



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 20TH FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

**TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL
INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2015/16**

Purpose of the Report

1. To allow the Corporate Governance Committee the opportunity to review the treasury management strategy statement and annual investment strategy for 2015/16.

Background

2. The treasury management strategy statement and annual investment strategy form part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and will be considered by the Council at its meeting on 18th February 2015. Any amendments made by the Council to either of these documents will be reported to the Committee.
3. The two strategies are broadly in line with those of previous years, with the only significant amendments being a move to more closely align this Authority's policy in respect of acceptable counterparties with that of Capita Asset Services, who act as treasury management advisor to the Authority. The rationale behind these changes, together with details of the expected impact, was the subject of a detailed report produced for the Corporate Governance Committee and considered at its meeting of 24th November 2014.
4. It is usual for the Corporate Governance Committee to have an opportunity to comment on the treasury management strategy statement and annual investment strategy prior to it being submitted to full Council. Due to the timing of meetings, it has not been possible to do so this year. However, the Committee will have an opportunity to influence the strategies via the use of delegated powers available to the Chief Financial Officer. Any significant issues raised by the Committee will be reported to the Cabinet for further consideration.

Resource Implications

7. The interest earned on revenue balances and the interest paid on external debt (which link directly into treasury management strategy statement and annual investment strategy) will impact onto the resources available to the Council.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

8. There are no discernable equal opportunity implications.

Recommendation

9. The Committee is asked to comment on this report.

Background Papers

Recommended change to treasury management policy in respect of the lending of surplus balances – Report of the Director of Corporate Resources. Corporate Governance Committee, 24th November 2014.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None

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**TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL
INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2015/16**

1. This strategy statement has been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice (the Code). Accordingly, the Council's Treasury Management Strategy will be approved annually by the full Council and there will be quarterly reports to the Corporate Governance Committee. The Corporate Governance Committee will consider the contents of Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy at its meeting to be held on 20th February 2015. The aim of these reporting arrangements is to ensure that those with ultimate responsibility for the treasury management function appreciate fully the implications of treasury management policies and activities, and that those implementing policies and executing transactions have properly fulfilled their responsibilities with regard to delegation and reporting.

The Council has adopted the following reporting arrangements in accordance with the requirements of the revised Code:-

Area of Responsibility	Council/Committee/Officer	Frequency
Treasury Management Policy Statement	Full Council	Annually before start of financial year
Treasury Management Strategy/Annual Investment Strategy	Full Council	Annually before start of financial year
Quarterly treasury management updates	Corporate Governance Committee	Quarterly
Updates or revisions to Treasury Management Strategy/Annual Investment Strategy during year	Cabinet (following consideration by Corporate Governance Committee, wherever practical)	Ad hoc
Annual Treasury Outturn Report	Cabinet	Annually by end of September following year end
Treasury Management Practices	Assistant Director, Strategic Finance & Property	
Review of Treasury Management Strategy/Annual Investment Strategy	Corporate Governance Committee	Annually before start of financial year and before consideration by full Council
Review of Treasury Management Performance	Corporate Governance Committee	Annually by end of September following year end

Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16

2. The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) and supporting regulations requires the Council to 'have regard to' the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to set Prudential and Treasury Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Act therefore requires the Council to set its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment strategy (as required by Investment Guidance issued subsequent to the Act) and this is included as paragraphs 24 – 44 of this strategy; this sets out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

The suggested strategy for 2015/16 in respect of the treasury management function is based upon Officers' views on interest rates, supplemented with leading market forecasts provided by the Council's treasury adviser, Capita Asset Services.

The strategy covers:

- treasury limits in force which will limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council
- Prudential and Treasury Indicators
- the current treasury position
- the borrowing requirement
- prospects for interest rates
- the borrowing strategy
- policy on borrowing in advance of need
- debt rescheduling
- the investment strategy
- creditworthiness policy
- policy on use of external service providers
- the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) strategy

Balanced Budget Requirement

3. It is a statutory requirement under Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for the Council to produce a balanced budget. In particular, Section 32 requires a local authority to calculate its budget requirement for each financial year to include the revenue costs that flow from capital financing decisions. This, therefore, means that increases in capital expenditure must be limited to a level whereby the increase in charges to revenue from:-
 - i) increase in interest charges caused by increased borrowing to finance additional capital expenditure, and
 - ii) Any increases in running costs from new capital projects are limited to a level which is affordable within the projected income of the Council for the foreseeable future.

