

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022/23 5th January 2022 AUDIT COMMITTEE	Classification: Public
Ward(s) affected None	
Corporate Director Ian Williams, Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report introduces the draft Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 for the Audit Committee, setting out the expected treasury operations for the 2022/23 financial year, ahead of it being sent to Cabinet and Council as part of the annual budget setting process, for formal adoption.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 The Audit Committee is recommended to:
- Approve the draft Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25 for submission to Council, subject to Capital programme that is being finalised ahead of budget setting, with delegated powers to the Group Director of Finance and Resources to approve the final Treasury Management Strategy for submission to Council.

3. REASONS FOR DECISION

- 3.1 The Treasury Management Strategy is required under the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services (the "CIPFA TM Code") to be approved by full Council along with the Prudential Indicators.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 Policy Context

- 4.1.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services (the "CIPFA TM Code") and the Prudential Code require local authorities to determine the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Prudential Indicators on an annual basis. The TMSS also incorporates the Investment Strategy as required under the MHCLG's Investment Guidance.

4.2 Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality impact issues arising from this report.

4.3 Sustainability

There are no sustainability issues arising from this report.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Consultations

No consultations have taken place in respect of this report.

5.2 Risk Assessment

The treasury management function is a significant area of risk for the Council if the function is not properly carried out and monitored by those charged with responsibility for oversight of treasury management. This Strategy sets out measures that mitigate that risk and sets the parameters within which the function should be carried out. Regular reporting on treasury ensures that the Committee is kept informed.

6. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES

- 6.1 The Treasury Management Strategy sets out how the Council's cash flow will be managed during the financial year 2022/23. The actual cost of borrowing and interest on investments will depend on market conditions and timing will be an important factor in decisions to be taken on the debt portfolio. The

prudential indicators are still to be finalised as part of the annual budget setting process relating to the capital programme.

- 6.2 The ongoing impact on the UK from coronavirus, together with higher inflation, the likelihood of higher interest rates, and the country's trade position post-Brexit, will be major influences on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2022/23.

7. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL

- 7.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 place obligations on the Council to ensure that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal controls which includes arrangements for management of risk. In addition the Council's Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules require the production of an Annual Treasury Management Strategy, which shall be carried out in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. This report demonstrates that Treasury Management is meeting these requirements and adapting to changes as and when they arise.

- 7.2 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the report.

8. BACKGROUND

- 8.1 The Treasury Strategy set out below is set in the context of the current macro-economic environment and the continuation of record low interest rates.
- 8.2 The Council has an increasing Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) due to its capital programme and therefore may need to borrow in future years, depending on the actual level of reserves and capital receipts and other resources available to it.

Report Author	Pradeep Waddon, 020 8356 2757, pradeep.waddon@hackney.gov.uk
Comments of the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources	Jackie Moylan, 020 8356 3032 jackie.moylan@hackney.gov.uk
Comments of the Director of Legal	Dawn Carter-McDonald, 020 8356 4817 Dawn.carter-mcdonald@hackney.gov.uk

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022/23 TO 2024/25

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services (the "CIPFA TM Code") and the Prudential Code require local authorities to determine the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Prudential Indicators (PIs) on an annual basis.

BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council adopted 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 Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year.
- 2.2 This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
- 2.3 The Council invests large sums of money and therefore, potentially, has exposure to certain financial risks concerning the capital sums invested and the effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk, is therefore central to the Council's treasury management strategy.

3 ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The ongoing impact on the UK from coronavirus, together with higher inflation, the likelihood of higher interest rates, and the country's trade position post-Brexit, will be major influences on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2022/23.
- 3.2 The Bank of England (BoE) held Bank Rate at 0.10% in November 2021 and maintained its Quantitative Easing programme at £895 billion. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 7-2 to keep rates on hold and 6-3 to maintain the asset purchase programme. Within the announcement the MPC suggested interest rates would be increased soon, but not to the 1% level expected by financial markets. Within the November 2021 Monetary Policy Report, the Bank expected consumer price index (CPI) inflation to peak at around 5% in April 2022 before falling back as the impact from higher energy prices fade and demand slows.
- 3.3 UK CPI for September 2021 registered 3.1% year on year, slightly down from 3.2% in the previous month. Core inflation, which excludes the more volatile components, fell to 2.9% year over year from 3.1%. The most recent labour market data for the three months to August 2021 showed the unemployment rate fell to 4.5% while the employment rate rose to 75.3%. Both measures were helped by the extension of the government's furlough scheme, but this ended in September 2021 and while this may put some pressure on the jobs

