

Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2018/19 (Updated)

Introduction

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the Treasury Code) requires the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year, and review it mid-year.

In addition, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) revised guidance on Local Authority Investments and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) in February 2018. The guidance requires the Council to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year.

This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act 2003* to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the MHCLG Guidance.

The Council has invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are therefore central to the Council's treasury management strategy.

Revised strategy: In accordance with the MHCLG Guidance, the Council will be asked to approve a revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement should the assumptions on which this report is based change significantly. Such circumstances would include, for example, a large unexpected change in interest rates, in the Council's capital programme or in the level of its investment balance.

External Context

Economic background: The major external influence on the Council's treasury management strategy for 2018/19 continues to be the UK's progress in negotiating its exit from the European Union and agreeing future trading arrangements. The EU Withdrawal Bill, which repeals the European Communities Act 1972 that took the UK into the EU and enables EU law to be transferred into UK law, narrowly made it through Parliament.

Very little progress was made in finalising negotiations with the EU (these have now been pushed into autumn 2018, with a UK-EU special summit on the Brexit deal expected in November). Nor was much progress made on future trading arrangements with non-EU countries, extending the period of uncertainty.

UK Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) index fell to 2.4% in June, a 12-month low. CPI ticked back up marginally to 2.5% in July. The Bank of England made no change to monetary policy at its meetings in May and June, however hawkish minutes and a 6-3 vote to maintain rates was followed by a unanimous decision for a rate rise of 0.25% in August, taking Bank Rate to 0.75%.

It is the view of the Council's treasury advisor that the UK economy still faces a challenging outlook as the minority government continues to negotiate the country's exit from the European Union. Central bank actions and geopolitical risks, such as prospective trade wars,

have and will continue to produce significant volatility in financial markets, including bond markets.

Financial markets: Gilt yields displayed marked volatility during the period, particularly following Italy’s political crisis in late May when government bond yields saw sharp moves akin to those at the height of the European financial crisis with falls in yield in safe-haven UK, German and US government bonds. Over the period, despite the volatility, the yield on the 5-year benchmark gilt only rose slightly from 1.13% to 1.14%, the 10-year from 1.37% to 1.39% and the 20-year gilt from 1.74% to 1.85%. Money markets rates remained low: 1-month, 3-month and 12-month LIBID rates averaged 0.45%, 0.60% and 0.87% respectively over the period.

Credit background: High profile bank failures in Italy and Portugal have reinforced concerns over the health of the European banking sector. Sluggish economies and fines for pre-crisis behaviour continue to weigh on bank profits, and any future economic slowdown will exacerbate concerns in this regard.

Bail-in legislation, which ensures that large investors including local authorities will rescue failing banks instead of taxpayers in the future, has now been fully implemented in the European Union, Switzerland and USA, while Australia and Canada are progressing with their own plans.

The big four UK banks are progressing well with ringfencing. Barclays Bank plc and HSBC Bank plc have created new banks (Barclays Bank UK and HSBC UK Bank) and transferred ringfenced (retail) business lines into the new companies. Lloyds Bank plc has created Lloyds Bank Corporate Markets as a new non-ringfenced (investment) bank. RBS has renamed existing group entities and transferred accounts to leave NatWest Markets as the non-ringfenced bank and NatWest Bank, Royal Bank of Scotland and Ulster Bank as the ringfenced banks.

There remains some uncertainty over how these changes will impact upon the credit strength of the residual legal entities.

The credit risk associated with making unsecured bank deposits has therefore increased relative to the risk of other investment options available to the Council; returns from cash deposits however remain very low.

Interest rate forecast: The Council’s treasury adviser Arlingclose’s central case is for UK for Bank Rate is to rise twice in 2019 (see below).

	Sep-18	Dec-18	Mar-19	Jun-19	Sep-19	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Arlingclose Central Ca:	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25
Downside risk	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75

Having raised policy rates in August 2018 to 0.75%, the Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has maintained expectations of a slow rise in interest rates over the forecast horizon. The market’s reaction to the rate hike suggests that investors expect both the relatively weak economic environment and political developments (Brexit negotiations and US trade relations) to limit the speed of rises in Bank Rate.

