

CABINET OVERVIEW WORKING GROUP
Thursday, 11 January 2018 at 7.30 pm
Council Chamber, Civic Centre

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence from Councillors.

2. Declarations of Interest

To receive Councillors' declarations of interest (if any) in relation to any matters on the agenda.

3. Minutes (Pages 2 - 3)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 05 December 2017.

4. Matters arising

Any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

5. Treasury Strategy Management Review. (Pages 4 - 55)

6. Work Plan (Page 56)

To review the Overview Working Group's work plan for the current year.

7. Matters of Urgent Business

Such other business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be received as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances to be specified in the minutes.

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET OVERVIEW WORKING GROUP
HELD ON**

5 December 2017

7.30 - 8.43 pm

PRESENT

Overview Working Group Members

Councillor Ian Beckett (Chair)
Councillor Mark Ingall (Vice-Chair)
Councillor David Carter
Councillor Tony Edwards
Councillor Michael Garnett
Councillor Stefan Mullard
Councillor John Strachan

Officers

Lisa Thornett, Corporate Governance Support Officer
Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing
Graeme Bloomer, Head of Place
Will Hales, Property & Facilities Manager
Maureen Pearman, Community, Leisure and Cultural Services Manager
Lourdes Madigasekera, Public Health Improvement Practitioner

17. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Simon Carter, Councillor Maggie Hulcoop and Councillor Clive Souter.

18. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

19. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

20. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

21. **NON HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - INTERIM REPORT**

AGREED that the Cabinet Overview Working Group accept the draft timescales and that the final report will be presented in June 2018. The group would welcome interim reports being emailed to the group in the interim.

22. **HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY - INTERIM REPORT**

AGREED that the Cabinet Overview Working Group note the draft Health and Safety Strategy. Following the discussion, it was agreed that a Working Group be arranged to assist in preparing the strategy. The following Councillors have agreed to form the party: Councillor Stefan Mullard, Councillor David Carter, Councillor Tony Edwards and Councillor Michael Garnett.

23. **REGENERATION STRATEGY - INTERIM REPORT**

RESOLVED that the Overview Working group recommends to Cabinet that:

A revised timeframe of 12 months from the date of this meeting of this meeting is planned for the production of the Regeneration Strategy be approved.

24. **WORK PLAN**

Resolved that the Final Regeneration Report due in March 2018 be amended to an update following the recommendation.

25. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW
WORKING GROUP

REPORT TO: CABINET OVERVIEW WORKING GROUP

DATE: 11 JANUARY 2018

TITLE: TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW

LEAD OFFICER(S): SIMON FREEMAN, HEAD OF FINANCE
(01279) 446228

RECOMMENDED that:

- A** The Working Group considers the report and the underpinning principles that support the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.
- B** That the Working Group refers any specific issues identified as a result of the review to Cabinet for consideration.

BACKGROUND

1. The Council has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (as revised November 2009) – "the Code". Under the Code the minimum reporting requirements are that Full Council receives the following reports:
 - An annual treasury strategy in advance of the year.
 - A mid-year treasury update report.
 - An annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy.
2. The 2018/19 Treasury Management Strategy will be approved in February 2018 at the same time as the MTFS, General Fund Budget, HRA estimates and rent levels and the Capital Programme. The Strategy supports the financial activities by setting out the investment and borrowing policy and it ensures that the Council's cash holdings are safeguarded as far as possible from loss in the current economic climate.
3. The strategy also contains the Prudential indicators required under the Prudential Code which set limits and boundaries for the capital expenditure of the Council. The Capital programme and borrowing activity must be constrained within the limits set by the indicators. It is intended that these limits ensure the Council operates within financial boundaries which it can afford in the context of its wider financial strategies. The current strategy is attached to the report at Appendix 1
4. The mid-year treasury management update report was presented to Cabinet

at its December meeting and is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

5. The annual report for 2016/17 has been produced in compliance with the Code and was reported to Cabinet in September 2017. The full report is attached as Appendix 3 to this report. The regulatory environment governing treasury management places onus on Councillors for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policies and activities. This report is important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the policies approved by the Council.

ISSUES/PROPOSALS

2016/17

6. As reported to Council in September, the Council operated within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement during 2016/17
7. The Council has held significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During 2016/17 the Council's investment balances have ranged between £35.007m and £58.367m, finishing the financial year at £35.887m. The average balance of investments held during 2016/17 was £48.509m. The actual interest received was £0.304m with the average return received by the Council of being 0.626% which compared very favourably to the 7 day LIBID rate of 0.2%
8. Security of capital remained the Council's main investment objective. This has been maintained by following the Council's counterparty policy as set out in its Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2016/17.
9. During 2016/17 the Council continued to diversify its investments following the actions taken in 2015/16 where it began to utilise certificates of deposit (CDs) and the CCLA Property Fund.
10. The Annual report shows that this diversification has seen a move away from the unsecured investments held with banks and building societies and has focus on replacing these investments with transactions with other local authorities. This is a trend that has also continued in to the 2017/18 financial year.
11. Counterparty credit quality was assessed and monitored with reference to credit ratings (the Council's minimum long-term counterparty rating is A-across rating agencies Fitch, S&P and Moody's); credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press.

12. The end of bank bail-outs, the introduction of bail-ins, and the preference being given to large numbers of depositors other than local authorities means that the risks of making unsecured deposits continues to be elevated relative to other investment options.
13. During 2016/17 the Council complied with the Prudential Indicators for as set within the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement approved in February 2016. The indicators themselves are included as part of the Annual report attached.

2017/18

14. The Council remains compliant with its Prudential Indicators for 2017/18, set in February 2017 as part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement and has continued to look to move its investments in to vehicles that remove or limit the exposure to unsecured investments.
15. The June General Election and the recent announcement that the Bank of England has increased the base rate for the first time in 10 years from 0.25% to 0.50% has added further uncertainty to money market activities during the latter part of 2017. The market experts remain uncertain of the outcomes for long-term interest rates, exchange rates, budget cuts and bank defaults at the current time.
16. In response to this situation the Council has continued to proceed in its treasury activity with great caution and continues to maintain particular emphasis on its key priority of investment security. The Council has operated within the remit of the approved Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and is utilising the lending list of approved institutions provided by the Council's treasury advisors, Arlingclose. This lending list is regularly updated and amended by Arlingclose in response to changes in the status and ratings of institutions and in response to forecasts and events occurring within the markets. As a result the lending list has continued to experience a reduction in the options available for investing the Council's cashflow balances, as well as shortening of investment periods and investment limits.
17. The Council's overriding response to the current market conditions is to continue to ensure the security of investments above liquidity and yield. Officers aim to ensure that investments are made in the most cost efficient and effective manner.
18. In order to further protect the Council's investment options, it may also be necessary to review some of the investment parameters within the TMSS (for example investment limits) if there are indications that future market events may constrict the lending list beyond what is manageable within the Council's

treasury operations.

19. There are further changes proposed to the wider investment market sector with effect from January 2018 under the EU Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (or Mifid II as it is more commonly known) This has involved a large amount of work for the Council in entering into agreements with the Financial Institutions it utilises to be regarded as a Professional Client rather than a Retail Client. 'Opting up' to Professional status has ensured that the ongoing advice the Council receives from its Treasury Advisors remains available along with market access to products and fee structures that are not available to retail clients.
20. Further information regarding the current TMSS assumptions are contained within the report at Appendix 1 and verbal updates on current activity and how it may influence the 2018/19 TMSS will be provided at the meeting.

IMPLICATIONS

Place (includes Sustainability)

None Specific

Author: **Graeme Bloomer, Head of Place**

Finance (Includes ICT)

As contained within the body of the report and appendices.

Author: **Simon Freeman, Head of Finance**

Housing

Non Specific

Author: **Andrew Murray, Head of Housing**

Community Wellbeing (includes Equalities and Social Inclusion)

None Specific.

Author: **Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing**

Governance (includes HR)

None Specific.

Author: **Brian Keane, Head of Governance**

<p style="text-align: center;">Harlow Council Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2017/18</p>

Summary of the Report

1. This Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) sets out the Council's capital plans and treasury management issues in accordance with proper practice.
2. It provides an update of external economic conditions impacting on the Council and focusses on the major issues of borrowing and investments.
3. The Council uses treasury management advisors to help its decision making, keeping officers up to date with economic developments and providing training and support. Arlingclose Limited has been the Council's appointed advisor for a five year term since December 2012.
4. Economic background and commentary has been provided by Arlingclose and included throughout the Statement. Never before have interest rates been so low, and with the prospect of increasing inflation during 2017/18 this makes treasury management a particularly challenging environment.
5. As a steward of public finance, the Council will continue to take all practical steps to protect its investment portfolio. In this respect emphasis remains in this order of priority:
 - **Security.** which includes the following, some of which might appear contradictory:
 - Reducing risk in order to protect the return of capital sums, particularly in relation to the Council's investments;
 - The repayment of the sum invested; and / or,
 - A total return equal to or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation
 - **Liquidity:** availability of cash when needed (adequate but not excessive liquidity)
 - **Yield:** a return commensurate with the level of risk.