Treasury Limits for 2015/16 to 2018/19

4. It is a statutory duty under Section 3 of the Act and supporting regulations, for the Council to determine and keep under review how much it can afford to borrow. The amount so determined is termed the “Affordable Borrowing Limit”. In England and Wales the Authorised Limit represents the legislative limit specified in the Act.

The Council must have regard to the Prudential Code when setting the Authorised Limit, which essentially requires it to ensure that total capital investment remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, that the impact upon its future council tax level is ‘acceptable’.

Whilst termed an “Affordable Borrowing Limit” the capital plans to be considered for inclusion incorporate financing by both external borrowing and other forms of liability, such as credit arrangements. The Authorised Limit is to be set, on a rolling basis, for the forthcoming financial year and three successive financial years. Details of the Authorised Limit can be found in annex 2 of this report.

Current Portfolio Position

5. The Council’s treasury portfolio position at 31st December 2014 was:

		Principal £m	Average Rate %
Fixed Rate Funding	PWLB	180.10	6.330
	Market	95.50	4.492
Variable Rate Funding	Market	10.00	3.990
Other Long Term Liabilities		<u>0.00</u>	
		285.60	5.634
Total Investments		<u>164.10</u>	0.644
Net debt		<u>121.50</u>	

The market debt relates to structures referred to as LOBOs (Lenders Option, Borrowers Option), where the lender has certain dates when they can increase the interest rate payable and, if they do, we have the option of accepting the new rate or repaying the loan. Where the first opportunity for the lender to do this has already passed the loan has been classed as ‘fixed rate’ even though, in theory, the rate could change in the future. Where the first option to increase the rate has not yet passed, the funding has been classified as ‘variable rate’.

Borrowing Requirement

6. It is not currently anticipated that the Council will take out any net new borrowing in the period covered by the Medium Term Financial Strategy (i.e. 2015/16 – 2018/19), and it is also expected that maturing loans will not be replaced. There

are a number of reasons that no new net borrowing is expected, including the current position of having internal indebtedness (at 31st March 2015 an estimated £12.9m of historical capital spending will be financed through internal cash resources), a change by the Government to switch capital approvals to grants as opposed to borrowing approvals, no unsupported borrowing included in the MTFS and the level of Minimum Revenue Provision (See Annex 1) that will be generated over the period.

7. The table below shows how the Capital Financing Requirement is expected to change over the period of the MTFS, and how this compares to the expected level of external debt. Although the level of actual debt is expected to exceed the Capital Financing Requirement at the end of 2016/17 and to increase further during the next two financial years it is currently prohibitively expensive to prematurely repay existing debt. If there are cost-effective opportunities to avoid an overborrowed position they will be considered as long as they are in the best long-term financial interests of the Council. This will probably require long-term borrowing rates to increase meaningfully from their current level.

	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000
Opening Capital Financing Requirement	298,540	283,607	266,613	253,858
New Borrowing	0	0	0	0
Statutory Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	(11,993)	(11,414)	(10,755)	(10,263)
Voluntary MRP	(2,940)	(5,580)	(2,000)	(2,000)
Closing Capital Financing Requirement	283,607	266,613	253,858	241,595
Opening external debt	285,600	275,100	274,600	264,600
Loans maturing	(10,500)	(500)	(10,000)	(500)
Closing external debt	275,100	274,600	264,600	264,100
Overborrowed/(borrowing requirement)	(8,507)	7,987	10,742	22,505

Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2015/16 – 2018/19

8. Prudential and Treasury Indicators (as set out in the tables in annex 2 to this report) are relevant for the purpose of setting an integrated treasury management strategy.

The Council is also required to indicate if it has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, and this was adopted in February 2010.