market, it is not expected to be material, with the BoE forecasting unemployment will only increase modestly in Q4 2021 according to its November 2021 Monetary Policy Report but remain low overall.

- 3.4 The US economy expanded at an annualised rate of 2.0% in Q3 2021, slowing sharply from gains of 6.7% and 6.3% in the previous two quarters. In its November 2021 interest rate announcement, the Federal Reserve continue to maintain the Fed Funds rate at between 0% and 0.25% but outlined its plan to reduce its asset purchase programme. Having bought \$120 billion of bonds each month during the pandemic to keep interest rates low, the Fed confirmed that purchases will be scaled back, starting with a \$15 billion reduction in November 2021. In terms of the timing of any interest rate hikes, Fed Chair Jerome Powell said the central bank can be patient about doing so.

4 INTEREST RATE FORECAST

- 4.1 The Authority's treasury management adviser Arlingclose is forecasting that Bank Rate will rise in calendar Q2 2022 to subdue inflationary pressures and the perceived desire by the BoE to move away from emergency levels of interest rates.
- 4.2 Gilt Investors continue to price in multiple rises in Bank Rate over the next forecast horizon, and Arlingclose believes that although interest rates will rise, the increases will not be to the extent predicted by financial markets. In the near-term, the risks around Arlingclose's central case are to the upside while over the medium-term the risks shift towards the downside.
- 4.3 A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is attached at **Appendix A**.

5 CREDIT OUTLOOK

- 5.1 Since the start of 2021, relatively benign credit conditions have led to credit default swap (CDS) prices for the larger UK banks to remain low and have steadily edged down throughout the year to almost pre-pandemic levels. The improved economic outlook during 2021 helped bank profitability and reduced the level of impairments many had made as provisions for bad loans. However, the relatively recent removal of coronavirus-related business support measures by the government means the full impact on bank balance sheets may not be known for some time.
- 5.2 The improved economic picture during 2021 led the credit rating agencies to reflect this in their assessment of the outlook for the UK sovereign as well as several financial institutions, revising them from negative to stable.
- 5.3 Looking ahead, while there is still the chance of bank losses from bad loans as government and central bank support is removed, the institutions on the Authority's counterparty list are well-capitalised and general credit conditions across the sector are expected to remain benign. Duration limits for

counterparties on the Authority's lending list are under regular review and will continue to reflect economic conditions and the credit outlook.

6 CURRENT POSITION AND BALANCE SHEET SUMMARY

- 6.1 The Council currently (as at 30.11.21) has outstanding external borrowing of £73.25m. Total investments as of the date were £82m.

Table 1: Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position as at 30/11/21

	Portfolio outstanding as at 30/11/2021 £'000	Average Rate %
External Borrowing:		
Market – Fixed Rate	73.250	1.94
Total External Borrowing	73.250	
Other Long Term Liabilities:		
PFI	11.645	
Finance Leases	0.240	
Total Gross External Debt	85.135	
Investments:		
Short-term monies - Deposits/ monies on call/MMFs	82,047	0.4
Long-term investments	200	
Total Investments	82,247	

- 6.2 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, otherwise known as internal borrowing. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table 2 below.