6. No financial planning can ignore the decision of the EU Referendum for Britain to leave the European Union. As we see in the news, Brexit is uncharted territory bringing uncertainties regarding the nation's economy. Interest rates have reduced to an historic and perhaps long term low, and inflation is predicted to rise due in large part to the fall in the exchange rate of sterling against other currencies. There is also what is described as political risk with elections looming in France and Germany, with outcomes far from certain. These uncertainties need to be factored into this Strategy.
7. A further consideration is the exposure local government has to a catastrophic outcome of a bank failing, or having a potential to fail. Rules are in place which place onus on banks to be "bailed in" by their creditors, rather than government, with public bodies such as Councils higher on the list to recompense. This then questions whether the small yield receivable from banks and building societies is worth the risk. Of course, one would expect a bank to be a safe haven for surplus cash. One way of limiting the risk of bail in is to invest in pooled funds which are highly diversified and, by implication, means that if one investment from a pooled fund into an institution fails then the loss is mitigated to the lender. Arlingclose advises the use of Cash Plus and Short-dated Bond Funds and multi-asset income funds which provide diversification of investment counterparties, opportunity for an income return as well as capital return.
8. In September 2015 the Council invested £2m in the CCLA Property Fund. It has, to date, provided a reasonable yield on the investment but the downside has been the recent reduction in capital values following the Brexit decision. Such Property Funds are available to a long-term investor and carry a cost of legal expenses and Stamp Duty on purchase. Further investment in the CCLA Property Fund remains an option in this strategy but would be one entered only with careful consideration.

Introduction

9. Harlow Council has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's 'Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2011 Edition' (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year.
10. In addition, the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) issued revised 'Guidance on Local Authority Investments' in

March 2010 that requires the Council to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year.

11. This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the 'Local Government Act 2003' to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the CLG Guidance.
12. The Council has invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are therefore central to the Council's treasury management strategy.
13. **Revised strategy:** In accordance with the CLG Guidance, Full Council will be asked to approve a revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement should the assumptions on which this report is based change significantly. Such circumstances would include, for example, a large unexpected change in interest rates, or in the Council's capital programme or in the level of its investment balance.

External Context (supplied by Arlingclose)

Economic background:

14. The major external influence on the Council's treasury management strategy for 2017/18 will be the UK's progress in negotiating a smooth exit from the European Union. Financial markets, wrong-footed by the referendum outcome, have since been weighed down by uncertainty over whether leaving the Union also means leaving the single market. Negotiations are expected to start once the UK formally triggers exit in early 2017 and last for at least two years. Uncertainty over future economic prospects will therefore remain throughout 2017/18.
15. The fall and continuing weakness in sterling and the near doubling in the price of oil in 2016 have combined to drive inflation expectations higher. The Bank of England is forecasting that Consumer Price Inflation will breach its 2% target in 2017, the first time since late 2013, but the Bank is expected to look through inflation overshoots over the course of the next few years when setting interest rates so as to avoid derailing the economy.
16. Initial post-referendum economic data showed that the feared collapse in business and consumer confidence had not immediately led to lower GDP growth. However, the prospect of a leaving the single market has dented business confidence and resulted in a delay in new business

investment and, unless counteracted by higher public spending or retail sales, will weaken economic growth in 2017/18.

17. Looking overseas, with the US economy and its labour market showing steady improvement, the market has priced in a high probability of the Federal Reserve further increasing interest rates in 2017. The Eurozone meanwhile has continued to struggle with very low inflation and lack of momentum in growth, and the European Central Bank has left the door open for further quantitative easing.
18. The impact of political risk on financial markets remains significant over the next year. With challenges such as immigration, the rise of populist, anti-establishment parties and negative interest rates resulting in savers being paid nothing for their frugal efforts or even penalised for them, the outcomes of Italy's referendum on its constitution (December 2016), the French presidential and general elections (April – June 2017) and the German federal elections (August – October 2017) have the potential for upsets.

Credit outlook:

19. Markets have expressed concern over the financial viability of a number of European banks recently. Sluggish economies and continuing fines for pre-crisis behaviour have weighed on bank profits, and any future slowdown will exacerbate concerns in this regard.
20. Bail-in legislation, which ensures that large investors including local authorities will rescue failing banks instead of taxpayers in the future, has now been fully implemented in the European Union, Switzerland and USA, while Australia and Canada are progressing with their own plans. The credit risk associated with making unsecured bank deposits has therefore increased relative to the risk of other investment options available to the Council; returns from cash deposits however continue to fall.

Interest rate forecast:

21. The Council's treasury adviser Arlingclose's central case is for UK Bank Rate to remain at 0.25% during 2017/18. The Bank of England has discussed the possibility of further interest rate cuts, especially if economic growth slows. Negative Bank Rate is currently perceived by some policymakers to be counterproductive, but this cannot be ruled out later in 2017/18, particularly if the UK enters recession as a result of concerns over leaving the European Union.
22. Gilt yields and PWLB rates are expected to trend broadly flat from current levels, albeit with much short-term volatility. Long-term economic fundamentals remain weak, and the quantitative easing (QE)

stimulus provided by central banks globally has only delayed the fallout from the build-up of public and private sector debt. The Bank of England has defended QE as a monetary policy tool, and further QE in support of the UK economy in 2017/18 remains a distinct possibility, to keep long-term interest rates low.

23. A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is attached at **Appendix A**.
24. For the purpose of setting the budget, it has been assumed that new investments will be made at an average rate of 0.51%. No new external long-term loans are planned to be taken out in 2016/17 and 2017/18 at the time of writing this strategy.

Local Context

25. On 31 December 2016, the Council held £211.837m of borrowing and £49.239m of investments. This is set out in further detail at **Appendix B**. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary and Forecast

	31.3.16 Actual £m	31.3.17 Estimate £m	31.3.18 Forecast £m	31.3.19 Forecast £m	31.3.20 Forecast £m
General Fund CFR	39.524	42.892	44.269	46.862	47.753
HRA CFR	187.370	187.370	187.370	187.370	187.370
Total CFR	226.894	230.262	231.639	234.232	235.123
Less: Other debt liabilities	0	0	0	0	0
Borrowing CFR	226.894	230.262	231.639	234.232	235.123
Less: External borrowing	(-)211.837	(-)211.837	(-)211.837	(-)211.837	(-)211.837
Internal borrowing	15.057	18.425	19.802	22.395	23.286
Less: Usable reserves	(-)41.390	(-)34.476	(-)29.509	(-)26.946	(-)25.642
Less: Working capital	(-)17.090	(-)27.090	(-)27.090	(-)27.090	(-)27.090
Investments	(-)43.423	(-)43.141	(-)36.797	(-)31.641	(-)29.446

26. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Council's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing. This provides protection by minimising investment balances and reducing exposure to market risks associated with such balances.

27. CIPFA's 'Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities' recommends that the Council's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. Table 1 shows that the Council expects to comply with this recommendation during 2017/18.

Borrowing Strategy

28. The Council currently holds £211.837m of external borrowing, which is unchanged on the previous year, as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. The balance sheet forecast in table 1 shows that the Council does not need to borrow in 2017/18. The Council may however borrow to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £270m (see Annex C).
29. **Objectives:** The Council's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Council's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.
30. **Strategy:** Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Council's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead.
31. By doing so, the Council is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of internal borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly. Arlingclose will assist the Council with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Council borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2017/18 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.
32. In addition, the Council may borrow short-term loans (normally for up to one month) to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.
33. **Sources:** The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and any successor body
 - any institution approved for investments (see below)
 - any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
 - UK public and private sector pension funds (except Essex County Council Pension Fund)
 - capital market bond investors
 - UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues
34. 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
35. The Council has previously raised all of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB but it would continue to investigate other sources of finance, such as local authority loans and bank loans that may be available at more favourable rates.
36. **Municipal Bond Agency:** UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. It plans to issue bonds on the capital markets and lend the proceeds to local authorities. This will be a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities will be required to provide bond investors with a joint and several guarantee to refund their investment in the event that the agency is unable to for any reason; and there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report to Full Council.
37. **Debt Rescheduling:** The PWLB allows councils to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Council may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk.