Prospects for Interest Rates

9. Despite economic growth in the UK being relatively robust, the current low level of inflation and the forecast for changes to inflation levels in the near term make it unlikely that there will be an increase in UK bank base rates until at least the end of 2015. The timing and extent of increases is highly dependent on economic growth in not just the UK, but also the rest of the developed world. The general consensus is that base rates, when they start to rise, will do so gradually in terms of both the amounts of the increase and also the pace of them. The likelihood of reaching levels that would previously have been considered normal (4% - 6%) within the foreseeable future is very slim.
10. The range of forecasts produced by economists is relatively narrow, with very few predicting meaningful increases in bank base rates over the next 2 – 3 years. There is, of course, a possibility of economic growth accelerating more than is currently predicted and if any acceleration gains traction, base rate rises may happen more quickly and more aggressively than is currently predicted. The Governor of the Bank of England continues to issue 'forward guidance' which suggests that base rate rises are not imminent and will be very gradual when they commence.

Borrowing Strategy

11. The outlook for borrowing rates - which are linked to Government bond (gilt) yields – is difficult to predict. Currently gilt yields are at multi-generational lows and the consensus is that they have to rise from here; this was however the consensus 12 months ago and they have fallen meaningfully since then. Supply of gilts is likely to be meaningful for a number of years and eventually there has to be an unwinding of quantitative easing which will see a further increase in gilt availability, so the demand/supply dynamic appears to point to yields rising rather than falling. Any setback in economic growth (not just in the UK, but also globally) may, however, cause investors to reassess the outlook for returns from other assets and a period of stable, or even falling, gilt yields cannot be ruled out.
12. Although borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) is still generally the most attractive external option available to the authority, the expectation of an overborrowed position by the end of 2016/17 makes the use of external borrowing unlikely. Even if the outlook for an overborrowed position changes, which is only likely if repayment of existing debt actually happens, the use of internal borrowing using available cash flows and balances (at a cost of the interest which would otherwise have been gained by lending the money to acceptable counterparties) is a more likely option.
13. Borrowing rates very rarely move in one direction without there being periods of volatility, and it is sensible to maintain a flexible and proactive stance towards when

borrowing should be carried out. Likewise it is sensible to retain flexibility over whether short, medium or long-term funding will be taken and whether some element of variable rate funding might be attractive. Any borrowing carried out will take into account the medium term costs and risks and will not be based on minimising short term costs if this is felt to compromise the medium term financial position of the Council.

External v Internal Borrowing

14. The Council currently has significant cash balances invested, and at the end of December 2014 these stood at £164.1m. These balances relate to a number of different items – earmarked funds and provisions, grants received in advance of expenditure, money invested on behalf of schools and simple cash flow are some of them – but only a small amount of the balances relate to the General County Fund.
15. The Council has, since January 2009, repaid over £80m more of external loans than has been borrowed. There has also been no new borrowing to finance the capital programme over this period, and internal borrowing is expected to stand at £12.9m at the end of the current financial year. This internal borrowing is, effectively, being financed through the loss of interest that would otherwise have been earned by lending the money, which is currently below 0.5%. This internal borrowing has been extremely cost-effective, but the cost of it will increase broadly in line with base rates in the years ahead.
16. The balance between internal and external borrowing will be managed proactively, with the intention of minimising long-term financing costs. Short-term savings which involve undue risk in respect of long-term costs will not be considered.

Policy on borrowing in advance of need

17. The Council will not borrow in advance of need simply to benefit from earning more interest on investing the cash than is being paid on the loan. If value for money can be demonstrated by borrowing in advance this option may be taken, but only if it is felt that the money can be invested securely until the cash is required.
18. In determining whether borrowing will be taken in advance of the need the Council will;
 - ensure that there is a clear link between the capital programme and maturity profile of existing debt which supports taking financing in advance of need.
 - ensure that the revenue implications of the borrowing, and the impact on future plans and budgets have been considered
 - evaluate the economic and market factors which might influence the manner and timing of any decision to borrow
 - consider the merits (or otherwise) of other forms of funding
 - consider a range of periods and repayment profiles for the borrowing.
19. The current position in respect of the level of internal borrowing and a move by Central Government to replace borrowing approvals for capital projects with grants makes it extremely unlikely that borrowing in advance of need will be used in the foreseeable future.