Table 2: Balance Sheet Summary and Forecast

	31.3.21 Actual £m	31.3.22 Estimate £m	31.3.23 Estimate £m	31.3.24 Estimate £m
General Fund CFR	372	336	364	415
HRA CFR	131	127	232	321
Total CFR	503	463	596	736
Less: Other long-term liabilities *	12	12	12	12
Loan CFR	491	451	584	724
Less: External borrowing **	77	120	250	390
Cumulative Maximum External Borrowing Requirement	414	331	334	334
Less: Usable reserves	254	225	200	175
Cumulative Net Borrowing Requirement /(Investments)	160	106	134	159

* finance leases and PFI liabilities that form part of the Authority's debt

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

- 6.3 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 2 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 3: Liability benchmark

	31.3.21 Actual £m	31.3.22 Estimate £m	31.3.23 Estimate £m	31.3.24 Estimate £m
Loan CFR	491	451	584	724
Less: Usable reserves	254	225	200	175
Net loans requirement	237	226	384	549
Plus: Liquidity allowance	10	10	10	10
Liability benchmark	247	236	394	559

- 6.4 The Authority currently has £73.25m in external borrowing. This is made up of a single £1.8m London Energy Efficiency Fund (LEEF) loan from the European Investment Bank to fund housing regeneration, along with £71.45m long term used to finance part of the borrowing requirement within the Housing Revenue Account associated with the delivery of the housing capital programme, particularly in respect of regeneration.
- 6.5 Furthermore, the Council has an increasing CFR due to the delivery of its capital programme with many regeneration schemes requiring borrowing upfront ahead of the realisation of capital receipts. It is therefore likely that the Council will need to borrow over the forecast period, the actual amount depending on the actual level of reserves and other cash balances available.
- 6.6 CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities recommends that the Authority's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. Table 2 shows that the Authority expects to comply with this recommendation during 2022/23.
- 6.7 Table 4 sets out the operational boundary and authorised limit for the Authority for the coming years. The numbers for 2021/22 to 2023/24 are provisional, ahead of February's annual budget report, and as such may be subject to change.

Table 4: Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	Approved	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Operational Boundary for External Debt	522	501	633	772
Authorised Limit for External Debt	552	531	663	802

7 BORROWING STRATEGY

- 7.1 The balance sheet forecast in Table 2 shows that the Authority has a borrowing requirement to £334 million in 2022/23. The Authority may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £663 million in 2022/23.
- 7.2 The Authority's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty 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.

- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 By doing so, the Authority is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. Whilst such a strategy is most likely to be beneficial over the next 2-3 years as official interest rates remain low, it is unlikely to be sustained in the medium-term. 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. Undertaking regular reviews regarding borrowing options, such as cost of carry and breakeven analysis will help determine whether the Authority borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2022/23 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional costs in the short-term.
- 7.5 Alternatively, the Authority may arrange forward starting loans during 2021/22, 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.
- 7.6 In addition, the Authority may borrow short-term loans (normally for up to a year) to cover liquid cash flow shortages.

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

- HM Treasury's PWLB lending facility (formerly the Public Works Loan Board)
- UK local authorities
- any institution approved for investments (see below)
- any other bank or building society authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority to operate in the UK
- Municipal Bond Agency (subject to relevant Council authorisations being in place)
- UK public and private sector pension funds (except London Borough of Hackney Pension Fund)
- Capital market bond investors
- Special purpose companies created to enable joint local authority bond issues.
- Private Placements and Loan.

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

- 7.7 The Authority has previously raised majority of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB but will consider long-term loans from other sources including banks, pensions and local authorities, and will investigate the possibility of issuing bonds and similar instruments, in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield; the Authority intends to avoid this activity in order to retain its access to PWLB loans.
- 7.8 UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. It issues bonds on the capital markets and lends the proceeds to local authorities. This is a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities will be required to provide bond investors with a 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.
- 7.9 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 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.
- 7.10 Short-term and variable rate 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 in *point 9.4 below*.

8 INVESTMENT RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 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. 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.