Investment Strategy

38. The Council holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Council's investment balance has ranged between £35.7m and £58.4m, and similar levels are expected to be maintained in the forthcoming year.
39. **Objectives:** Both the CIPFA Code and the CLG Guidance require the Council to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Council will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested.
40. **Negative Interest Rates:** In the unlikely event that the UK enters into a recession in 2017/18, there is a small chance that the Bank of England could set its Bank Rate at or below zero, which is likely to feed through to negative interest rates on all low risk, short-term investment options. This situation already exists in many other European countries. In this event, security will be measured as receiving the contractually agreed amount at maturity, even though this may be less than the amount originally invested.
41. **Strategy:** Given the increasing risk and falling returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Council aims to further diversify into more secure and/or higher yielding asset classes during 2017/18 without compromise to excessive risk. The majority of the Council's surplus cash remains invested in short-term unsecured bank deposits, certificates of deposit and money market funds. This diversification will represent a continuation of the new strategy begun in 2015/16 when the Council invested £2m in The Local Authorities' Property Fund through CCLA. This is intended as a long-term investment at potentially attractive dividends (of at least 4% p.a.) but has recently been affected by a reduction in property values following the EU Referendum, which has lowered the capital value of the sum invested. Further, less volatile, investments for durations of 1, 3 or 5 years will be considered, for example, through Cash Plus and Short-dated Bond Funds and Multi-Asset Income funds. Any investments through new asset

classes, or an extension of investment through The Local Authorities' Property Fund, will be made in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

42. **Approved Counterparties:** The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in table 2 below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown.

Table 2: Approved Investment Counterparties and Limits

Credit Rating	Banks Unsecured	Banks Secured	Government	Corporates	Registered Providers
UK Govt	n/a	n/a	£ Unlimited 50 years	n/a	n/a
AAA	£4m 5 years	£4m 20 years	£4m 50 years	£2m 20 years	£2m 20 years
AA+	£4m 5 years	£4m 10 years	£4m 25 years	£2m 10 years	£2m 10 years
AA	£4m 4 years	£4m 5 years	£4m 15 years	£2m 5 years	£2m 10 years
A-	£4m 3 years	£4m 4 years	£4m 10 years	£2m 4 years	£2m 10 years
A+	£4m 2 years	£4m 3 years	£4m 5 years	£2m 3 years	£2m 5 years
A	£4m 13 months	£4m 2 years	£2m 5 years	£2m 2 years	£2m 5 years
A-	£2m 6 months	£4m 13 months	£2m 5 years	£2m 13 months	£2m 5 years
BBB+	£1m 100 days	£2m 6 months	£1m 2 years	£1m 6 months	£1m 2 years
None	£1m 6 months	n/a	£4m 25 years	£50,000 5 years	£2m 5 years
Pooled funds	£5m per fund				

This table must be read in conjunction with the notes below

43. **Credit Rating:** Investment limits are set by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from Fitch, Moody's or Standard & Poor's. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.
44. **Banks Unsecured:** Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. The risk of credit loss is determined by the robustness of the bank's own balance sheet. Whilst this does not preclude the Council from making these investments, it will only do so

where there is a sufficiently high credit rating. The maximum which may be invested with each institution with a high credit rating is £4m, so typically might be 10% of total surplus cash available. During 2017/18 the Council will look to mitigate risk by diversifying investments into other asset classes.

45. The Council will not place unsecured investments with poorly rated institutions other than fully liquid deposits with the Council's own bankers, Barclays Bank plc., should the bank fail to reach the grade. The use of an account to leave overnight deposits with our own bankers is an important tool in cost effective cash flow management. Other than over the Christmas period (see Table 4 below) the maximum amount which may be held in the overnight account is £4m.
46. **Banks Secured:** Covered bonds, reverse repurchase agreements and other collateralised arrangements with banks and building societies. To date the Council has not used any of these products. These investments are secured on the bank's assets, which limits the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency, and means that they are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used to determine cash and time limits. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.
47. **Government:** Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is an insignificant risk of insolvency. Investments with the UK Central Government may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years. Investments through the Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility (DMADF) are risk free but this is reflected in a lower interest yield than investments with other institutions. The maximum the Council would normally invest through this facility is £20m for specified periods up to six months, and only does so when other deposit takers are limited. If another banking crisis struck then the DMADF would be a safe haven for surplus cash. The Council has not invested in Treasury Bills to date. Local authority lending has become more popular in recent times but, again, yields tend to be lower than banks. The vast majority do not have a credit rating. The Council permits a maximum of £4m to be invested.
48. **Corporates:** Loans, bonds and commercial paper issued by individually named companies other than banks and registered providers. To date the Council has not used any of these products.

These investments are not subject to bail-in, but are exposed to the risk of the company going insolvent. Loans to unrated companies will only be made as part of a diversified pool in order to spread the risk widely.

49. **Registered Providers:** Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of Registered Providers of Social Housing, formerly known as Housing Associations. These bodies are tightly regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency and, as providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.
50. **Pooled Funds: Shares** in diversified investment vehicles consisting of the any of the above investment types, plus equity shares and property. These funds have the advantage of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a fee. Investment in shares, within a pooled fund, have the potential of high volatility, changing with market prices, and/or have a notice period will be used for longer investment periods. Short-term Money Market Funds (MMFs) that offer same-day liquidity and very low or no volatility will be used as an alternative to instant access bank accounts. Arlingclose recommend that no more than 50% of surplus cash is invested in MMFs, which would typically mean a total of £20m on a cash surplus of £40m as has been the case until now. The Council has seven MMFs, so could allow a maximum investment of £5m per fund would stretch the limit to £35m in extremis.
51. **Pooled Funds: Bond, equity and property funds** offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Council to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives will be monitored regularly. The Council invested £2m in a Local Authority Pooled Property Fund in September 2015. It will consider investing in other products.
52. **Risk Assessment and Credit Ratings:** Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Council's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:
 - no new investments will be made,
 - any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and

- full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.
53. Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as “rating watch negative” or “credit watch negative”) so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

Other Information on the Security of Investments:

54. The Council understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may meet the credit rating criteria.
55. When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2011, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Council will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Council’s cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, via the Debt Management Office or invested in government treasury bills for example, or with other local authorities. This will cause a reduction in the level of investment income earned, but will protect the principal sum invested.

Specified Investments:

56. The CLG Guidance defines specified investments as those:
- denominated in pound sterling,
 - due to be repaid within 12 months of arrangement,
 - not defined as capital expenditure by legislation, and
 - invested with one of:
 - the UK Government,

- a UK local authority, parish council or community council,
or
 - a body or investment scheme of “high credit quality”.
57. The Council defines “high credit quality” organisations and securities as those having a credit rating of A- (A minus) or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher. For money market funds and other pooled funds “high credit quality” is defined as those having a credit rating of A- (A minus) or higher.

Non-specified Investments:

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

Table 3: Non-Specified Investment Limits

	Cash limit
Total long-term investments	£10m
Total investments without credit ratings or rated below A- (A minus)	£15m
Total investments (except pooled funds) with institutions domiciled in foreign countries rated below AA+	£1m
Total non-specified investments	£26m

Investment Limits:

59. The Council’s revenue reserves available to cover investment losses are forecast to be £34.5m on 31 March 2017. In order to mitigate as far as possible the risk of a single default, the maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £4 million. A group of banks under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes. Limits will also be placed on fund managers, investments in brokers’ nominee accounts, foreign countries and industry sectors as below. This excludes any accumulated interest.

Table 4: Investment Limits

	Cash limit
Any single organisation, except the UK Central Government	£4m each
With the Council's own bankers	£4m (£6m over the Christmas period, defined as 20 December to 4 January inclusive)
UK Central Government	unlimited
Any group of organisations under the same ownership	£5m per group
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£10m per manager
Registered Providers	£10m in total
Unsecured investments with Building Societies	£4m in total
Loans to unrated corporates	£4m in total
Money Market Funds	£35m in total

Liquidity Management:

60. The Council uses its own cash flow forecasting spreadsheet to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a prudent basis to minimise the risk of the Council being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Council's medium term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

Treasury Management Indicators

61. The Council measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.
62. **Interest Rate Exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on fixed and variable rate interest rate exposures, expressed as the amount of net principal borrowed will be:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposure	£246m	£259m	£265m
Upper limit on variable interest rate exposure	(-)£2m	(-)£1m	-

63. Fixed rate investments and borrowings are those where the rate of interest is fixed for at least 12 months, measured from the start of the

financial year or the transaction date if later. All other instruments are classed as variable rate.

64. **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:

	Current Portfolio	Upper	Lower
Under 12 months	-	25%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	-	50%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	-	100%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	19.7%	100%	0%
10 years and above	80.3%	100%	0%

Other Items

65. There are a number of additional items that the Council is obliged by CIPFA or CLG to include in its Treasury Management Strategy.
66. **Policy on Apportioning Interest to the HRA:** On 1 April 2012, the Council notionally split each of its existing long-term loans into General Fund and HRA pools. 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. This balance will be measured each month and interest transferred between the General Fund and HRA at the Council's average interest rate on investments.
67. **Investment Training:** The needs of the Council's treasury management staff for training in investment management are assessed on an ongoing basis. Officers meet formally at regular intervals – typically monthly – to discuss operational treasury management plans. Colleagues will talk informally where appropriate in making daily investment decisions. Additional training is necessary when the responsibilities of individual members of staff change.
68. Staff regularly attend training courses, seminars and conferences provided by Arlingclose and CIPFA. Relevant staff are also encouraged to undertake Continued Professional Development in accordance with their respective accounting / finance qualification requirements.

