

Bolsover District Council

Council

20 February 2019

Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20 - 2022/23

**Report of Cllr B Watson, Portfolio Holder Finance and Resources and
Renewable Energy**

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the necessary information to approve the Council's Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20 to 2022/23.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act 2003* to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
- 1.2 In previous years the Treasury Management Strategy contained information which included Capital Expenditure and Financing; the Minimum Revenue Provision policy and details on the Authority's investments and loans. From 2019/20 there is a requirement to produce three separate reports.
- 1.3 This report outlines the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy for the years 2019/20 to 2022/23 for consideration and approval by Council.
- 1.4 Investments held for service purposes or for commercial profit are considered in a different report, the Corporate Investment Strategy.
- 1.5 A further report, the Capital Strategy, sets out the Authority's Capital Expenditure programme and Minimum Revenue Provision policy (MRP).

Introduction

- 1.6 Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Authority has borrowed and 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 financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management.

External Context

- 1.7 **Economic background:** The UK's progress negotiating its exit from the European Union, together with its future trading arrangements, will continue to be a major influence on the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20.
- 1.8 UK Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) for October was 2.4%, slightly below the consensus forecast and broadly in line with the Bank of England's November Inflation Report. The most recent labour market data for October 2018 showed the unemployment rate edged up slightly to 4.1% while the employment rate of 75.7% was the joint highest on record. The 3-month average annual growth rate for pay excluding bonuses was 3.3% as wages continue to rise steadily and provide some pull on general inflation. Adjusted for inflation, real wages grew by 1.0%, a level still likely to have little effect on consumer spending.
- 1.9 The rise in quarterly GDP growth to 0.6% in Q3 from 0.4% in the previous quarter was due to weather-related factors boosting overall household consumption and construction activity over the summer following the weather-related weakness in Q1. At 1.5%, annual GDP growth continues to remain below trend. Looking ahead, the Bank of England, in its November Inflation Report, expects GDP growth to average around 1.75% over the forecast horizon, providing the UK's exit from the EU is relatively smooth.
- 1.10 Following the Bank of England's decision to increase Bank Rate to 0.75% in August, no change to monetary policy has been made since. However, the Bank expects that should the economy continue to evolve in line with its November forecast, further increases in Bank Rate will be required to return inflation to the 2% target. The Monetary Policy Committee continues to reiterate that any further increases will be at a gradual pace and limited in extent.
- 1.11 While US growth has slowed over 2018, the economy continues to perform robustly. The US Federal Reserve continued its tightening bias throughout 2018, pushing rates to the current 2%-2.25% in September. Markets continue to expect one more rate rise in December, but expectations are fading that the further hikes previously expected in 2019 will materialise as concerns over trade wars drag on economic activity.

- 1.12 **Credit outlook:** The big four UK banking groups have now divided their retail and investment banking divisions into separate legal entities under ring-fencing legislation. Bank of Scotland, Barclays Bank UK, HSBC UK Bank, Lloyds Bank, National Westminster Bank, Royal Bank of Scotland and Ulster Bank are the ring-fenced banks that now only conduct lower risk retail banking activities. Barclays Bank, HSBC Bank, Lloyds Bank Corporate Markets and NatWest Markets are the investment banks. Credit rating agencies have adjusted the ratings of some of these banks with the ring-fenced banks generally being better rated than their non-ring-fenced counterparts.
- 1.13 The Bank of England released its latest report on bank stress testing, illustrating that all entities included in the analysis were deemed to have passed the test once the levels of capital and potential mitigating actions presumed to be taken by management were factored in. The BoE did not require any bank to raise additional capital.
- 1.14 European banks are considering their approach to Brexit, with some looking to create new UK subsidiaries to ensure they can continue trading here. The credit strength of these new banks remains unknown, although the chance of parental support is assumed to be very high if ever needed. The uncertainty caused by protracted negotiations between the UK and EU is weighing on the creditworthiness of both UK and European banks with substantial operations in both jurisdictions.
- 1.15 **Interest rate forecast:** Following the increase in Bank Rate to 0.75% in August 2018, the Authority's treasury management adviser Arlingclose is forecasting two more 0.25% hikes during 2019 to take official UK interest rates to 1.25%. The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee has maintained expectations for slow and steady rate rises over the forecast horizon. The Monetary Policy Committee continues to have a bias towards tighter monetary policy but is reluctant to push interest rate expectations too strongly. Arlingclose believes that Monetary Policy Committee members consider both that ultra-low interest rates result in other economic problems, and that higher Bank Rate will be a more effective policy weapon should downside Brexit risks crystallise when rate cuts will be required.
- 1.16 The UK economic environment remains relatively soft, despite seemingly strong labour market data. Arlingclose's view is that the economy still faces a challenging outlook as it exits the European Union and Eurozone growth softens. Whilst assumptions are that a Brexit deal is struck and some agreement reached on transition and future trading arrangements before the UK leaves the EU, the possibility of a "no deal" Brexit still hangs over economic activity. As such, the risks to the interest rate forecast are considered firmly to the downside.
- 1.17 Gilt yields and hence long-term borrowing rates have remained at low levels but some upward movement from current levels is expected based on Arlingclose's