- 8.2 As a result of the 2008 financial crisis, there has been a major effort by governments and regulators to make legislative and regulatory changes to the banking environment. These changes were undertaken with the aim of preventing the future failures of banks and to move away from taxpayer funded bailouts, as was the case for Lloyds and RBS, and move towards a bail in scenario.
- 8.3 Bail in is whereby a levy on deposits within banks would be made to lower the amount of external bailout needed. It would take place before a bankruptcy with regulators imposing losses on shareholders, bond holders and unsecured deposits.
- 8.4 Bail in was first introduced during the Cypriot financial crisis in March 2013, when the Cypriot government was able to refinance its banks and the EU did not provide the finance to bail the banks out. Subsequently, the Cypriot banks were bailed-in via a levy on all unsecured depositors of more than £100,000.
- 8.5 The Banking Reform Act (2013) delivered significant reform to the UK banking sector and introduced into law the bail in process as a pre-emptive measure to stop failing banks. This means that unsecured depositors, such as Local Authorities, would be subject to a levy on their deposits if that counterparty was bailed in.
- 8.6 To reduce and manage this risk, it is recommended that the Council continues with its current investment strategy for high diversification and hold some investments in more secured instruments (those instruments excluded from bail in risk) such as Covered Bonds and Tri-party Repos, as well as looking at non-financial counterparties such as corporations. For unsecured deposits, the Council will continue to ensure high diversification amongst the Banks and Building Societies which will help to reduce single exposure to one organisation and increase diversification.

9 INVESTMENT STRATEGY

- 9.1 The Authority holds varying levels of invested funds at varying lengths of duration. These investments represent income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held.
- 9.2 For the 2021/22 financial year the Council had an investment balance of £82m as of 30.11.21, down from £124m for the same period last year. It is expected that investment levels will decrease in forthcoming years as balances are used to finance the capital programme.
- 9.3 The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the risk that the Bank of England will 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. Since investments cannot pay negative income, negative rates will be applied by reducing the value of investments. 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.

- 9.4 Given the investment risk as detailed in *section 7*, the Authority aims to further diversify into more secure asset classes during 2022/23. The majority of the Authorities surplus cash is currently invested in money market funds, deposits in Local authorities and Housing Associations.
- 9.5 The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in table below, subject to the limits shown.

Treasury investment counterparties and limits:

Sector	Time limit	Counterparty limit	Sector limit
The UK Government	50 years	Unlimited	n/a
Local authorities & other government entities	25 years	£10m	Unlimited
Secured investments *	25 years	£10m	Unlimited
Banks (unsecured) *	13 months	£5m	Unlimited
Building societies (unsecured) *	13 months	£5m	£10m
Registered providers (unsecured) *	5 years	£5m	£25m
Money market funds *	n/a	£10m	Unlimited
Strategic pooled funds	n/a	£10m	£50m
Real estate investment trusts	n/a	£10m	£25m
Other investments *	5 years	£5m	£10m

- 9.7 Treasury investments in the sectors marked with an asterisk will only be made with entities whose lowest published long-term credit rating is no lower than A-. 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.

For entities without published credit ratings, investments may be made either (a) where external advice indicates the entity to be of similar credit quality; or (b) to a maximum of £5m per counterparty as part of a diversified pool e.g. via a peer-to-peer platform.

9.8 Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Authority’s treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. The credit rating agencies in current use are listed in the Treasury Management Practices document. 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
- 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 “negative watch”) 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.

9.9 The maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £10million to reduce the chance of a credit event placing the council under undue financial pressure. A group of entities under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes.

Limits are also placed on fund managers, investments in brokers’ nominee accounts and foreign countries 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.

Additional investment limits

	Cash limit
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£25m per manager
Negotiable instruments held in a broker’s nominee account	£25m per broker
Foreign countries	£10m per country