69. **Investment Advisers:** The Council appointed Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers in December 2012 and receives specific advice on investment, debt and capital finance issues.
70. **Investment of Money Borrowed in Advance of Need:** The Council may, from time to time, borrow in advance of need, where this is expected to provide the best long term value for money. Since amounts borrowed will be invested until spent, the Council is aware that it will be exposed to the risk of loss of the borrowed sums, and the risk that investment and borrowing interest rates may change in the intervening period. These risks will be managed as part of the Council's overall management of its treasury risks.
71. The total amount borrowed will not exceed the authorised borrowing limit of £270m. The maximum period between borrowing and expenditure is expected to be two years, although the Council is not required to link particular loans with particular items of expenditure.
72. **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).
73. The Council will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Council is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be taken into account when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds and forward starting transactions, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.
74. Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria. The current value of any amount due from a derivative counterparty will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.

Financial Implications

75. The budget for investment income in 2017/18 is £204,000, based on an average investment portfolio of £40m at an interest rate of 0.51%. The budget for debt interest paid in 2017/18 is £6.97m, based on an average debt portfolio of £211.837m at an average interest rate of 3.292%. (Details of HRA investment earnings and borrowing is given in the 'HRA Business Plan 2016-2046', Appendix 6.3.) If actual levels of investments and borrowing, and actual interest rates differ from those forecast, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

Other Options Considered

76. The CLG Guidance and the CIPFA Code do not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Head of Finance, having consulted the Portfolio Holder for 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

Annex A
Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast September 2016
Underlying assumptions:

1. The economic trajectory for the UK has been immeasurably altered following the vote to leave the European Union. The long-term position of the UK economy will be largely dependent on the agreements the government is able to secure with the EU and other countries.
2. The short to medium-term outlook is somewhat more downbeat due to the uncertainty generated by the result and the forthcoming negotiations (notwithstanding the Olympic and summer feel-good effects). The rapid installation of a new Prime Minister and cabinet lessened the political uncertainty, and the government / Bank of England have been proactive in tackling the economic uncertainty.
3. Purchasing Managers Index data, and consumer and business confidence surveys presented a more positive picture for August following the shock-influenced data for July, in line with expectations for an initial overreaction. However, many indicators remain at lower levels than pre-Referendum.
4. Over the medium term, economic and political uncertainty will likely dampen investment intentions and tighten credit availability, prompting lower activity levels and potentially a rise in unemployment. These effects will dampen economic growth through the second half of 2016 and in 2017.
5. UK Consumer Price Index inflation will rise close to target over the coming year as previous rises in commodity prices and the sharp depreciation in sterling begin to drive up imported material costs for companies.
6. The rise in inflation is highly unlikely to prompt monetary tightening by the Bank of England, with policymakers looking through import-led CPI spikes to the negative effects of Brexit on economic activity and, ultimately, inflation.
7. There is a debatable benefit to further interest rate cuts (particularly with regard to financial stability). Negative Bank Rate is currently perceived by policymakers to be counterproductive, but there is a possibility of close-to-zero Bank Rate. QE will be used to limit the upward movement in bond yields.
8. Following significant global fiscal and monetary stimulus, the short term outlook for the global economy is somewhat brighter than a few months ago. However, financial market volatility is likely at various points

because the stimulus has only delayed the fallout from the build-up of public and private sector debt (particularly in developing economies, e.g. China).

Forecast:

9. The likely path for Bank Rate is weighted to the downside. The Arlingclose central case is for Bank Rate to remain at 0.25%, but there is a 40% possibility of a drop to close to zero, with a small chance of a reduction below zero later in the forecast period.
10. Gilt yields will be broadly flat from current levels, although there will likely be much volatility as reports of negotiations between the UK and the remaining EU affect market perceptions of both parties' economic growth potential.

	Dec-16	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17	Mar-18	Jun-18	Sep-18	Dec-18	Mar-19	Jun-19	Sep-19	Dec-19
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Arlingclose Central Case	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Downside risk	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
3-month LIBID rate													
Upside risk	0.05	0.05	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.15	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Arlingclose Central Case	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
Downside risk	0.20	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.30	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
1-yr LIBID rate													
Upside risk	0.10	0.10	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.20	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
Arlingclose Central Case	0.60	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.85	0.90	0.90	0.90
Downside risk	0.10	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.20	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
5-yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.25	0.40	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	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.50
Downside risk	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
10-yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.30	0.40	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	0.75	0.75	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.85	0.90	0.90	0.95	0.95
Downside risk	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
20-yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.25	0.40	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	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.30	1.35	1.35	1.40	1.40
Downside risk	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
50-yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.25	0.40	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	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.30	1.35	1.35	1.40	1.40
Downside risk	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70

Appendix B Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

	31.12.16 Actual Portfolio £m	31.12.16 Average Rate %
External Borrowing:		
Public Works Loan Board: Fixed Rate	211.837	3.31%
Total External Borrowing	211.837	3.31%
Total Gross External Debt	211.837	
Investments:		
Managed in-house		
Short term investments	(-)39.239	0.36%
Pooled Fund: Money Market Funds	(-)8.000	0.28%
Managed externally		
Pooled Funds (Property Fund)	(-)2.000	4.55%
Total Investments	(-)49.239	0.52%
Net Debt	162.598	

Mortgage and other loans rate

Schedule 16 of the Housing Act 1985 specifies that Councils must set the interest rate on mortgages arranged since October 1985 on an annual basis. Councils are required to charge the higher of:

- i. The Standard National Rate, which is set by the Secretary of State (currently 3.13%), or,
- ii. The applicable local average rate, based on the Council's own borrowing costs and a small percentage (0.25%) for administration.

The interest rate chargeable is therefore 3.56%.

Annex C Prudential Indicators 2017/18

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's 'Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities' (the Prudential Code) when determining how much money it can afford to borrow. The objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable, and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice. To demonstrate that the Council has fulfilled these objectives, the Prudential Code sets out the following indicators that must be set and monitored each year.

Estimates of Capital Expenditure: The Council's planned capital expenditure and financing may be summarised as follows.

Capital Expenditure and Financing	2016/17 Revised £m	2017/18 Estimate £m	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m
General Fund	8.850	5.425	4.441	2.416
HRA	21.366	18.530	15.745	16.251
Total Expenditure	30.216	23.955	20.186	18.667
Capital Receipts	3.505	2.297	1.301	1.066
Government Grants	3.611	2.626	0.660	0.505
Major Repairs Reserves	10.859	10.928	10.935	11.052
Revenue Contributions	8.630	6.502	4.433	4.818
Borrowing	3.611	1.602	2.857	1.226
Total Financing	30.216	23.955	20.186	18.667

Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement: The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) measures the Council's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose.

Capital Financing Requirement	31.03.17 Revised £m	31.03.18 Estimate £m	31.03.19 Estimate £m	31.03.20 Estimate £m
General Fund	42.892	44.269	46.862	47.753
HRA	187.370	187.370	187.370	187.370
Total CFR	230.262	231.639	234.232	235.123

The CFR is forecast to rise by £4.9m over the next three years as capital expenditure financed by debt outweighs resources put aside for debt repayment.

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement: In order to ensure that over the medium term debt will only be for a capital purpose, the Council should ensure that debt 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. This is a key indicator of prudence.

Debt	31.03.17 Revised £m	31.03.18 Estimate £m	31.03.19 Estimate £m	31.03.20 Estimate £m
Borrowing	211.837	211.837	211.837	211.837
Finance leases	0	0	0	0
Total Debt	211.837	211.837	211.837	211.837

Total debt is expected to remain below the CFR during the forecast period.

Operational Boundary for External Debt: The operational boundary is based on the Council's estimate of most likely (i.e. prudent but not worst case) scenario for external debt. It links directly to the Council's estimates of capital expenditure, the capital financing requirement and cash flow requirements, and is a key management tool for in-year monitoring. Other long-term liabilities comprise finance lease, Private Finance Initiative and other liabilities that are not borrowing but form part of the Council's debt.

Operational Boundary	2016/17 Revised £m	2017/18 Estimate £m	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m
Borrowing	257.000	260.000	267.000	269.000
Other long-term liabilities	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500
Total Debt	258.500	261.500	268.500	270.500

Authorised Limit for External Debt: The authorised limit is the affordable borrowing limit determined in compliance with the Local Government Act 2003. It is the maximum amount of debt that the Council can legally owe. The authorised limit provides headroom over and above the operational boundary for unusual cash movements.