Debt Rescheduling/Premature Debt Repayment

20. Debt rescheduling usually involves the premature repayment of debt and its replacement with debt for a different period, to take advantage of differences in the interest rate yield curve. The repayment and replacement does not necessarily have to happen simultaneously, but would be expected to have occurred within a relatively short period of time.
21. If medium and long-term loan rates rise substantially in the coming years, there may be opportunities to adjust the portfolio to take advantage of lower rates in shorter periods. It is important that the debt portfolio is not managed to maximise short-term interest savings if this is felt to be overly risky, and a maturity profile that is overly focussed into a single year will be avoided. Changes in recent years to the way that PWLB rates are set, and the introduction of a significant gap between new borrowing costs and the rate used in calculating premia/discounts for premature debt repayments, significantly reduces the probability of debt rescheduling being attractive in the future.
22. If there is meaningful increase in medium and long-term premature repayment rates, there is a possibility that premature repayment of existing debt (without any replacement) might become attractive. This type of action would involve an increase in internal debt from its current levels, and would only be carried out if it was considered likely to be beneficial in the medium term.
23. All debt rescheduling or premature repayments will be reported to the Corporate Governance Committee at the earliest meeting following the action.

Annual Investment Strategy

Investment Policy

24. The Council will have regard to the CLG's Guidance on Local Authority Investments ("the Guidance") issued in March 2004, any revisions to that guidance, the Audit Commission's report on Icelandic investments and the 2009 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code"). The Council's investment priorities are:-
 - the security of capital and
 - the liquidity of its investments
25. The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments that is commensurate with proper level of security and liquidity. The risk appetite of this Council is low in order to give priority to security of its investments. Borrowing money purely to invest or on-lend is unlawful and this Council will not engage in such activity.
26. The Council's policy in respect of deciding which counterparties are acceptable has always been stringent, and is one reason that the various organisations that have got into financial difficulties over the years (BCCI, Northern Rock, the Icelandic Banks etc.) have not been on the list of acceptable counterparties. The current policy is based almost entirely on ratings issued by independent credit rating agencies and the Council's rating requirements were increased following the default of the Icelandic Banks. This coincided with credit rating downgrades for the majority of financial institutions, and led to a list that had very few acceptable counterparties. This was considered to be entirely appropriate given the risks inherent within financial markets at the time.
27. In recent years financial institutions have become far more tightly regulated and are now forced to hold significantly more capital. There is also a requirement to hold higher levels of capital if the assets held by them are of higher risk. Regular stress tests are also carried out that assess the risks in the event of a number of quite extreme scenarios. Overall, the 'riskiness' of financial institutions - and of the banking system as a whole - is much lower than it has been for a long time and it is now felt appropriate to slightly relax the requirements for becoming an acceptable counterparty, with the changes being effective from 1st April 2015.
28. Alongside the meaningful improvements to the security of financial institutions, the credit rating agencies continue to amend their methodologies in terms of how ratings are awarded. The three major credit rating agencies – S&P, Moody's and Fitch – have different methods and there is relatively regular 'finessing' of the methodologies which make it extremely difficult for the Council's in-house resource to judge what changes are required to our own requirements in terms of acceptable credit rating levels.
29. Using credit ratings as virtually the only determinant of whether a counterparty is acceptable or not is rather one-dimensional and fails to take full account of some of the other useful information that is available when determining the risk of individual financial institutions. This other information includes the cost of Credit Default Spreads (CDS - in effect, the cost of insuring against default) for individual institutions. CDS's are liquid and actively traded and having up-to-date information

on the prices of them is vital if they are going to be used as part of the decision-making process.

