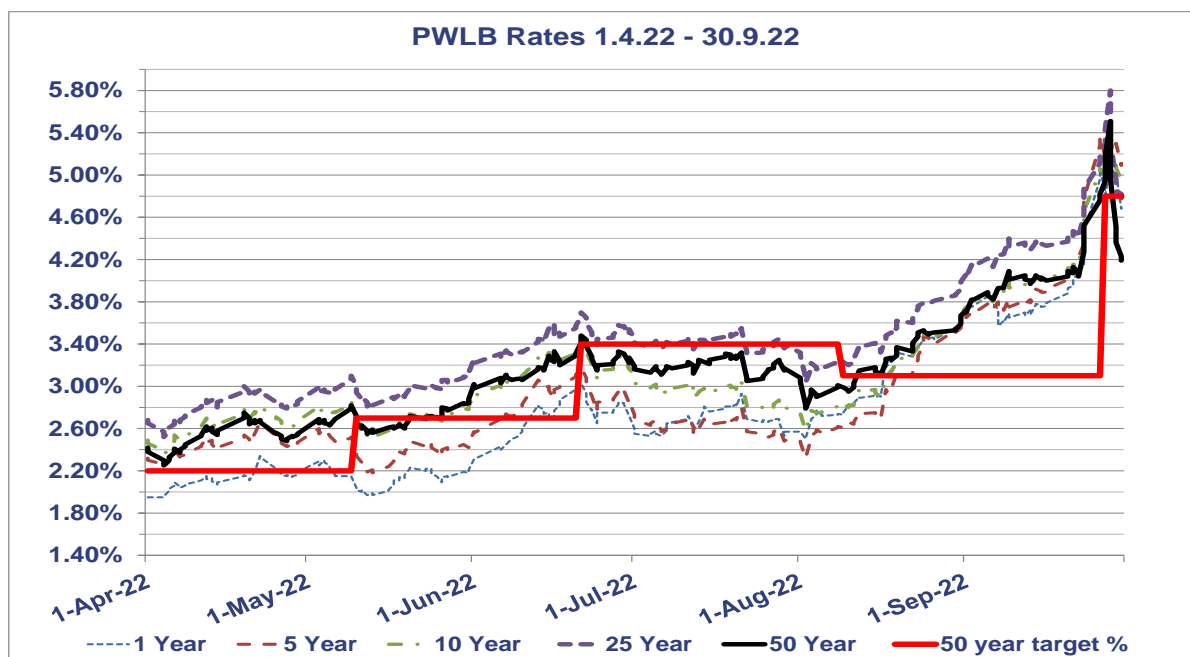
Throughout Q3 Bank Rate increased, finishing the quarter at 2.25% (an increase of 1%). Q4 has seen rates rise to 3% in November and the market expects Bank Rate to hit 4.5% by May 2023.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

## CENTRAL BANK CONCERNS – NOVEMBER 2022

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

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

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

the last year, only for the Bank to have to play catch-up as the inflationary data has proven stronger than expected.

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



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

**SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS:** All such investments will be sterling denominated, with **maturities up to a maximum of 1 year**, meeting the minimum 'high' quality criteria where applicable. (Non-specified investments which would be specified investments apart from originally being for a period longer than 12 months, will be classified as being specified once the remaining period to maturity falls to under twelve months.)

**NON-SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS:** These are any investments which do not meet the specified investment criteria. A maximum of £10m \*\* will be held in aggregate in non-specified investment.

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

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

	Minimum credit criteria / colour band	** Max % of total investments / £ limit per institution	Max. maturity period
DMADF – UK Government	Yellow	100%	6 months (max. is set by the DMO*)
UK Gilts	Yellow	£2m	5 years
UK Treasury Bills	Yellow	£2m	364 days (max. is set by the DMO*)
Bonds issued by multilateral development banks	Yellow	£2m	5 years
Money Market Funds CNAV	AAA	£3m per fund	Liquid
Money Market Funds LNAV	AAA	£3m per fund	Liquid
Money Market Funds VNAV	AAA	£3m per fund	Liquid

Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.25	AAA	100%	Liquid
Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.5	AAA	100%	Liquid
Local Authorities	N/A	100%	12 Months
	N/A	£2m – non specified	5 Years
Term Deposits with Housing Associations	Blue Orange Red Green No Colour	£3m per fund	12 months 12 months 6 months 100 days Not for use
Term Deposits with Banks and Building Societies	Blue Orange Red Green No Colour	£6m per institution £9m per banking group	12 months 12 months 6 months 100 days Not for use
	Blue Orange Red Green No Colour	£3m per institution	3 years
CDs or Corporate Bonds with Banks and Building Societies	Blue Orange Red Green No Colour	£3m- non specified per banking group	12 months 12 months 6 months 100 days Not for use
Property Funds (longer term investment option)	N/A	£5m	Minimum 5 years
Gilt Funds	UK sovereign rating	£5m	5 Years

\* DMO – is the Debt Management Office of HM Treasury

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

## **5.5 TREASURY MANAGEMENT SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

### **(i) Council**

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

### **(ii) Cabinet**

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

### **(iii) Director for Corporate Services**

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

## 5.6 THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT ROLE OF THE SECTION 151 OFFICER

### The S151 (responsible) officer – Director for Corporate Services

- recommending clauses, treasury management policy/practices for approval, reviewing the same regularly, and monitoring compliance;
- submitting regular treasury management policy reports;
- submitting budgets and budget variations;
- receiving and reviewing management information reports;
- reviewing the performance of the treasury management function;
- ensuring the adequacy of treasury management resources and skills, and the effective division of responsibilities within the treasury management function;
- ensuring the adequacy of internal audit, and liaising with external audit;
- recommending the appointment of external service providers.
- preparation of a Capital Strategy to include capital expenditure, capital financing, non-financial investments and treasury management, with a long-term timeframe
- ensuring that the Capital Strategy is prudent, sustainable, affordable and prudent in the long term and provides value for money
- ensuring that due diligence has been carried out on all treasury and non-financial investments and is in accordance with the risk appetite of the authority
- ensure that the Authority has appropriate legal powers to undertake expenditure on non-financial assets and their financing
- ensuring the proportionality of all investments so that the Authority does not undertake a level of investing which exposes the Authority to an excessive level of risk compared to its financial resources
- ensuring that an adequate governance process is in place for the approval, monitoring and ongoing risk management of all non-financial investments and long-term liabilities
- provision to members of a schedule of all non-treasury investments including material investments in subsidiaries, joint ventures, loans and financial guarantees
- ensuring that members are adequately informed and understand the risk exposures taken on by the Authority
- ensuring that the Authority has adequate expertise, either in house or externally provided, to carry out the above
- creation of Treasury Management Practices which specifically deal with how non treasury investments will be carried out and managed, to include the following: -
  - *Risk management (TMP1 and schedules), including investment and risk management criteria for any material non-treasury investment portfolios;*
  - *Performance measurement and management (TMP2 and schedules), including methodology and criteria for assessing the performance and success of non-treasury investments;*

- *Decision making, governance and organisation (TMP5 and schedules), including a statement of the governance requirements for decision making in relation to non-treasury investments; and arrangements to ensure that appropriate professional due diligence is carried out to support decision making;*
- *Reporting and management information (TMP6 and schedules), including where and how often monitoring reports are taken;*
- *Training and qualifications (TMP10 and schedules), including how the relevant knowledge and skills in relation to non-treasury investments will be arranged.*