Authorised Limit	2016/17 Limit £m	2017/18 Limit £m	2018/19 Limit £m	2019/20 Limit £m
Borrowing	260.000	265.000	275.000	280.000
Other long-term liabilities	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000
Total Debt	265.000	270.000	280.000	285.000

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream: This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs, net of investment income.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2016/17 Revised %	2017/18 Estimate %	2018/19 Estimate %	2019/20 Estimate %
General Fund	0.94	2.14	2.92	4.27
HRA	11.00	11.53	11.71	11.86

Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions: This is an indicator of affordability that shows the impact of capital investment decisions on Council Tax and housing rent levels. The incremental impact is the difference between the total revenue budget requirement of the current approved capital programme and the revenue budget requirement arising from the capital programme proposed.

Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions	2017/18 Estimate £	2018/19 Estimate £	2019/20 Estimate £
General Fund - increase in annual band D Council Tax	23.85	21.35	24.23
HRA - increase in average weekly rents	12.73	8.79	9.65

Adoption of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code: Full Council approved the adoption of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's 'Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice' at its meeting on 10 February 2010.

Annex D

Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2017/18

Where the Council finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there has been no statutory minimum since 2008. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to have regard to the Department for Communities and Local Government's 'Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision' (the CLG Guidance) most recently issued in 2012.

The broad aim of the CLG Guidance is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant.

The CLG Guidance requires the Council to approve an Annual MRP Statement each year, and recommends a number of options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP. The following statement only incorporates options recommended in the Guidance.

For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008, and for supported capital expenditure incurred on or after that date, MRP will be determined in accordance with the former regulations that applied on 31 March 2008. For Harlow Council, the adjusted Capital Financing Requirement upon which the MRP is calculated is negative in each year prior to April 2008. The MRP on this portion of CFR is therefore zero. (*Option 1 in England & Wales*)

For unsupported capital expenditure incurred after 31 March 2008, MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant asset in equal instalments, starting in the year after the asset becomes operational. (*Option 3 in England and Wales*)

For assets acquired by finance leases, MRP will be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2017/18 will not be subject to a MRP charge until 2018/19.

Based on the Council's latest estimate of its Capital Financing Requirement on 31 March 2017, the budget for MRP has been set as follows:

	31.03.2017 Estimated CFR £m	2017/18 Estimated MRP £
Capital expenditure before 01.04.2008	5.455	0
Capital expenditure after 31.03.2008	37.436	224,000
Finance leases	0	0
Total General Fund	42.891	224,000
Assets in the Housing Revenue Account	187.370	0
Total Housing Revenue Account	187.370	0
Total	230.261	224,000

Annex E Reporting Arrangements

This Council will adopt the following reporting arrangements in accordance with the requirements of the revised CIPFA Code: -

Area of Responsibility	Council/ Committee/ Officer	Frequency
Treasury Management Policy Statement (revised)	Full Council	Formally adopted Feb 2010 (incorporated within subsequent TMSS reports)
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy	Full Council	Annually before the start of the financial year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy – mid-year review	Full Council	Mid-year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy – updates or revisions at other times	Full Council	Only following significant events (e.g. substantial changes to Codes of Practice) and where normal reporting arrangements are not timely in relation to the change.
Annual Treasury Management Outturn Report	Full Council	Annually by 30 September after the end of the financial year
Treasury Management Monitoring Reports	Portfolio Holder for Resources	Monthly
Treasury Management Practices	Portfolio Holder for Resources	Annually
Scrutiny of Treasury Management Strategy	Cabinet Overview Working Group (+ Audit & Standards Committee as may be required)	Annually before the start of the year
Scrutiny of treasury management performance	Portfolio Holder for Resources, Cabinet Overview Working Group (+ Audit & Standards Committee, as may be required)	As incorporated within Annual Treasury Management Outturn report

Annex F

Treasury Management Scheme of Delegation

(i) Full Council

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

(ii) Cabinet

- review of/ amendments to the Council's adopted clauses and Treasury Management Strategy Statement and making associated recommendations to Full Council;
- budget consideration and recommendation to Full Council;
- approval of the division of responsibilities;
- receiving ad hoc treasury management monitoring reports and acting on recommendations.

(iii) Portfolio Holder for Resources

- receiving and reviewing regular monitoring reports and making recommendations to Cabinet;
- reviewing the treasury management policy and procedures and making recommendations to the Cabinet;
- reviewing the treasury management practices;
- approving the selection of external service providers and agreeing terms of appointment in conjunction with normal contract approval procedures.

(iv) Section 151 Officer

- recommending clauses, treasury management policy for approval, reviewing the same regularly, and monitoring compliance;
- setting treasury management practices;
- submitting regular treasury management policy reports;
- submitting budgets and budget variations;
- receiving and reviewing management information reports;
- reviewing the performance of the treasury management function;
- ensuring the adequacy of treasury management resources, skills and training, and the effective division of responsibilities within the treasury management function;
- ensuring the adequacy of internal audit, and liaising with external audit;
- recommending the appointment of external service providers.

Annex G
Credit Ratings Table

The Credit Ratings Table has been included as an annex in order to assist with understanding of the ratings referred to within the TMSS. Generally the Council will invest in 'High Grade' or 'Upper Medium Grade' investments.

	Moody's	S&P	Fitch	Meaning
Investment Grade	Aaa	AAA	AAA	Prime
	Aa1	AA+	AA+	High Grade
	Aa2	AA	AA	
	Aa3	AA-	AA-	
	A1	A+	A+	Upper Medium Grade
	A2	A	A	
	A3	A-	A-	
	Baa1	BBB+	BBB+	Lower Medium Grade
	Baa2	BBB	BBB	
	Baa3	BBB-	BBB-	
Junk	Ba1	BB+	BB+	Non Investment Grade Speculative
	Ba2	BB	BB	
	Ba3	BB-	BB-	
	B1	B+	B+	Highly Speculative
	B2	B	B	
	B3	B-	B-	
	Caa1	CCC+	CCC+	Substantial Risks
	Caa2	CCC	CCC	Extremely Speculative
	Caa3	CCC-	CCC-	In Default w/ Little Prospect for Recovery
	Ca	CC	CC+	
		C	CC	
			CC-	In Default
	D	D	DDD	

Annex H

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

Bank Rate:

The term 'Bank Rate' is 'the official Bank Rate paid on commercial bank reserves', i.e. reserves placed by commercial banks with the Bank of England as part of the Bank's operations to reduce volatility in short term interest rates in the money markets. Previously referred to as "repo rate" this term has been replaced as a result of the change in terminology used by the Bank of England as from May 2006

Base Rate:

The term Base Rate refers to the rate which is set by each high street bank; it is the key foundational rate on which they each base all their various lending rates to customers. It is normally set at the same rate as the Bank Rate (q.v.) and changes in line with, and very soon after changes in Bank Rate.

BRRD: 'Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive'

CD: see 'Certificate of deposit'.

CDS: see 'Credit Default Swaps'

CFR: see 'Capital Financing Requirement'

CP: see 'Commercial paper'.

CRA: see 'Credit Rating Agency'.

Call Account: 'Call account' is a bank deposit where funds can be withdrawn at any time.

Callable Deposit

Placing a deposit with a bank or building society at a set rate for a set amount of time. However, the borrower has the right to repay the funds on pre agreed dates before maturity. This decision is based upon how market rates have moved since the deal was agreed. If rates have fallen, the likelihood of the deposit being repaid rises, as cheaper money can be found by the borrower.

Capital Financing Requirement

The Capital Financing Requirement reflects the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. Thus, if new capital expenditure is incurred and not financed from sources other than by borrowing, the CFR will increase by the amount of that expenditure. Borrowing, up to the value of the CFR, may be either from internal cash balances or externally, such as from the Public Works Loan Board (q.v.).

Certificate of Deposit

A certificate of deposit is an unsecured investment issued by a bank or building society which is a fixed deposit, giving a guaranteed interest return. These differ from term

deposits in that the lender is not obliged to hold the investment through to maturity and may realise the cash by selling the CD into an active secondary market. This may be useful in instances where the counterparty receives a downgraded credit rating, or the investor encounters an unexpected cashflow issue. CDs are obtained through specialist brokers who deal through the primary and secondary market. CDs offer liquidity and greater access to counterparties who do not trade in term deposits.

CIPFA: Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice

This represents official practitioners' guidance, which is produced by CIPFA. The government expects Councils and other public service authorities to adopt and comply with the code. The recommendations made in the Code provide a basis for all these public service organisations to create clear treasury management objectives and to structure and maintain sound treasury management policies and practices.

CLG: Department of Communities and Local Government.

Commercial Paper

Short-term obligations with maturities ranging from 2 to 270 days issued by banks, corporations and other borrowers. Such instruments are unsecured and usually discounted, although some may be interest bearing.

Corporate Bond

Strictly speaking, corporate bonds are those issued by companies. However, the term is used to cover all bonds other than those issued by governments in their own currencies and includes issues by companies, supranational organisations and government agencies

Counterparty

A counterparty is a party with which a transaction is done.