30. Capita Asset Services have advised the Council on treasury management matters for many years and are the dominant treasury management advisor to local authorities. They maintain a list of suggested counterparties that is used by the vast majority of their clients and the decision-making process that produces this list includes the use of credit ratings, CDS prices and a number of other 'softer' issues. They also have meaningful resource in this area and are better placed than Officers of the Council to take a holistic view of counterparty risk. It is now considered appropriate to utilise the skills of Capita and for the Council's list of acceptable counterparties to mirror the one produced by them, with the exception of some small changes discussed below.
31. There are two areas in which it is proposed to differ from the standard Capita list of acceptable counterparties. They have a small number of institutions where they recommend a maximum loan period of two years, and it is considered appropriate that Leicestershire should restrict all loans to one year. There are also a small number of counterparties to whom Capita give a suggested maximum maturity period of 100 days and it is proposed that these are excluded from the Council's list entirely. The Council's list of acceptable counterparties will, therefore, be marginally different from the one produced by Capita.
32. It is important to point out that the proposed change to the method of producing an acceptable counterparty list is not based on the desire to have more counterparties, and therefore greater flexibility within the loan portfolio. This greater flexibility and the expected £150,000 - £250,000 p.a. increase in interest that will be earned (based on current market conditions) are by-products of a desire to maintain a policy that can evolve in line with market changes, which will be increasingly difficult if we continue to use in-house resource for this purpose. The increase in counterparties does not come at the expense of a meaningful increase in risk, and the list will continue to include only high-quality, low-risk counterparties.
33. It is also proposed, for the first time, to include certificate of deposit (CDs) in the list of acceptable investment instruments. CDs are merely tradable loan instruments that carry exactly the same security risks as term deposits. It is expected that term deposits will continue to be the preferred option for loans, but as there are some counterparties that are not active in taking term deposits but do issue CDs including them will add flexibility to the management of the portfolio.
34. The proposed changes to the method in which the list of acceptable counterparties is produced and the inclusion of CDs within the list of acceptable instruments was considered by the Corporate Governance Committee at its meeting of 24th November 2014. They were supportive of the proposals.
35. The investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed below. The limits for both maximum loan periods and amounts will be set in line with the criteria shown in annex 3. As part of the proposal to commence utilisation of Capita's suggested counterparty list (adjusted for the matters mentioned in paragraph 31, above) the maximum loan period has been reduced to one year. If financial institutions show meaningful increases in their credit ratings in the years ahead consideration will be given to the reintroduction of loan periods of over one year.

Investment	Repayment within 12 months	Level of Security	Maximum Period	Maximum % of Portfolio or cash sum (1)
Term deposits with the Debt Management Office	Yes	Government-Backed	1 year	100
UK Government Treasury Bills	Yes	Government-Backed	1 year	100
Term deposits with credit-rated institutions with maturities up to 1 year	Yes	Varied acceptable credit ratings, but high security	1 year	100
Money Market Funds	Yes	At least as high as acceptable credit – rated banks	Daily, same-day redemptions and subscriptions	£125m
Term Deposits with UK Local Authorities up to 1 year	Yes	LA's do not have credit ratings, but high security	1 year	50
Certificates of Deposit with credit-rated institutions with maturities of up to 1 year	Yes	Varied acceptable credit ratings, but high security	1 year	100

(1) As the value of the investment portfolio is variable, limit applies at time of agreeing investment. Subsequent changes in the level of the portfolio will not be classed as a breach of any limits.

For the sake of clarity, if a forward deal (one where the start of the investment is at some future date) is agreed, the maximum period commences on the first date of investment.

Local Authority Mortgage Scheme

Under this scheme the Council has invested £8.4m, for a period of up to 5 years. This is classified as being a service investment, rather than a treasury management investment.

Leicestershire Local Enterprise Fund

Up to £1m has been made available for loans to small and medium-sized Leicestershire businesses via this Fund, which is administered by Funding Circle. This is classified as being a service investment, rather than a treasury management investment.

Creditworthiness policy

36. It is proposed that the Council adopts the suggested counterparty list as produced by Capita Asset Services, subject to a maximum one year loan period and the

exclusion of any counterparty with a suggested maximum loan period of 100 days or less. Capita's methodology includes the use of credit ratings from S & P, Fitch and Moody's, factors such as credit outlook reports from the credit rating agencies, the rating of the sovereign government in which the counterparty is domiciled and the level of Credit Default Swap spreads within the market (effectively the market cost of insuring against default). The general economic climate is also considered and will, on occasions, have an impact onto the list of suggested counterparties.

37. Capita Asset services issue very timely information in respect of changes to credit ratings or outlooks, and changes to their suggested counterparty list are also issued. These reports are monitored within a short time of receipt and any relevant changes to the counterparty list are actioned as quickly as is practical. A weekly summary of the credit ratings etc. of counterparties is also issued and this gives an opportunity to ensure that no important information has been missed.