- 9.10 The Council understands that credit ratings are a good predictor of investment default but are rating agencies' expressed opinions and not a perfect indicator. Therefore, Officers will use other sources of information; including credit default swap ratings and equity prices, to determine the credit quality of an organisation. These are detailed in Appendix B.
- 9.11 No investments will be made with an organisation if there are doubts about its credit quality even though it may meet the Lending Policy criteria. This means the Lending Policy applied operationally may at times be more restrictive than it formally allows.
- 9.12 When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations but these are not generally reflected in credit ratings, then the Council will restrict its investments in those organisations to maintain the required level of security. These restrictions may mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available for investment and so any cash surplus will be deposited with the government's Debt Management Office or with other local authorities. This may result in a reduction in the level of investment income earned but will protect the principal sums invested.
- 9.13 The proposed 2022/23 Treasury Management Strategy has considered a full range of risks and Officers will apply the strategy to ensure that security of deposits is the prime consideration. However, in agreeing the proposed strategy, Members should be aware that there is always a risk of default of counterparties other than the Debt Management Office which is guaranteed by the government.
- 9.14 The Authority uses cash flow forecasting to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a pessimistic basis, with receipts under-estimated and payments over-estimated 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.

10 TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

- 10.1 The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.
- 10.2 **Security:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating 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
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Portfolio average credit rating	A-
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10.3 **Liquidity:** The Authority 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 3 month period, without additional borrowing.

	Target
Target total cash available within 3 months	£20m

10.4 **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:

	2022/23
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	£0.5m
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	£0.5m

1% rise in interest rate - It is unlikely that the borrowing to this extent will be done on a short term basis but if borrowing takes place on short term basis then the impact of 1% increase in interest rates will be funded from reserves.

1% fall in interest rate exposure is calculated based on the current investment portfolio of the council. In the event of a fall in interest rate investment strategy will be revisited to identify measures to be put in place to nullify the impact on fall in interest rate.

10.5 **Maturity Structure of Borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Authority'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%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	100%	0%
24 months and within 2 years	100%	0%
2 years and within 10 years	100%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

This indicator highlights the existence of any large concentrations of fixed rate debt needing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates and is designed to protect against excessive exposures to interest rate changes in any one period. No limits have been put in place as the current debt portfolio is relatively small and no limit gives us more flexibility in restructuring the borrowing as and when required. Limits will be put in place if the debt portfolio is likely to increase.

- 10.6 **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 total principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£90m	£90m	£90m

11 OTHER ITEMS

- 11.1 There are a number of additional items that the Authority is obliged by CIPFA or MHCLG to include in its Treasury Management Strategy.
- 11.2 **Policy on 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).
- 11.3 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 will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.
- 11.4 Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria, assessed using the appropriate credit rating for derivative exposures. An allowance for credit risk calculated using the methodology in the Treasury Management Practices document will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.
- 11.5 **Policy on Apportioning Interest to the HRA:** The Council has adopted a two pooled approach following the self-financing settlement in March 2012. In

the future, new long-term loans borrowed will be assigned in their entirety to one pool or the other. Interest payable and other costs/income arising from long-term loans (e.g. premiums and discounts on early redemption) will be charged/ credited to the respective revenue account. Differences between the value of the HRA loans pool and the HRA's underlying need to borrow (adjusted for HRA balance sheet resources available for investment) will result in a notional cash balance which may be positive or negative. Where the HRA needs to borrow from the General Fund to meet its remaining borrowing requirement the General Fund is compensated based on what the Council would have to borrow from the PWLB, with rates based on a best decision from a treasury management perspective and the current interest rate outlook. This will be determined annually following advice from the Council's treasury advisers and the interest transferred between the General Fund and the HRA at the year end.

- 11.6 **Investment Training:** The needs of the Authority's treasury management staff for training in investment management are assessed as part of individual staff appraisal processes, and additionally when the responsibilities of individual members of staff change.
- 11.7 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.
- 11.8 **Investment Advisers:** The Council has appointed Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers and receives specific advice on investment, debt and capital finance issues. Arlingclose are an independent treasury advisory company providing unbiased financial advice and capital financing expertise for the public sector. They provide advice on investment trends, developments and opportunities consistent with the Council's chosen strategy relating to investments, debt repayment and restructuring, and also for economic information and data interpretation.
- 11.9 Although the Council uses the expertise of an external provider for treasury management advice relating to investing, borrowing and restructuring of the portfolios, the Council remains fully accountable for any decisions made.
- 11.10 Regular communications are received in relation to economic data releases, interest rate forecast and debt structuring opportunities with, sometimes, daily communications in respect of counterparties. Officers also attend training sessions facilitated by Arlingclose relating to Prudential Code, Treasury Management Code of Practice and Accounting.
- 11.11 Meetings are held on a quarterly basis with Officers of the Council, including the Director Financial Management, to discuss treasury management strategies, which may, from time to time, include discussions in regard to enhancement of the service provision if required. Additional ad-hoc meetings are arranged as required if specific issues arise during the course of the year outside of scheduled quarterly meetings.