CPI: Consumer Prices Index

Credit Default Swaps

A CDS is a contract between two counterparties in which the buyer of the contract makes quarterly payments to the seller of the contract in exchange for a payoff if there is a credit event (e.g. default) of the reference entity (i.e. the third party on whom the contract is based). The contract essentially provides a means of insurance to the buyer of the CDS against default by a borrower. The "spread" (effectively the premium paid by the CDS buyer) provides an indication of the perceived risk of a default occurring.

Credit Rating

A credit rating is an estimate of the quality of a debt from the lender viewpoint in terms of the likelihood of interest and capital not being paid and of the extent to which the lender is protected in the event of default.

An individual, a firm or a government with a good credit rating can borrow money from financial institutions more easily and cheaply than those who have a bad credit rating.

Credit Ratings are evaluated by Credit Rating agencies (q.v.).

Credit rating agency

'Credit rating agency', or 'rating agency', or CRA, is a firm that issues opinions on companies' ability to pay back their bonds. These opinions are often abbreviated on an alphanumeric scale ranging from AAA to C (or equivalent). The three CRAs used by the Council are Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's.

DCLG: Department for Communities and Local Government

DMADF: see 'Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility'

DMO: see 'Debt Management Office'

Dealing

Is the process of carrying out transactions with a counterparty (q.v.), including agreeing the terms of an investment. This is usually conducted through a broker.

Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility

Deposit Account offered by the Debt Management Office (q.v.), guaranteed by the UK government.

Debt Management Office

The Debt Management Office (DMO) is an executive agency of HM Treasury responsible for carrying out the government's debt management policy and managing the aggregate cash needs of the Exchequer. It is also responsible for lending to local authorities and managing certain public sector funds.

Derivative

A contract whose value is based on the performance of an underlying financial asset, index or other investment. e.g. an option is a derivative because its value changes in relation to the performance of an underlying stock.

ECB: European Central Bank

Equity

A share in a company with limited liability. It generally enables the holder to share in the profitability of the company through dividend payments and capital gain.

EU: European Union

Fed: The Federal Reserve (US)

FLS: Funding for Lending Scheme

Floating Rate Notes

Bonds on which the rate of interest is established periodically with reference to short-term interest rates

Forward Deal

The act of agreeing today to deposit funds with an institution for an agreed time limit, on an agreed future date, at an agreed rate.

Forward Deposits: see 'forward deal'

Fund Manager

The individual responsible for making decisions related to any portfolio of investments in accordance with the stated goals of the fund.

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

Gilt

Registered British government securities giving the investor an absolute commitment from the government to honour the debt that those securities represent.

Gilt Funds

Pooled fund investing in bonds guaranteed by the UK government.

HRA: Housing Revenue Account

HRACFR: Housing Revenue Account Capital Financing Requirement

iTraxx benchmark

A group of international credit derivative indexes that are monitored by the International Index Company (IIC). The credit derivatives market that iTraxx provides allows parties to transfer the risk and return of underlying assets from one party to another without actually transferring the assets. iTraxx indexes cover credit derivatives markets in Europe, Asia and Australia.

Lender Option Borrower Option

'Lender Option Borrower Option' (LOBO) is a floating rate instrument which allows the lender to designate an adjustment rate at periodic reset dates and lets the borrower decide whether to pay the rate or redeem the bond.

Liquidity

Liquidity refers to an asset that can be turned into cash or the ability to quickly sell or buy an asset

LIBID: see 'London Interbank Bid Rate'

LIBOR: see 'London Interbank Offer Rate'

LOBO: see 'Lender Option Borrower Option'

London Interbank Bid Rate

The 'London Interbank Bid Rate' (LIBID) is the rate of interest at which first-class banks in London will bid for deposit funds. Often used as a benchmark for deposit rates. LIBID is not fixed in the same way as LIBOR (q.v.), but is typically one-sixteenth to one-eighth of a per cent below LIBOR.

London Interbank Offer Rate

'London Interbank Offer Rate' (LIBOR) is the interest rate which banks pay when lending to each other. It is calculated at a specified time each day and based on what it would cost a panel of banks to borrow funds for various periods of time and in various currencies. It then creates an average of the individual banks' figures.

MMF: see 'Money Market Fund'

Money Market Fund

Money Market Funds are mutual funds that invest in short-term debt instruments. They provide the benefits of pooled investment, as investors can participate in a more diverse and high-quality portfolio than they otherwise could individually. Like other mutual funds, each investor who invests in a money market fund is considered a shareholder of the investment pool, a part owner of the fund. Money market funds are actively managed within rigid and transparent guidelines to offer safety of principal, liquidity and competitive sector-related returns. It is very similar to a unit trust, however, in a MMF equities are replaced by cash instruments. Returns are typically around 1 month LIBID (q.v.), and the average maturity is generally below 60 days.

MPC: Monetary Policy Committee

MRP: Minimum Revenue Provision, for the repayment of debt.

Open Ended Investment Companies (OEIC)

Investment funds that partly resemble an investment trust and partly a unit trust. Like investment trusts, they issue shares on the London Stock Exchange and invest money raised from shareholders in other companies. The term open-ended means that when demand for the shares rises the fund manager just issues more shares, instead of there being a rise in the share price. The price of OEIC shares is determined by the value of the underlying assets of the fund.

Other Bond Funds

Pooled funds investing in a wide range of bonds.

PWLB: see 'Public Works Loan Board'

Programme of Development

The balance of Programme of Development funding (POD) represents monies received from Central Government for regeneration in the east of England, and is held by the Council on behalf of a Partnership comprising local councils and partners from the third and private sectors. The funding was received after a series of successful bids by the Partnership.

Public Works Loan Board

The Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) is a UK Government statutory body whose function is to lend money from the National Loans Fund to Councils and other public bodies and to collect the repayments.

Rating Agency: see 'Credit Rating Agency'

Repo: see 'Repurchase Agreement'

Repurchase Agreement

'Repurchase agreement', or repo, is a contract where the seller of certain securities agrees to buy them back from the purchaser at a specified time for an agreed price.

Reverse Gilt Repo

This is a transaction as seen from the point of view of the party which is buying the gilts. In this case, one party buys gilts from the other and, at the same time and as part of the same transaction, commits to resell equivalent gilts on a specified future date, or at call, at a specified price.

Sovereign Issues (Ex UK Gilts)

Bonds issued or guaranteed by nation states, but excluding UK government bonds.

Supranational Bonds

Bonds issued by supranational bodies, e.g. European Investment Bank. These bonds – now known as Multilateral Development Bank bonds – are generally AAA rated and behave similarly to gilts, but pay a higher yield ("spread") given their relative illiquidity when compared with gilts.

T-bills: see 'Treasury Bills'.

Term Deposit

(or 'Time deposit') is a generic term for a bank deposit where funds cannot be withdrawn for a fixed period of time. The lender receives a fixed rate of interest. These are unsecured investments and place the lender at risk of bail-in should this occur during the term of the investment.

Time Deposit: see 'Term Deposit'

Treasury Bills

Treasury bills are a AAA/AA+ rated, short-dated form of Government debt, issued by the Debt Management Office (q.v.), via a weekly tender, on a Friday. Lenders would use the services of a specialist broker to access the market. These usually have a maturity of one, three or six months and provide a return to the investor by virtue of being issued at a discount to their final redemption value. There is also an active secondary market for T-bills which means that lending may be available for a range of dates. Interest rates tend to be higher than the DMADF (q.v.).

Treasury Management Strategy

This is the Council's overall policy and framework by which it will carry out that policy in relation to its borrowing and investment needs in the coming financial year.

Treasury Management Policy Statement

This is the Council's statement of intention in respect of its treasury management. It is prescribed by the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice (q.v.).

Variable Rate Asset Value

'Variable Rate Asset Value' (VNAV) occurs where the net asset value, or principal sum, invested may change depending on trading conditions. The value is calculated at the end of the business day based on the value of investments less any liabilities divided by the number of shares outstanding. With investments carrying this attribute, the capital sum invested may not be equal to the capital sum repaid.

VNAV: see 'Variable Net Asset Value'.

Weighted Average Maturity

'Weighted average maturity', or WAM, is used to measure interest rate risk. WAM is calculated by taking the maturity of the underlying money market instruments held by the fund, weighted according to the relative holdings per instrument.

Annex I Background Papers

The CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (revised 2011)

CIPFA's Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice (revised 2011)

DCLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments (issued March 2010)

HRA Business Plan 2016-2046 *

Capital Programmes 2016/17-2021/22 *

Arlingclose Ltd treasury management advisory documents

Treasury Management and Accounting records

*These are separate reports submitted to Cabinet, 26 January 2017.