The MPC has a definite bias towards tighter monetary policy. While policymakers are wary of domestic inflationary pressures over the next two years, it is believed that the MPC members consider both that:

- 1) ultra-low interest rates result in other economic problems, and that
- 2) higher Bank Rate will be a more effective weapon should downside Brexit risks crystallise.

Local Context

On 31 March 2018, the Council held £52m of investments and had no external borrowing. During the first half of 2018/19, the balances available for investment have increased by £3m.

An additional £2m has been invested in pooled funds; this is in line with the financial strategy of increasing level of strategic investments and further diversifying into more secure and/or higher yielding asset classes.

This is set out in further detail at **Appendix 1A**. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance sheet summary and forecast

	31.3.18 Actual £'000	31.3.19 Estimate £'000	31.3.20 Forecast £'000	31.3.21 Forecast £'000
CFR	17,439	45,425	65,393	84,113
Usable Capital Receipts	(25,268)	(14,064)	(10,357)	(10,354)
Balances & Reserves	(23,575)	(23,575)	(23,575)	(23,575)
Borrowing	0	(20,000)	(50,000)	(75,000)
Net Balance Sheet Position **	(31,404)	(12,214)	(18,539)	(24,816)

**excluding working capital.

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Council's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing.

The Council is currently "debt free" (no external borrowing) although it has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme, and will therefore be required to borrow a minimum of £75m over the forecast period. Maintaining strategic investments as part of the treasury strategy will mean the borrowing requirement is expected to exceed this sum, potentially up to a maximum £124m. It should be noted that the Council has also agreed to progress with significant regeneration programmes. The financing approach agreed in the governance for these programmes is quite elastic meaning the CFR could grow further in line with supported business cases.

CIPFA's *Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities* recommends that the Council's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. Table 1 shows that the Council expects to comply with this recommendation during 2018/19.

Borrowing Strategy

The Council didn't hold any external loan finance at 31 March 2018, and this remains the case as at 30 September 2018. The balance sheet forecast in table 1 shows that the Council expects to borrow in 2018/19. The Council may decide to borrow to pre-fund future years'

requirements as well, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £124 million. Recent increases in PWLB borrowing rates indicates it may be appropriate to externalise some or all of the current CFR in the near future in order to secure favourable long term borrowing rates. This is currently being reviewed by the S151 Officer.

Objectives: The Council's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Council's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

Strategy: Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Council's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead of long-term.

By doing so, the Council is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of internal/short term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly. Arlingclose will assist the Council with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Council borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2018/19 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.

Alternatively, the Council may arrange forward starting loans during 2018/19, where the interest rate is fixed in advance, but the cash is received in later years. This would enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period.

In addition, the Council may borrow short-term loans to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.

Sources of borrowing: The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and any successor body
- Any institution approved for investments (see below)
- Any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
- UK public and private sector pension funds (except the Somerset County Council Pension Fund)
- Capital market bond investors
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues

Other sources of debt finance: In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

- operating and finance leases
- hire purchase
- Private Finance Initiative
- sale and leaseback

The Council has previously raised all of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB but it continues to investigate other sources of finance, such as local authority loans and bank loans, which may be available at more favourable rates.

Municipal Bonds Agency: UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. It plans to issue bonds on the capital markets and lend the proceeds to local authorities. This will be a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities will be required to provide bond investors with a joint and several guarantee to refund their investment in the event that the agency is unable to for any reason; and there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report to Full Council.

Short-term and variable rate loans: These loans leave the Council exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the limit on the net exposure to variable interest rates in the treasury management indicators below.

Debt rescheduling: The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Council may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk.

Investment Strategy

The Council holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the last financial year, the Council's investment balance ranged between £35 million and £75 million. As capital expenditure plans are implemented the investment balances are likely to fall unless these are supported through external funding or borrowing.

Objectives: Both the CIPFA Code and the CLG Guidance require the Council to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Council will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested.

Strategy: Given the increasing risk and very low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Council will further diversify into more secure and/or higher yielding asset classes during 2018/19. A proportion of the Council's surplus cash is currently invested in short-term unsecured bank deposits, certificates of deposit and money market funds. The financial strategy seeks to increase and maintain higher levels of investment income and we are therefore actively increasing funds held in strategic treasury investments.