Country Limits

38. The Capita criteria includes a requirement for the country of domicile of any counterparty to be very highly rated. This is a requirement on the basis that it will probably be the national government which will offer financial support to a failing bank, but the country must itself be financially able to afford the support. The Council's list of acceptable counterparties will include a limit on the maximum amount that can be invested in all counterparties domiciled in a single country (except for the UK) in order to mitigate sovereign risk.

Investment Strategy

39. The investment strategy shall be to only invest in those institutions which are included in the counterparty list, and only to lend up to the limit set for each counterparty. Periods for which loans are placed will take into account the outlook for interest rates and, to a lesser extent, the need to retain cash flows. There may be occasions when it is necessary to borrow to fund short-term cashflow issues, but there will generally be no deliberate intention to make regular borrowing necessary.

Policy on the use of external service providers

40. External investment managers will not be used, except to the extent that a Money Market Fund can be considered an external manager.
41. The Council uses Capita Asset Services as its external treasury management adviser, but recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the organisation at all times. Undue reliance on our external advisers will be avoided, although the value of employing an external adviser and accessing specialist skills and resources is recognised.

Scheme of Delegation

42. (i) Full Council
 - Approval of annual strategy
 - Other matters where full Council approval is required under guidance or statutory requirement
- (ii) Cabinet

- Approval of updates or revisions to strategy during the year
- Approval of Annual Treasury Outturn report

(iii) Corporate Governance Committee

- Mid-year treasury management updates (usually quarterly)
- Review of treasury management policy and procedures, including making recommendations to responsible body
- Scrutiny of Treasury Management Strategy/Annual Investment Strategy and Annual Treasury Outturn report.

(iv) Assistant Director, Strategic Finance and Property

- Day-to-day management of treasury management, within agreed policy
- Appointment of external advisers, within existing Council procurement procedures

Role of Section 151 Officer

43. The Section 151 Officer is the Assistant Director, Strategic Finance and Property who has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the treasury management function.

Pension Fund Cash

44. This Council will comply with the requirements of The Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2009, which were implemented on 1st January 2010, and will not pool pension fund cash with its own cash balances for investment purposes. Any investments made by the pension fund directly with the County Council after 1st April 2010 will comply with the requirements of SI 2009 No 393.

1**ANNUAL STATEMENT FOR THE DETERMINATION OF THE ANNUAL MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP)**

Statutory regulations introduced in 2008 require local authorities to make prudent provision for the repayment of debt raised to finance capital expenditure. In addition a statement of the level of MRP has to be submitted to the County Council for approval before the start of the next financial year.

Prudent Provision.

The definition of what is prudent provision is determined by each local authority based on guidance rather than statutory regulation

It is proposed that provision is made on the following basis:Government supported borrowing (through the formula grant system):

Retention of the pre 2003 arrangements whereby provision for repayment is based on 4% of outstanding debt (i.e. repayment over approximately 25 years) including an optional adjustment used in the transition to the new system in 2004 to avoid debt repayment being higher than under the previous system.

Prudential (unsupported) borrowing and expenditure capitalised by direction of the Secretary of State and certain other expenditure classified as capital incurred after 1st April 2008:

Provision to be based on the estimated life of the asset to be financed by that borrowing, with repayment by equal annual instalments.

The County Council will also look to take opportunities to use general underspends and one off balances to make additional (voluntary) revenue provision where possible to reduce ongoing capital financing costs. In 2014/15, voluntary contributions of £6.4m are planned. The MTFS 2015-19 includes further voluntary contributions of £2.9m (2015/16), £5.6m (2016/17), £2m (2017/18) and £2m (2018/19).

Financial Implications

MRP is a constituent of the Financing of Capital budget shown within Central Items component of the revenue budget and for 2015/16 totals £14.9m (includes £2.9m voluntary contributions). This comprises £14.5m in respect of supported borrowing and £0.4m in respect of unsupported borrowing incurred since 2008/9.

The extent of unsupported borrowing required to finance the capital programme is not directly linked to any specific projects thus in determining the average life of assets an average of 25 years has been taken as proxy for the average life of assets contained within the discretionary component of the Capital Programme.

ANNEX 2**PRUDENTIAL AND TREASURY INDICATORS**

In line with the requirements of the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in local authorities, the various indicators that inform authorities whether their capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable, are set out below.