HARLOW COUNCIL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY MID-YEAR REVIEW, 2017/18

Summary of the Report

1. This report provides an update on economic conditions impacting on the Council and focusses on any major issues affecting borrowing and investments.
2. A full commentary is provided within this report by the Council's treasury management advisors, Arlingclose Ltd. In summary Bank whilst there was a Bank Rate rise on 2 November 2017 from 0.25% to 0.5%, interest rates have remained at an historic low following the UK referendum in June 2016 to leave the European Union (EU).
3. Officers are considering the cost and benefit of investments whilst recognising an overall need to ensure deposits are securely placed.
4. At all times the Council will take steps to protect its investment portfolio by placing security (the reduction of risk in order to protect the return of capital sums) and liquidity (being able to have immediate access to a reasonable amount of funds so that cashflow obligations may be met) above yield (i.e. the interest paid on investments).
5. In setting out the Council's strategy for 2018/19, a full report will be presented to Cabinet and Full Council in January / February 2018. This will be in conjunction with the 2018/19 budget proposals.
6. The Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/18 has been underpinned by the adoption of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFAs) Code of Practice on Treasury Management, which indicates the requirement for determining a treasury strategy for the likely financial and investment activity for the forthcoming financial year.
7. The Council is supported by treasury management advisors in decision making. Arlingclose Ltd. has been appointed for a further period of up to six years following a competitive tendering process during the summer of 2017.

Background

8. The Code also recommends that Councillors are informed of treasury management activities at least twice a year (mid-year and year end). This report therefore ensures this Council is embracing best practice in accordance with CIPFA's recommendations.
9. Treasury management is defined as: "The management of the local Council's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market

transactions; the effective control of risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks”.

10. In addition to reporting on risk management related to treasury activities, the Treasury Management Code also requires the Council to report on any financial instruments entered into to manage treasury risks.

External Context: A commentary provided by the Council’s Treasury Management advisors, Arlingclose Ltd. (October 2017)

11. **Economic backdrop:** Commodity prices fluctuated over the period with oil falling below \$45 a barrel before inching back up to \$58 a barrel. UK Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) index rose with the data print for August showing CPI at 2.9%, its highest since June 2013 as the fall in the value of sterling following the June 2016 referendum result continued to feed through into higher import prices. The new inflation measure CPIH, which includes owner occupiers’ housing costs, was at 2.7%.
12. The unemployment rate fell to 4.3%, its lowest since May 1975, but the squeeze on consumers intensified as average earnings grew at 2.5%, below the rate of inflation. Economic activity expanded at a much slower pace as evidenced by Q1 (Jan-Mar) and Q2 (Apr-Jun) GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth of 0.2% and 0.3% respectively. With the dominant services sector accounting for 79% of GDP, the strength of consumer spending remains vital to growth, but with household savings falling and real wage growth negative, there are concerns that these will be a constraint on economic activity in the second half of the calendar year 2017.
13. The Bank of England made no change to monetary policy at its meetings in the first half of the financial year. The vote to keep Bank Rate at 0.25% narrowed to 5-3 in June highlighting that some MPC (Monetary Policy Committee) members were more concerned about rising inflation than the risks to growth. Although at September’s meeting the Committee voted 7-2 in favour of keeping Bank Rate unchanged, the MPC changed their rhetoric, implying a rise in Bank Rate in "the coming months". The Council’s treasury advisor Arlingclose is not convinced the UK’s economic outlook justifies such a move at this stage, but the Bank’s interpretation of the data seems to have shifted.
14. In contrast, near-term global growth prospects improved. The US Federal Reserve (Fed) increased its target range of official interest rates in June for the second time in 2017 by 0.25% to between 1% and 1.25% and, despite US inflation hitting a soft patch with core CPI at 1.7%, a further similar increase is expected in its December 2017 meeting. The Fed also announced that it would be starting a reversal of its vast Quantitative Easing programme and reduce the \$4.2 trillion of bonds it acquired by initially cutting the amount it reinvests by \$10bn a month.
15. Geopolitical tensions escalated in August as the US and North Korea exchanged escalating verbal threats over reports about enhancements in North Korea’s missile

programme. The provocation from both sides helped wipe off nearly \$1 trillion from global equity markets but benefited safe-haven assets such as gold, the US dollar and the Japanese yen. Tensions remained high, with North Korea's threat to fire missiles towards the US naval base in Guam, its recent missile tests over Japan and a further testing of its latent nuclear capabilities.

16. Prime Minister Theresa May called an unscheduled General Election in June, to resolve uncertainty but the surprise result has led to a minority Conservative government in coalition with the Democratic Unionist Party. This clearly results in an enhanced level of political uncertainty. Although the potential for a so-called hard Brexit is diminished, lack of clarity over future trading partnerships, in particular future customs agreements with the rest of the EU block, is denting business sentiment and investment. The reaction from the markets on the UK election's outcome was fairly muted, business confidence now hinges on the progress (or not) on Brexit negotiations, the ultimate 'divorce bill' for the exit and whether new trade treaties and customs arrangements are successfully concluded to the UK's benefit.
17. In the face of a struggling economy and Brexit-related uncertainty, Arlingclose expects the Bank of England to take only a very measured approach to any monetary policy tightening, any increase will be gradual and limited as the interest rate backdrop will have to provide substantial support to the UK economy through the Brexit transition.
18. **Financial markets:** Gilt yields displayed significant volatility over the six-month period with the appearing change in sentiment in the Bank of England's outlook for interest rates, the push-pull from expectations of tapering of Quantitative Easing (QE) in the US and Europe and from geopolitical tensions, which also had an impact. The yield on the 5-year gilts fell to 0.35% in mid-June, but then rose to 0.80% by the end of September. The 10-year gilts similarly rose from their lows of 0.93% to 1.38% at the end of the quarter, and those on 20-year gilts from 1.62% to 1.94%.
19. The FTSE 100 nevertheless powered away reaching a record high of 7548 in May but dropped back to 7377 at the end of September. Money markets rates have remained low: 1-month, 3-month and 12-month LIBID rates have averaged 0.25%, 0.30% and 0.65% over the period from January to 21 September.
20. **Credit background:** UK bank credit default swaps continued their downward trend, reaching three-year lows by the end of June. Bank share prices have not moved in any particular pattern.
21. There were a few credit rating changes during the quarter. The significant change was the downgrade by Moody's to the UK sovereign rating in September from Aa1 to Aa2 which resulted in subsequent downgrades to sub-sovereign entities including local authorities. Moody's downgraded Standard Chartered Bank's long-term rating to A1 from Aa3 on the expectation that the bank's profitability will be lower following management's efforts to de-risk their balance sheet. The agency

also affirmed Royal Bank of Scotland's and NatWest's long-term ratings at Baa1, placed Lloyds Bank's A1 rating on review for upgrade, revised the outlook of Santander UK plc, and Nationwide and Coventry building societies from negative to stable but downgraded the long-term rating of Leeds Building Society from A2 to A3. The agency downgraded long-term ratings of the major Canadian banks on the expectation of a more challenging operating environment and the ratings of the large Australian banks on its view of the rising risks from their exposure to the Australian housing market and the elevated proportion of lending to residential property investors.

22. S&P also revised Nordea Bank's outlook to stable from negative, whilst affirming their long-term rating at AA-. The agency also upgraded the long-term rating of ING Bank from A to A+.
23. Ring-fencing, which requires the larger UK banks to separate their core retail banking activity from the rest of their business, is expected to be implemented within the next year. In May Councils were advised by Arlingclose reduced the maximum duration of unsecured investments with Bank of Scotland, HSBC Bank and Lloyds Bank from 13 months to 6 months as until banks' new structures are finally determined and published, the different credit risks of the 'retail' and 'investment' banks cannot be known for certain. (Although Arlingclose still include banks on the Council's Lending List, locally our appetite for investment with these institutions has receded because of bail-in risk.)
24. The new EU regulations for Money Market Funds were finally approved and published in July and existing funds will have to be compliant by no later than 21 January 2019. The key features include Low Volatility Net Asset Value (LVNAV) Money Market Funds which will be permitted to maintain a constant dealing NAV, providing they meet strict new criteria and minimum liquidity requirements. MMFs will not be prohibited from having an external fund rating (as had been suggested in draft regulations). Arlingclose expects most of the short-term MMFs it recommends to convert to the LVNAV structure and awaits confirmation from each fund.

Regulatory Updates

25. **MiFID II:** Local authorities are currently treated by regulated financial services firms as professional clients who can "opt down" to be treated as retail clients instead. But from 3 January 2018, as a result of the second Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID II), local authorities will be treated as retail clients who can "opt up" to be professional clients, providing that they meet certain criteria. Regulated financial services firms include banks, brokers, advisers, fund managers and custodians, but only where they are selling, arranging, advising or managing designated investments. In order to opt up to professional, the Council must have an investment balance of at least £10 million and the person authorised to make investment decisions on behalf of the authority must have at least one year's relevant professional experience. In addition, the firm must assess that that person has the expertise, experience and knowledge to make investment decisions and understand the risks involved.