MHCLG released a consultation on statutory overrides relating to the introduction of IFRS 9 Financial Instruments accounting standard from 2018/19. The consultation recognises that the requirement in IFRS 9 for certain investments to be accounted for at fair value through profit and loss (income and expenditure statement for local authorities) may introduce "more income statement volatility" which may impact on budget calculations. The consultation proposes a time-limited statutory override and has sought views whether it should be applied only to pooled property funds. The Council has responded to the consultation which closed on 30th September, strongly encouraging Government to implement the statutory override without a time limit.

Approved counterparties: The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in table 2 below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown. There are no proposals to change the limits through the mid-year review of the strategy.

Table 2: Approved investment counterparties and limits

Credit rating	Banks unsecured	Banks secured	Government	Corporates	Registered Providers
UK Govt	n/a	n/a	£ Unlimited 50 years	n/a	n/a
AAA	£3 m 5 years	£6 m 20 years	£6 m 50 years	£3 m 20 years	£3 m 20 years
AA+	£3 m 5 years	£6 m 10 years	£6 m 25 years	£3 m 10 years	£3 m 10 years
AA	£3 m 4 years	£6 m 5 years	£6 m 15 years	£3 m 5 years	£3 m 10 years
AA-	£3 m 3 years	£6 m 4 years	£6 m 10 years	£3 m 4 years	£3 m 10 years
A+	£3 m 2 years	£6 m 3 years	£3 m 5 years	£3 m 3 years	£3 m 5 years
A	£3 m 13 months	£6 m 2 years	£3 m 5 years	£3m 2 years	£3 m 5 years
A-	£3 m 6 months	£6 m 13 months	£3 m 5 years	£3 m 13 months	£3 m 5 years
None	n/a	n/a	£6 m 25 years*	n/a	£3 m 5 years
Pooled funds	£10m (nominal value) per fund				

This table must be read in conjunction with the notes below

*includes unrated UK Local Authorities

Credit rating: Investment limits are set by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from Fitch, Moody's or Standard & Poor's. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

Banks unsecured: Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.

Banks secured: Covered bonds, reverse repurchase agreements and other collateralised arrangements with banks and building societies. These investments are secured on the bank's assets, which limits the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency, and means that they are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used to determine cash and time limits. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

Government: Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject

to bail-in, and there is an insignificant risk of insolvency. Investments with the UK Central Government may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

Corporates: Loans, bonds and commercial paper issued by companies other than banks and registered providers. These investments are not subject to bail-in, but are exposed to the risk of the company going insolvent. Loans to unrated companies will only be made following an external credit assessment as part of a diversified pool in order to spread the risk widely.

Registered providers: Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of registered providers of social housing, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are tightly regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency and, as providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

Pooled funds: Shares in diversified investment vehicles consisting of the any of the above investment types, plus equity shares and property. These funds have the advantage of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a fee. Short-term Money Market Funds that offer same-day liquidity and very low or no volatility will be used as an alternative to instant access bank accounts, while pooled funds whose value changes with market prices and/or have a notice period will be used for longer investment periods.

Bond, equity and property funds offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Council to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.

Operational bank accounts: The Council may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments, but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in, and balances will therefore be kept below £200,000 per bank. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Council maintaining operational continuity.

Risk assessment and credit ratings: Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Council's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:

- no new investments will be made,
- any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
- full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.

Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "rating watch negative" or "credit watch negative") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

Other information on the security of investments: The Council understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it

invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may meet the credit rating criteria.

When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2011, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Council will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Council's cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, via the Debt Management Office or invested in government treasury bills for example, or with other local authorities. This will cause a reduction in the level of investment income earned, but will protect the principal sum invested.

Specified investments: The CLG Guidance defines specified investments as those:

- denominated in pound sterling,
- due to be repaid within 12 months of arrangement,
- not defined as capital expenditure by legislation, and
- invested with one of:
 - the UK Government,
 - a UK local authority, parish council or community council, or
 - a body or investment scheme of "high credit quality".