12 Other Options Considered

- 11.1 The CIPFA Code does not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources 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
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

Appendix A – Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast October 2021

Underlying assumptions:

- The global economy continues to recover from the pandemic but has entered a more challenging phase. The resurgence of demand has led to the expected rise in inflationary pressure, but disrupted factors of supply are amplifying the effects, increasing the likelihood of lower growth rates ahead. This is particularly apparent in the UK due to the impact of Brexit
- While Q2 UK GDP expanded more quickly than initially thought, the 'pingdemic' and more latterly supply disruption will leave Q3 GDP broadly stagnant. The outlook also appears weaker. Household spending, the driver of the recovery to date, is under pressure from a combination of retail energy price rises, the end of government support programmes and soon, tax rises. Government spending, the other driver of recovery, will slow considerably as the economy is taken off life support
- Inflation rose to 3.2% in August. A combination of factors will drive this to over 4% in the near term. While the transitory factors affecting inflation, including the low base effect of 2020, are expected to unwind over time, the MPC has recently communicated fears that these transitory factors will feed longer-term inflation expectations that require tighter monetary policy to control. This has driven interest rate expectations substantially higher
- The supply imbalances are apparent in the labour market. While wage growth is currently elevated due to compositional and base factors, stories abound of higher wages for certain sectors, driving inflation expectations. It is uncertain whether a broad-based increase in wages is possible given the pressures on businesses.
- Government bond yields increased sharply following the September FOMC and MPC minutes, in which both central banks communicated a lower tolerance for higher inflation than previously thought. The MPC in particular has doubled-down on these signals in spite of softer economic data. Bond investors expect higher near-term interest rates but are also clearly uncertain about central bank policy.
- The MPC appears to be playing both sides, but has made clear its intentions to tighten policy, possibly driven by a desire to move away from emergency levels. While the economic outlook will be challenging, the signals from policymakers suggest Bank Rate will rise unless data indicates a more severe slowdown.

Forecast:

- Arlingclose expects Bank Rate to rise in Q2 2022. We believe this is driven as much by the Bank's desire to move from emergency levels as by fears of inflationary pressure.

- Investors have priced in multiple rises in Bank Rate to 1% by 2024. While we believe Bank Rate will rise, it is by a lesser extent than expected by markets
- Gilt yields have risen sharply as investors factor in higher interest rate and inflation expectations. From here, we believe that gilt yields will be broadly steady, before falling as inflation decreases and market expectations fall into line with our forecast
- The risk around our forecasts for Bank Rate is to the upside over the next few months, shifting to the downside in the medium term. The risks around the gilt yield forecasts are initially broadly balanced, shifting to the downside later

	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk	0.15	0.15	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Arlingclose Central Case	0.10	0.10	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Downside risk	0.00	0.00	-0.15	-0.15	-0.15	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40
3-month money market rate													
Upside risk	0.10	0.15	0.20	0.20	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35
Arlingclose Central Case	0.10	0.15	0.35	0.40	0.45	0.60	0.65	0.65	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Downside risk	0.00	-0.05	-0.25	-0.25	-0.30	-0.45	-0.50	-0.50	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45
5yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.25	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
Arlingclose Central Case	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.25	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40
10yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35
Arlingclose Central Case	1.05	1.05	1.05	1.05	1.05	1.05	1.00	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.90	0.90	0.90
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.45	-0.45	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50
20yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.30	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Arlingclose Central Case	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.35	1.35	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30
Downside risk	-0.35	-0.40	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50
50yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Arlingclose Central Case	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.25	1.25	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
Downside risk	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40	-0.45	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50