A further key objective of the code is to ensure that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice and in a manner that supports prudence, affordability and sustainability. The indicators for Treasury management are set out in this paper.

Compliance with the Code is required under Part I of the Local Government Act 2003.

	<u>2014/15</u> <u>Estimate</u>	<u>2015/16</u> <u>Estimate</u>	<u>2016/17</u> <u>Estimate</u>	<u>2017/18</u> <u>Estimate</u>	<u>2018/19</u> <u>Estimate</u>
Capital Expenditure	£53.1m	£84.7m	£94.2m	£47.1m	£32.9m
Capital financing requirement	£299m	£284m	£267m	£254m	£242m
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	8.66%	7.58%	8.39%	7.25%	7.20%
Impact on Band D Council Tax	£4.51	£4.40	£4.32	£4.25	£4.17

The projected level of capital expenditure shown above, differs from the total of the detailed four year programme presented in this report as an allowance has been provided to cover estimated additional resources that may become available to the authority during the course of a year, typically further developer contributions arising from housing development. Capital expenditure for 2017/18 and 2018/19 is less than previous years as government funding for C&FS has not yet been announced.

The capital financing requirement measures the authorities need to borrow for capital purposes and as such is influenced by the availability of capital receipts and income from third parties e.g. developer contributions. The decreasing balance in the capital financing requirement reflects the change in government resources from supported borrowing allocations to capital grant, the recognition in the Capital Strategy for no or limited unsupported borrowing and the Councils policy to make additional contributions of voluntary MRP to reduce ongoing capital financing costs.

The prudential code includes the following as a key indicator of prudence:

‘In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years’. It is anticipated this requirement will be met having taken into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in the budget report.

The key indicator of affordability is the impact of capital expenditure on Council Tax. This is falling over the periods shown and reflects the reduction due to MRP and the decision for no new unsupported borrowing.

In respect of external debt, it is recommended that the Council approves the following limits for its total external debt for the next four financial years. These limits separately identify borrowing from other long term liabilities such as finance leases. The Council is asked to approve these limits and to delegate authority to the Director of Corporate Resources, within the total limit for any individual year, to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long term liabilities. Any such changes made will be reported to the Cabinet at its next meeting following the change.

There are two limits on external debt: the 'Operational Boundary' and the 'Authorised Limit'. Both are consistent with the current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in the budget report for capital expenditure and financing, and with approved treasury management policy statement and practices. They are both based on estimates of most likely, but not worst case scenario. The key difference is that the Authorised Limit cannot be breached without prior approval of the County Council. It therefore includes more headroom to take account of eventualities such as delays in generating capital receipts, forward borrowing to take advantage of attractive interest rates, use of borrowing in place of operational leasing, "invest to save" projects, occasional short term borrowing to cover temporary revenue cash flow shortfalls as well as an assessment of risks involved in managing cash flows. The Operational Boundary is a more realistic indicator of the likely position.

Operational boundary for external debt

	<u>2015/16</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2016/17</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2017/18</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2018/19</u> <u>£m</u>
Borrowing	289.8	280.9	271.0	270.6
Other long term liabilities	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0
TOTAL	291.1	282.1	272.1	271.6

Authorised limit for external debt

	<u>2015/16</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2016/17</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2017/18</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2018/19</u> <u>£m</u>
Borrowing	299.8	290.9	281.0	280.6
Other long term liabilities	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0
TOTAL	301.1	292.1	282.1	281.6

In agreeing these limits, the Council is asked to note that the authorised limit determined for 2015/16 will be the statutory limit determined under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

Comparison of original 2014/15 indicators with the latest forecast

In February 2014 the County Council approved certain prudential limits and indicators, the latest projections of which are shown below:

	<u>Prudential</u> <u>Indicator</u>	<u>Latest</u> <u>Projection</u>
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	<u>Set 2014/15</u>	<u>19/01/15</u>
Actual Capital Financing Costs as a % of Net Revenue Stream	7.24%	8.66%
Capital Expenditure	£64.3m	£53.1m
Operational Boundary for External Debt	£310.5m	£306.5m
Authorised Limit for External Debt	£320.5m	£316.5m
Interest Rate Exposure – Fixed	50-100%	96%
Interest Rate Exposure – Variable	0-50%	4%
Capital Financing Requirement	£303m	£299m

The latest forecast of external debt, £285.6m, shows that it is within both the authorised borrowing limit and the operational boundary set for 2014/15. The maturity structure of debt is within the indicators set. The latest projection for the Capital Financing Requirement includes voluntary additional provision of £6.4m in 2014/15 (funded from the 2014 MTFS and 2014/15 forecast revenue underspends – see MRP strategy). This has led to the increase in the latest projection of actual capital financing costs, to 8.66% compared with the original indicator of 7.24%.