interest rate projections, due to the strength of the US economy and the European Central Bank's forward guidance on higher rates. 10-year and 20-year gilt yields are forecast to remain around 1.7% and 2.2% respectively over the interest rate forecast horizon, however volatility arising from both economic and political events are likely to continue to offer borrowing opportunities.

1.18 A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is attached at **Appendix A**.

1.19 For the purpose of setting the budget, it has been assumed that new investments will be made at an average rate of 0.75%.

Local Context

1.20 On 31st December 2018, the Authority held £102.1m of borrowing and £41.8m of investments. This is set out in further detail at **Appendix B**. 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 £m	31.3.19 Estimate £m	31.3.20 Forecast £m	31.3.21 Forecast £m	31.3.22 Forecast £m	31.3.23 Forecast £m
General Fund CFR	8.4	10.9	12.4	12.2	13.1	12.7
HRA CFR	104.1	107.9	109.8	109.8	109.8	109.8
Total CFR	112.5	118.8	122.2	122.0	122.9	122.5
Less: External borrowing **	(102.1)	(102.1)	(99.1)	(97.1)	(93.4)	(89.4)
Internal borrowing	10.4	16.7	23.10	24.9	29.5	33.1
Less: Usable reserves	(39.7)	(39.7)	(39.7)	(39.7)	(39.7)	(39.7)
Less: Working capital (balance)	(6.7)	(6.7)	(6.7)	(6.7)	(6.7)	(6.7)
Investments	36.0	29.7	23.3	21.5	16.9	13.3

** shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

1.21 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 Authority's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing.

1.22 The Authority has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme, but reducing investments and may therefore be required to borrow by the beginning of 2021/22 based on the most recent forecast.

1.23 **Liability benchmark:** To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes the same forecasts as **table 1** above, but that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £10m at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity but minimise credit risk.

Table 2: Liability benchmark

	31.3.18 Actual £m	31.3.19 Estimate £m	31.3.20 Forecast £m	31.3.21 Forecast £m	31.3.22 Forecast £m	31.3.23 Forecast £m
CFR	112.5	118.8	122.2	122.0	122.9	122.5
Less: Usable reserves	(39.7)	(39.7)	(39.7)	(39.7)	(39.7)	(39.7)
Less: Working capital	(6.7)	(6.7)	(6.7)	(6.7)	(6.7)	(6.7)
Plus: Minimum investments	10	10	10	10	10	10
Liability Benchmark	76.1	82.4	85.8	85.6	86.5	86.1

Borrowing Strategy

1.24 The Authority currently holds £102.1m of loans, as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. The balance sheet forecast in table 1 shows that the Authority anticipates borrowing during 2021/22 but does not expect to need to borrow in 2019/20. The Authority may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £131.9m.

1.25 **Objectives:** The Authority'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 Authority's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

1.26 **Strategy:** Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Authority'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.

- 1.27 By doing so, the Authority is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of internal 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 Authority with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Authority borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2019/20 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.
- 1.28 Alternatively, the Authority may arrange forward starting loans during 2019/20, 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.
- 1.29 In addition, the Authority may borrow short-term loans to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.
- 1.30 **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
 - any other UK public sector body
 - UK public and private sector pension funds (except Derbyshire 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
- 1.31 **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:
- leasing
 - hire purchase
 - Private Finance Initiative
 - sale and leaseback
- 1.32 The Authority 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 that may be available at more favourable rates.
- 1.33 **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 Council.

- 1.34 **LOBOs:** The Authority doesn't hold or intend to hold any LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans.
- 1.35 **Short-term and variable rate loans:** These loans leave the Authority exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the interest rate exposure limits in the treasury management indicators below.
- 1.36 **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. The Authority 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.