The Council defines "high credit quality" organisations and securities as those having a credit rating of A- or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher. For money market funds and other pooled funds "high credit quality" is defined as those having a credit rating of A- or higher.

Non-specified investments: Any investment not meeting the definition of a specified investment is classed as non-specified. The Council does not intend to make any investments denominated in foreign currencies, nor any that are defined as capital expenditure by legislation, such as company shares. Non-specified investments will therefore be limited to long-term investments, i.e. those that are due to mature 12 months or longer from the date of arrangement, and investments with bodies and schemes not meeting the definition on high credit quality. Limits on non-specified investments are shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Non-specified investment limits

	Cash limit
Total long-term investments	£50m
Total investments without credit ratings or rated below A- (except UK Government and local authorities)	£5m
Total investments (except pooled funds) with institutions domiciled in foreign countries rated below AA+	£4m
Total non-specified investments	£59m

Investment limits: The Council's revenue general reserves available to cover investment losses were £4.3 million on 31st March 2018. The maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £10 million. A group of banks under the

same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes. Limits will also be placed on fund managers, investments in brokers' nominee accounts, foreign countries and industry sectors as below. Investments in pooled funds and multilateral development banks do not count against the limit for any single foreign country, since the risk is diversified over many countries.

Table 4: Investment limits

	Cash limit
Any single organisation, except the UK Central Government	£10m each
UK Central Government	unlimited
Any group of organisations under the same ownership	£20m per group
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£20m per manager
Negotiable instruments held in a broker's nominee account	£30m per broker
Foreign countries	£12m per country
Registered providers	£8m in total
Unsecured investments with building societies	£8m in total
Loans to unrated corporates	£4m in total
Money Market Funds	£20m in total

Liquidity management: The Council maintains cash flow forecasts, updated on a daily basis, to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a prudent basis to minimise the risk of the Council being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Council's medium term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

Non Treasury Investments

The definition of investments in CIPFA's revised Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Council as well as other non-financial assets which the Council holds primarily for financial return. This is replicated in MHCLG's Investment Guidance, in which the definition of investments is further broadened to also include all such assets held partially for financial return.

The value of the Council's existing non-treasury investments are listed in **Appendix 1A**.

The Council's commercial strategy seeks to build its investment property portfolio in order to increase income available to maintain services, in response to reductions in general grant funding from Government. Most if not all of the proposed investment will require financing to be raised through borrowing. This will require the Council to disregard the statutory guidance in respect of 'borrowing in advance of need', and report the rationale for this. The purpose was clearly set out in the Council's approved Commercial Strategy prior to the release of the latest Guidance, and this will be clarified further within the Capital Strategy that is brought to Members in February 2019.

Treasury Management Indicators

The Council measures and manages its exposure to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

Security: The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit score of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

	Target
Portfolio average credit score	5.0

Liquidity: The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three month period, without additional borrowing.

	Target
Total cash available within 3 months	£10m

Interest rate exposures: This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on fixed and variable rate interest rate exposures, expressed as the proportion of net principal borrowed will be:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit on variable interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%

The indicator has been set at 100% to maximise opportunities as they arise.

Fixed rate investments and borrowings are those where the rate of interest is fixed for at least 12 months, measured from the start of the financial year or the transaction date if later. All other instruments are classed as variable rate.

Maturity structure of borrowing: This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing will be:

	Upper	Lower
Under 12 months	100%	100%
12 months and within 24 months	100%	100%
24 months and within 5 years	100%	100%
5 years and within 10 years	100%	100%
10 years and above	100%	100%

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

As the council doesn't have any fixed rated external borrowing at present the above upper and lower limits have been set to allow flexibility to borrow within any of the maturity bands.

Principal sums invested for periods longer than 365 days: The purpose of this indicator is to control the Council's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment

of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£50m	£30m	£20m

Other Items

There are a number of additional items that the Council is obliged by CIPFA or MHCLG to include in its Treasury Management Strategy.

Policy on the use of financial derivatives: Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (e.g. interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk (e.g. LOBO loans and callable deposits). The general power of competence in Section 1 of the *Localism Act 2011* removes much of the uncertainty over local authorities' use of standalone financial derivatives (i.e. those that are not embedded into a loan or investment).