Treasury Management Indicators

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the County Council to ensure that treasury management is carried out with good professional practice. The Prudential Code includes the following as the required indicators in respect of treasury management:

- a) Upper limits on fixed interest and variable rate external borrowing.
- b) Upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of borrowings.
- c) Upper limit for principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days.

After reviewing the current situation and assessing the likely position next year, the following limits are recommended:

- a) An upper limit on fixed interest rate exposures for 2015/16 to 2018/19 of 100% of its net outstanding principal sums and an upper limit on its variable interest rate exposures for 2015/16 to 2018/19 of 50% of its net outstanding principal sums.
- b) Upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of its borrowings as follows:
Amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate:

	<u>Upper Limit %</u>	<u>Lower Limit%</u>
under 12 months	30	0
12 months and within 24 months	30	0
24 months and within 5 years	50	0
5 years and within 10 years	70	0
10 years and above	100	25

- c) An upper limit for principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days is 0% of the portfolio.

The County Council has adopted the CIPFA code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services.

ANNEX 3**POLICY ON APPROVED ORGANISATIONS FOR LENDING****APPROVED ORGANISATIONS FOR LENDING**

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Maximum Sum Outstanding/Period of Loan</u>
UK Clearing Banks and UK Building Societies	£20m/6 months up to £50m/12months
UK Debt Management Office	No maximum sum outstanding/12 months
UK Government Treasury Bills	No maximum sum outstanding/12 months
Foreign Banks	£10m/6 months up to £15m/12 months
Money Market Funds	£25m limit within any AAA-rated fund. £125m maximum exposure to all Money Market Funds
UK Local Authorities	£10m/12 months

The list of acceptable institutions will mirror the list of suggested counterparties maintained by Capita Asset Services, except the maximum maturity period will be restricted to 1 year and no institution with a suggested maturity period of 100 days or less will be excluded.

LIMITS FOR INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

UK Banks and Building Societies

Maximum Sum Outstanding	£50m	£30m	£20m
Maximum Loan Period	1 year	1 year	6 months
General description	'Special Institutions' (i.e. part UK-Government owned) and included in Capita list for period of 1 year or more	Not 'special institutions' and included in Capita list for period of 1 year or more	Included in Capita List for period of 6 months

Overseas Banks

Maximum Sum Outstanding	£15m	£10m
Maximum Loan Period	1 year	6 months
Minimum Fitch Ratings	Included in Capita list for period of 1 year or more	Included in Capita List for period of 6 months

A maximum of £30m can be invested with all banks domiciled within a single country.

Some financial institutions have both a parent company and a subsidiary that are licensed deposit takers in the UK. Where this is the case a 'group limit' will apply, and this will be the limit that is given to the parent company.

In some cases the parent company will be an overseas institution and they will have UK-registered subsidiaries. Where this is the case the parent company limit will apply at a total group level, even if this limit is less than would be given to the UK subsidiary on a stand-alone basis. Any money invested with a UK subsidiary of an overseas institution will be classed as being invested in the country of domicile of the parent, if the parent is an overseas institution for country-maximum purposes.

If the credit rating of an individual financial institution decreases to a level which no longer makes them an acceptable counterparty the Assistant Director, Strategic Finance & Property will make a decision on what action to take and report it subsequently to the Cabinet and/or Corporate Governance Committee. It should be noted that there will be no legal right to cancel a loan early, and any premature repayment can only be made with the approval of the counterparty and may include financial penalties. Similar actions will be taken if a counterparty is downgraded to a level which allows them to remain on the list of acceptable counterparties, but where the unexpired term of any loan is longer than the maximum period for which a new loan could be placed with them.