Treasury Management Investment Strategy

- 1.37 The Authority holds an average of £38m invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Authority's investment balance has ranged between £33m and £42m, and similar levels are expected to be maintained in the forthcoming year.
- 1.38 **Objectives:** The CIPFA Code requires the Authority 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 Authority'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.
- 1.39 Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Authority 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.
- 1.40 **Negative interest rates:** If the UK enters into a recession in 2019/20, there is a small chance that the Bank of England could set its Bank Rate at or below zero, which is likely to feed through to negative interest rates on all low risk, short-term investment options. This situation already exists in many other European countries. In this event, security will be measured as receiving the contractually agreed amount at maturity, even though this may be less than the amount originally invested.

1.41 **Strategy:** Given the increasing risk and very low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Authority aims to diversify into more secure and higher yielding asset classes during 2019/20. This is especially the case for the estimated £10m that is available for longer-term investment. The majority of the Authority’s surplus cash is currently invested in short-term unsecured bank deposits, short term fixed deposits with local authorities and money market funds. This diversification will represent a substantial change in strategy over the coming year

1.42 **Business models:** Under the new IFRS 9 standard, the accounting for certain investments depends on the Authority’s “business model” for managing them. The Authority aims to achieve value from its internally managed treasury investments by a business model of collecting the contractual cash flows and therefore, where other criteria are also met, these investments will continue to be accounted for at amortised cost.

1.43 **Approved counterparties:** The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in **table 3** below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown.

Table 3: 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	£5m 5 years	£5m 20 years	£5m 50 years	£5m 20 years	£1m 20 years
AA+	£5m 5 years	£5m 10 years	£5m 25 years	£5m 10 years	£1m 10 years
AA	£5m 4 years	£5m 5 years	£5m 15 years	£5m 5 years	£1m 10 years
AA-	£5m 3 years	£5m 4 years	£5m 10 years	£5m 4 years	£1m 10 years
A+	£2.5m 2 years	£5m 3 years	£5m 5 years	£2.5m 3 years	£1m 5 years
A	£2.5m 13 months	£5m 2 years	£5m 5 years	£2.5m 2 years	£1m 5 years
A-	£2.5m 6 months	£5m 13 months	£5m 5 years	£2.5m 13 months	£1m 5 years
None	n/a	n/a	£5m 25 years	n/a	£1m 5 years
Pooled funds and real estate investment trusts	£5m per fund				

- 1.44 **Credit rating:** Investment limits are set by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from a selection of external rating agencies. 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.
- 1.45 **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.
- 1.46 **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.
- 1.47 **Government:** Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities, Parish Councils and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Central Government may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.
- 1.48 **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 either following an external credit assessment or as part of a diversified pool in order to spread the risk widely.
- 1.49 **Registered providers:** Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of registered providers of social housing and registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are tightly regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.
- 1.50 **Pooled funds:** Shares or units in diversified investment vehicles consisting of 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.

- 1.51 Bond, equity and property funds offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Authority 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 Authority's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.
- 1.52 **Real estate investment trusts:** Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties.
- 1.53 **Operational bank accounts:** The Authority 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 £5m 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 Authority maintaining operational continuity.
- 1.54 **Risk assessment and credit ratings:** Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Authority'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.
- 1.55 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.

- 1.56 **Other information on the security of investments:** The Authority 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, reports in the quality financial press and analysis and advice from the Authority's treasury management adviser. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may otherwise meet the above criteria.
- 1.57 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 Authority 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 Authority'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.
- 1.58 **Investment limits:** In order to minimise investments that will be put at risk in the case of a single default, the maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £5m. 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	£5m each
UK Central Government	unlimited
Any group of organisations under the same ownership	£5m per group
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£10m per manager
Foreign countries	£5m per country
Registered providers and registered social landlords	£10m in total

Unsecured investments with building societies	£5m per society
Loans to unrated corporates	£5m in total
Money market funds	£30m in total
Real estate investment trusts	£5m in total
Lloyds Bank (as providers of operational banking services)	£5m overnight

1.59 **Liquidity management:** The Authority uses its own cash flow forecasting techniques 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 Authority being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Authority's medium-term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

Treasury Management Indicators

1.60 The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators:

1.61 **Interest rate exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates will be:

Interest rate risk indicator	Limit each year
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	£60,418
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	(£60,418)