PWLB certainty rate = relevant gilt yield + 0.80%

Appendix B - London Borough of Hackney's Investment Policy

1. Institutions and instruments included:

1.1 The Council will invest in the following types of institutions;

- UK Central Government
- UK Local Authorities
- UK Police and Fire Authorities
- UK Banks and Building Societies
- Corporate Institutions
- Banks domiciled in other countries or their subsidiaries domiciled in the UK providing the country has a sovereign rating of at least AA+ from each of the three credit rating criteria set out below. If the ratings of a parent bank fall below the minimum criteria, no lending will be undertaken with its subsidiaries even if their ratings continue to meet the minimum criteria
- Supranational Banks
- AAA rated Money Market Funds
- Pooled Funds
- UK registered providers for Social Housing

1.2 The Council will invest using the following types of instruments

- Call and Notice Account
- Fixed Term deposits
- Treasury bills
- Bonds
- Certificate of deposits
- Money Market Funds
- Commercial Papers
- Pooled Funds
- Revolving Credit Facility
- Repurchasing agreements
- Alternatives

- 1.3 UK Local governments with no credit rating will be treated in line with the credit rating of the UK central government.
- 1.4 For secured investments, where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the highest of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used to determine cash and time limits.
- 1.5 Sovereign credit rating criteria will not apply to investments in multilateral development banks (e.g. the European Investment bank and the World Bank) or other subsidiaries.
- 1.6 As well as assessing credit rating as an indicator of risk, the Council will also analyse the following sources of information:
 - Credit default Swap
 - Equity Prices
 - Economic output
 - Counterparty's financial Statements and financial ratios
 - News

Appendix C - Glossary of Terms

Government: Loans to, and 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 generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Government are deemed to be zero credit risk due to its ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

Secured investments: Investments secured on the borrower's assets, which limits the potential losses in the event of insolvency. The amount and quality of the security will be a key factor in the investment decision. Covered bonds and reverse repurchase agreements with banks and building societies 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. The combined secured and unsecured investments with any one counterparty will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

Banks and building societies (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.

Registered providers (unsecured): Loans to, and bonds issued or guaranteed by, registered providers of social housing or registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (in England), the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Welsh Government and the Department for Communities (in Northern Ireland). As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

Money market funds: Pooled funds that offer same-day or short notice liquidity and very low or no price volatility by investing in short-term money markets. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee. Although no sector limit applies to money market funds, the Authority will take care to diversify its liquid investments over a variety of providers to ensure access to cash at all times.

Strategic pooled funds: Bond, equity and property funds that 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.

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.

Other investments: This category covers treasury investments not listed above, for example unsecured corporate bonds and company loans. Non-bank companies cannot be bailed-in but can become insolvent placing the Authority's investment at risk.

Appendix D

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

1. Approved Activities

In accordance with the Council's Constitution and Delegated Powers, the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources and Officers authorised by the Group Director, may arrange all investments, borrowing, repayment of debt outstanding and leasing required and permitted by the Local Government Act 2003.

Borrowing must be contained within the limit determined under the Authorised Limit of the Prudential Code and used solely for the purpose of the Council's statutory functions. Treasury management operations will comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice.

2. Treasury Management Policy Objectives

The Council defines its treasury management activities as:

"The management of the Council's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

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

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

The treasury management activities of the Council will be conducted to achieve the following policy objectives: -

- (a) To ensure that risk to the Council's financial position is minimised by the adoption of sound debt management and investment practices;
- (b) The Council's borrowing will be affordable, sustainable and prudent and consideration will be given to the management of interest rate risk and refinancing risk. The source from which the borrowing is taken and the type of borrowing should allow the Council transparency and control over its debt.
- (c) The overall average rate of interest on short-term investments to be greater than the average seven-day LIBID rate (source: Bloomberg), whilst having regard to the security of funds and the minimisation of risk;
- (d) To have a policy to repay debt, take opportunities to make premature debt repayments, and restructuring of debt when and where it is advantageous to the Council to do so.