The Council will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Council is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be taken into account when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds and forward starting transactions, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria. The current value of any amount due from a derivative counterparty will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.

Investment training: The needs of the Council's treasury management staff for training in investment management are assessed annually as part of the staff appraisal process, and additionally when the responsibilities of individual members of staff change. Staff regularly attend training courses, seminars and conferences provided by Arlingclose and CIPFA. Relevant staff are also encouraged to study professional qualifications from CIPFA, the Association of Corporate Treasurers and other appropriate organisations.

Investment advisers: The Council has appointed Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers and receives specific advice on investment, debt and capital finance issues. The quality of this service is monitored by measuring:

- The timeliness of advice
- The returns from investments
- The accuracy of technical advice
- Regular market testing
- Regular internal meetings to discuss performance
- Direct access to a nominated advisor
- The quality and content of training courses

Investment of money borrowed in advance of need: The Council may, from time to time, borrow in advance of need, where this is expected to provide the best long-term value for

money. Since amounts borrowed will be invested until spent, the Council is aware that it will be exposed to the risk of loss of the borrowed sums, and the risk that investment and borrowing interest rates may change in the intervening period. These risks will be managed as part of the Council's overall management of its treasury risks.

The total amount borrowed will not exceed the authorised borrowing limit of £124 million. The maximum period between borrowing and expenditure is expected to be three years, although the Council is not required to link particular loans with particular items of expenditure.

Minimum revenue provision (MRP): MHCLG published updated Minimum Revenue Provision guidance in February 2018. This includes clarification regarding the application of the guidance in respect of investment properties. A 2018/19 updated SSDC MRP Policy Statement is included in **Appendix 1C**, to include specific provisions for investment properties.

Financial Implications

The budget for investment income in 2018/19 is £727,820, based on an average investment portfolio of £48 million at an interest rate of 1.52%. The budget for minimum revenue provision (MRP) for debt repayment in 2018/19 is £186,200. If actual levels of investments and borrowing, and actual interest rates differ from those forecast, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

The interest received as at 30 September 2018 and the projected year-end position is included in **Appendix 1B**.

Other Options Considered

The MHCLG Guidance and the CIPFA Code do not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Section 151 Officer believes that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Some alternative strategies, with their financial and risk management implications, are listed below.

Alternative	Impact on income and expenditure	Impact on risk management
Invest in a narrower range of counterparties and/or for shorter times	Interest income will be lower	Lower chance of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be greater
Invest in a wider range of counterparties and/or for longer times	Interest income will be higher	Increased risk of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be smaller
Borrow additional sums at long-term fixed interest rates	Debt interest costs will rise; this is unlikely to be offset by higher investment income	Higher investment balance leading to a higher impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be more certain
Borrow short-term or variable loans instead of long-term fixed rates	Debt interest costs will initially be lower	Increases in debt interest costs will be broadly offset by rising investment income in the medium term, but long-term costs may be less certain

Appendix 1A – Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

EXISTING PORTFOLIO PROJECTED FORWARD

	31/03/17 Actual £'000	31/03/18 Actual £'000	30/09/18 Actual £'000	31/3/19 Estimate £'000	31/3/20 Estimate £'000
External Debt:					
Total External Borrowing	0	0	0	30,000	50,000
<i>Long-term liabilities</i>					
• Finance Leases*	227	138	138*	138*	138*
Total External Debt	227	138	138	30,138	50,138
Investments:					
• Short term Deposits	20,000	8,000	6,000	2,000	2,000
• Monies on call and Money Market Funds	1,000	2,230	260	1,000	1,000
• Long term Deposits	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	2,000
• Bonds/CDs	22,175	8,814	14,200	4,000	3,000
• Property Fund & Other pooled funds	6,000	13,000	15,000	25,000	25,000
Total treasury investments	42,175	35,044	38,460	35,000	33,000
Non-treasury investments:					
• Investment property	6,004	17,633	18,475	47,000	67,000
Total non-treasury investments	6,004	17,633	18,475	47,000	67,000
Total Investments	48,179	52,677	56,935	82,000	100,000
(Net Borrowing Position)/ Net Investment position	47,952	52,539	56,797	51,862	49,862

*Proposed changes to IFRS 16 (Leases) come into effect from 1 April 2019. The revised IFRS 16 retains the concept of operating and finance leases for lessors, but adopts a new accounting model for lessees that will see most leases come onto the balance sheet.