1.62 The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at current rates.

1.63 **Maturity structure of borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. This indicator used to be for fixed rate borrowing only but now includes all borrowing. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

Refinancing rate risk indicator	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	20%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	40%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	60%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	80%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

- 1.64 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.
- 1.65 **Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year:** The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority'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:

Price risk indicator	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£5m	£4m	£3m	£2m

Related Matters

- 1.66 The CIPFA Code requires the Authority to include the following in its treasury management strategy.
- 1.67 **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).
- 1.68 The Authority 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 Authority 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.
- 1.69 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.
- 1.70 **Housing Revenue Account:** The Authority completed the HRA self-financing settlement in March 2012 which resulted in an increase in housing debt of £94.386m. Within the HRA business plan and HRA budgets there is a sum set-aside to repay the outstanding debt, this amount is variable dependant on the level of available resources within the HRA each year. The Debt Repayment Reserve will be used to repay the debt arising from the self-financing settlement. For the period 2018/19 to 2021/22 no contribution will be made to the Debt Repayment

Reserve. The amount that was going to be put into this Reserve will now be used in the capital programme to fund further B@home new build schemes.

1.71 **Markets in Financial Instruments Directive:** The Authority has opted up to professional client status with its providers of financial services, including advisers, banks, brokers and fund managers, allowing it access to a greater range of services but without the greater regulatory protections afforded to individuals and small companies. Given the size and range of the Authority’s treasury management activities, the Chief Financial Officer believes this to be the most appropriate status.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 This report outlines the Council’s proposed Treasury Management Strategy for the period 2019/20 to 2022/23 for consideration and approval by Council. It fulfils the following key requirements:

- The Treasury Management Strategy sets out the parameters for all borrowing and lending associated with the day to day treasury management of the Council’s cash flow requirements.
- Within the strategy the Council is required to include a number of prudential indicators covering future financial years which show the impact of changes in the level of the Council’s debt on its revenue accounts.
- The report also includes a Treasury Management Investment strategy which sets out the Council’s criteria for choosing investment counterparties and limiting exposure to the risk of loss.

The above policies and parameters provide an approved framework within which the officers undertake the day to day capital and treasury activities.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

3.1 There are no equality issues arising from this report.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 The CIPFA Code does not prescribe any particular Treasury Management Strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Chief Financial 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
Alternative	Impact on income and expenditure	Impact on risk management
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
Reduce level of borrowing	Saving on debt interest is likely to exceed lost investment income	Reduced investment balance leading to a lower impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be less certain

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

5.1.1 The budget for investment income in 2019/20 is £258,884 GF; £21,750 HRA, based on an average investment portfolio of £33m at an interest rate of 0.75%. The budget for debt interest paid in 2019/20 is £1,087,636 GF, £3,513,950 HRA, based on an average debt portfolio of £102m at an average interest rate of 3.57%. If actual levels of investments and borrowing, or actual interest rates, differ from those forecast, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

5.1.2 Risk is considered throughout the report.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

5.2.1 As part of the requirements of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice the Council is required to produce every year a Treasury Management Strategy which requires approval by full Council prior to the commencement of each financial year. This report is prepared in order to comply with these obligations.

5.2.2 There are no Data Protection issues arising directly from this report.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

5.3.1 There are no human resource implications arising directly out of this report.

6 Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that Council approve the Treasury Management Strategy as set out in this report and in particular:

- a) Approve the Borrowing Strategy as set out in Sections **1.24 – 1.36** of this report.
- b) Approve the Treasury Management Investment Strategy as set out in Sections **1.37 – 1.59** of this report.
- c) Approve the use of the external treasury management advisors Counterparty Weekly List – or similar - to determine the latest assessment of the counterparties that meet the Council’s Criteria under section **1.43 – 1.58** before any investment is undertaken.
- d) Approve the Prudential Indicators as set out in Sections **1.60 – 1.65**.

7 Decision Information

<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><i>BDC:</i> <i>Revenue - £75,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £150,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>NEDDC:</i> <i>Revenue - £100,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £250,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	N/A
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	N/A
<p>Has the relevant Portfolio Holder been informed</p>	Yes
<p>District Wards Affected</p>	N/A
<p>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</p>	This Treasury Management Strategy is an integral part of the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan which links our financial position to the Corporate Plan and our other service strategies.

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title	
A	Economic & Interest Rate Forecast	
B	Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position	
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)		
Finance Section		
Report Author		Contact Number
Chief Accountant		01246 242458
Principal Accountant		01246 242459