3 Adoption of the CIPFA Code of Practice

The Council has adopted the key recommendations of CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the Code), as described in Section 2 of that Code.

Accordingly, this organisation will create and maintain, as the cornerstones for effective treasury management:

- A Treasury Management Policy Statement, stating policies and objectives of its treasury management activities.
- Suitable Treasury Management Practices (TMPs), setting out the manner in which the organisation will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, prescribing how the Council will manage and control those activities.

The contents of the Policy Statement and TMPs will follow the recommendations contained in Sections 6 and 7 of the Code, subject only to amendment where necessary to reflect the particular circumstances of the Council. Such amendments will not result in the Council materially deviating from the Code's key recommendations.

- The Council will receive reports on its treasury management policies practices and activities, including, as a minimum, an annual strategy and plan in advance of the year.
- The Council delegates responsibility for the implementation, monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices to Audit Committee, and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources, who will act in accordance with the policy statement, TMPs and CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

4 Investment of Cash Balances

Investment of all balances arising from day to day cash flows, capital receipts, minimum revenue provisions and other financial reserves and provisions will be in accordance with Government regulations or guidelines to produce a maximum return having regard to the security of funds and the minimisation of risk.

The Council's primary objective in relation to investments remains the security of capital. The liquidity or accessibility of the Authority's investments followed by the yield earned on investments remain important but are secondary considerations.

The spread of risk will be controlled by reference to the approved criteria and financial limits. Investment liquidity will be structured with regard to cash flow projections maintained under the authority of the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.

5 Investment Names/Financial Limits

Investments are to be made only to those institutions, which meet the approved criteria for lending, and within the current maximum financial limits as approved, by the Cabinet and Council. Where investments in any of these institutions were made at a time where a higher maximum limit applied, the new maximum limit will be applied as existing investments mature.

Between reports to the Cabinet/Council, the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources, under delegated powers, is authorised to revise, and further

restrict or relax, the investment names/limits to reflect changes in market sentiment, information and credit ratings.

6 Risk Appetite Statement

The Council's objectives in relation to debt and investment is to assist the achievement of the Council's service objectives by obtaining funding and managing the potential debt and investments at a net cost which is as low as possible , consistent with a degree of interest cost stability and a very low risk to sums invested.

This means that the Council takes a low risk position but is not totally risk averse. Treasury management staff have the capability to actively manage treasury risk within the scope of the council's treasury management policy and strategy.

7 Legal Issues

Borrowing and investment will be arranged efficiently through a range of brokers practising in the money markets and, in addition, the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources is authorised to deal directly with counterparties where it is advantageous to do so. The requirements of the Bank of England Non-Investment Products Code (NIPS) (November 2011) will be met in all the above arrangements.

8 Use of Bankers

Approved agreements are currently in place with the Lloyds Bank and the RBS/Natwest Bank for the conduct of banking business for the Council and schools respectively.

The Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources is authorised to negotiate appropriate changes to the mandates which may be needed to cover any exceptional market circumstances to protect the Council's finances.

9 Review

The Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources will report to the appropriate committee on the Treasury Management performance as follows:

- **TM Outturn Report –**

Frequency - once a year against the TM Strategy and Prudential Indicators approved for the previous financial year, no later than September of the current financial year

To – Cabinet via the OFP (Overall Financial Position) and Audit Committee

- **TM Half-Year Activity and Performance Report –**

Frequency – a report on its treasury activity and performance, it is anticipated to be no later than January of the current financial year

To – Cabinet via OFP and Audit Committee

- **TM Quarterly Activity Report –**

Frequency - report to be submitted on treasury activity for the previous quarter

To – Audit Committee

- **Ad-hoc –**

Additional reports will be submitted to the appropriate committee as required, in order to react to extreme fluctuations in market conditions and/or increased levels of treasury activity

The Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources will make such arrangements as are necessary for monitoring daily activities in the treasury functions.