This will have a significant impact upon local authorities' accounting and capital finance frameworks, work is ongoing to identify and implement the changes required. The figures included in the table do not take account the potential impact of the revised IFRS 16.

Appendix 1B – Half Year Interest position & Year end Projection

INTEREST AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2018 & YEAR END PROJECTION

	Income as at 30 Sept 18	2018/19 Projected
	£'000	£'000
Investments advised by Arlingclose:		
Money Market Funds (VNAV)	4	10
Diversified Income Fund (Investec)	62	210
Property Fund (CCLA)	124	250
Pooled Funds	111	320
Total	301	790
Internal Investments:		
Certificates of Deposit (CD's)	7	10
Corporate Bonds	22	30
Floating Rate Notes (FRNs)	8	10
Fixed Term Deposits	47	60
Money Market Funds (CNAV) & Business Reserve Accounts	15	20
Total	99	130
Other Interest:		
Miscellaneous Loans	78	150
Total	78	150
Total Treasury Investment Income	478	1070
Treasury Income Budget	364	728
Surplus	114	342

Appendix 1C

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2018/19 (Updated)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Where the Authority finances capital expenditure through borrowing it must put aside resources to repay it. This is usually undertaken by a charge to the annual revenue budget known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).
- 1.2. It is also possible to use or 'set aside' capital receipts to repay capital borrowing. This may be in lieu of and/or additional to a charge to the revenue budget.
- 1.3. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to 'have regard' to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Statutory Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision. The Regulations gives local authorities flexibility in how they calculate MRP, providing the calculation is 'prudent'.
- 1.4. The Guidance was updated in February 2018, with the requirement that it is fully implemented from 2019/20 financial year, however early adoption is encouraged. This latest edition provides specific guidance related to investment properties. The duty to make MRP extends to investment properties where their acquisition has been partially or fully funded by an increase in borrowing or credit arrangements. However the Guidance states that as depreciation is not charged on investment properties the Depreciation method is not a suitable approach for calculating the MRP to be charged in respect of investment properties
- 1.5. The broad aim of prudent provision is to require local authorities to put aside revenue over time to cover their CFR. In doing so, local authorities should align the period over which they charge MRP to one that is commensurate with the period over which their capital expenditure provides benefits.
- 1.6. A full revision of the MRP Policy will be provided for consideration at Full Council in February 2019. In the meantime, a minor revision is proposed now in respect of Investment Properties.

2. The Policy

- 2.1. For capital expenditure incurred before 1st April 2008, MRP will be determined in accordance with the former regulations that applied on 31st March 2008, incorporating an "Adjustment A" of £9,113,000.
- 2.2. For capital expenditure on operational assets incurred after 31st March 2008, MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant asset by either of the following methods:
 - a) In equal instalments
 - b) Using an annuity basis
- 2.3. For freehold land, MRP will be applied over 50 years, except where there is a structure on the land which the Council considers to have a life of more than 50 years where in such cases the longer life may also be applied to the land.

- 2.4. For capital expenditure not related to council assets but which has been capitalised by regulation or direction (e.g. capital grants to third parties) will be charged in equal instalments over a period of up to 25 years.
 - 2.5. For assets acquired by finance leases, MRP will be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the lease obligation.
 - 2.6. For investment properties, MRP will be calculated over a period of no more than 50 years, and MRP may be calculated by either of the following methods:
 - a) In equal instalments
 - b) Using an annuity basis
 - c) Weighted to reflect projected net income cash flows over the expected life of investment (up to 50 years)
 - 2.7. MRP will normally be charged from the start of the financial year after the expenditure is incurred.
 - 2.8. The Section 151 Officer is responsible for calculating the Minimum Revenue Provision in line with the policy approved by Full Council.
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