26. Harlow has three MiFID II authorised officers who meet this criteria:
 - Head of Finance
 - Principal Finance Manager
 - Finance Manager (with responsibility for Treasury Management)
27. The main additional protection for retail clients is a duty on the firm to ensure that the investment is “suitable” for the client. However, local authorities are not protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme nor are they eligible to complain to the Financial Ombudsman Service whether they are retail or professional clients. It is also likely that retail clients will face an increased cost and potentially restricted access to certain products including money market funds, pooled funds, treasury bills, bonds, shares and to financial advice. The Council has declined to opt down to retail client status in the past as the costs were thought to outweigh the benefits.
28. The Council meets the conditions to opt up to professional status and intends to do so in order to maintain its current MiFID status.
29. **CIPFA Consultation on Prudential and Treasury Management Codes:** In February 2017 CIPFA canvassed views on the relevance, adoption and practical application of the Treasury Management and Prudential Codes and after reviewing responses launched a further consultation on changes to the codes in August with a deadline for responses of 30 September 2017.
30. The proposed changes to the Prudential Code include the production of a new high-level Capital Strategy report to full Council which will cover the basics of the capital programme and treasury management. The prudential indicators for capital expenditure and the authorised borrowing limit would be included in this report but other indicators may be delegated to another committee. There are plans to drop certain prudential indicators, however local indicators are recommended for ring fenced funds (including the HRA) and for group accounts. Other proposed changes include applying the principles of the Code to subsidiaries.
31. Proposed changes to the Treasury Management Code include the potential for non-treasury investments such as commercial investments in properties in the definition of “investments” as well as loans made or shares bought for service purposes. Another proposed change is the inclusion of financial guarantees as instruments requiring risk management and addressed within the Treasury Management Strategy. Approval of the technical detail of the Treasury Management Strategy may be delegated to a committee rather than needing approval of full Council. There are also plans to drop or alter some of the current treasury management indicators.
32. CIPFA intends to publish the two revised Codes towards the end of 2017 for implementation in 2018/19, although CIPFA plans to put transitional arrangements in place for reports that are required to be approved before the start of the 2018/19 financial year. The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and CIPFA wish to have a more rigorous framework in place for the treatment of commercial investments as soon as is practical. It is understood that DCLG will be revising its Investment Guidance (and its Minimum Revenue Provision guidance) for local authorities in England; however there have been no discussions with the devolved administrations yet.

Local Context

33. On 31 March 2017 the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes as measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) was £230.009m, while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment was £44.803m. The Council had £211.837m of borrowing and £35.888m of investments. The Council's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their current underlying level, referred to as internal borrowing.

Borrowing during the half year

34. At 30 September 2017 the Council held £211.837m of loans. Taking advice from its Treasury Management Advisors, Arlingclose, there is no current requirement to undertake new external borrowing in 2017/18.
35. However there are two key development projects, the Enterprise Zone and development of Prentice Place, for which new external borrowing is forecast to be required. Members of Cabinet will be provided with update reports as appropriate, including an update in the 2018/19 Treasury Management Strategy Statement, which will accompany the Council's budget proposals in January. Meanwhile, should any new borrowing be required, it will remain within the Council's Authorised Limit for External Debt, approved by Full Council in February 2017.

Table 1: Borrowing Position

	31.3.17 Balance £m	Movement £m	30.9.17 Balance £m	30.9.17 Weighted average rate %	30.9.17 Weighted average maturity years
Public Works Loan Board	211.837	-	211.837	3.309	17.8
Total borrowing	211.837	-	211.837		

Investment Activity

36. The Council holds invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the first half of 2017/18 the Council's investment balance ranged between £35.438m and £48.269m due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position during the half year is shown in table 2 (overleaf).

Table 2: Investment Position

	31.3.17 Balance £m	Movement £m	30.9.17 Balance £m	30.9.17 Weighted average rate %	30.9.17 Weighted average maturity: Days
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	13.073	(-)12.973	0.100	0.10	1
Government (incl. local authorities)	11.000	14.300	25.300	0.35	113
Money Market Funds	9.815	2.725	12.540	0.17	1
Other Pooled Funds	2.000	2.000	4.000	2.25	-
Total investments	35.888	6.052	41.940		

37. Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Council to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.
38. In furtherance of these objectives, and given the increasing risk and falling returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Council has moved away from placing unsecured deposits with banks and building societies into the local authority market and other secure asset classes, also benefitting from some improvements in yields. A further £2m has been invested externally in a pooled fund, on this occasion in a Cash Plus Income Fund. Further consideration will be given to adding to the investment in an externally managed Property Fund. The progression of risk and return metrics are shown in the extracts from Arlingclose's quarterly investment benchmarking in table 3 below.

Table 3: Investment Benchmarking

	Credit Score	Credit Rating	Bail-in Exposure	WAM* (days)	Rate of Return
31.03.2017	4.04	AA-	56%	43	0.51%
30.06.2017	3.97	AA-	64%	51	0.62%
30.09.2017	3.87	AA-	33%	58	0.67%
Similar LAs	4.39	AA-	65%	108	1.43%
All LAs	4.44	AA-	64%	40	1.12%

*Weighted average maturity

39. The Council's £4m of externally managed pooled property and multi asset funds is likely to generate an average total return in 2017/18 of £90,000 (2.25%). Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives are regularly reviewed.

Other Investment Activity

40. Although not currently classed as treasury management activities and therefore not covered by the CIPFA Code, the Council also holds £3.709m of balances in loans to local businesses. This represents an increase of £2.709m on the previous year due to new investment in the Enterprise Zone and HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd.
41. These non-treasury investments will generate approximately £176,000 of credit interest for the Council, representing a rate of return of 4.75%. This is higher than the return earned on treasury investments, which stems from the Council's requirement to align its interest rate for these loans with commercial rates of interest.
42. If CIPFA's proposed amendments to the Treasury Management Code are adopted in the revised Code from 2018/19, these will be included in the expanded definition of "investments" if, or when, required by the new Code.

Compliance Report

43. The Head of Finance is pleased to report that all treasury management activities undertaken during the first half of 2017/18 complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

Outlook for the remainder of 2017/18 (Arlingclose Ltd)

44. The UK economy faces a challenging outlook as the minority government continues to negotiate the country's exit from the European Union. Both consumer and business confidence remain subdued. Household consumption growth, the driver of UK GDP growth, has softened following a contraction in real wages. Savings rates are at an all-time low and real earnings growth (i.e. after inflation) struggles in the face of higher inflation.
45. The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee has changed its rhetoric, implying a rise in Bank Rate in "the coming months". Arlingclose is not convinced the UK's economic outlook justifies such a move at this stage, but the Bank's interpretation of the data seems to have shifted.
46. This decision is still very data dependant and Arlingclose is, for now, maintaining its central case for Bank Rate at 0.25% whilst introducing near-term upside risks to the forecast as shown below. Arlingclose's central case is for gilt yields to remain broadly stable in the medium term, but there may be near term volatility due to shifts in interest rate expectations.

	Dec-17	Mar-18	Jun-18	Sep-18	Dec-18	Mar-19	Jun-19	Sep-19	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Downside risk	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25

REPORT TO: CABINET

DATE: 14 SEPTEMBER 2017

TITLE: ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2016/17

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR MIKE DANVERS, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR RESOURCES

LEAD OFFICER: SIMON FREEMAN, HEAD OF FINANCE (01279) 446228

CONTRIBUTING OFFICER: ANDREW SMITH, FINANCE MANAGER (01279) 446212

This is a Key Decision

It is on the Forward Plan as Decision number I007286

This decision is not subject to Call-in procedures for the following reasons:

The decision stands as a recommendation to Council.

This decision will affect no ward specifically

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- A** Notes the annual Treasury Management Report for 2016/17 (Appendix A) including that the Council operated within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement during 2016/17, and that the report is recommended to Full Council for approval.
- B** Notes the issues that the outcome of the EU Referendum is creating and their impact on the Council's treasury management activities.
- C** Recommends to Full Council adoption of the revised Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy, attached as Appendix B.

REASON FOR DECISION

- A** In complying with latest Codes of Practice, Full Council is required to receive an annual report on the prior year's treasury management functions of the Council. This should also be reviewed by Cabinet in advance of its presentation to Full Council.
- B** The Prudential Indicators are also required to be reported to Full Council. These are included within the annual treasury management report.

- C** Recognising the Council's contribution towards economic development within the town, particularly in relation to the Enterprise Zone, provides a timely opportunity to review the Council's MRP Policy to ensure it remains prudent.

BACKGROUND

1. Treasury management is defined as: 'The management of the local authority'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.'
2. On 10 February 2010, Full Council adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (as revised November 2009), known as the Code.
3. During 2016/17, the minimum reporting requirements were that Full Council should receive the following reports:
 - a) An annual treasury strategy in advance of the year (Full Council, 4 February 2016);
 - b) A mid-year treasury update report (Full Council, 16 December 2016); and
 - c) An annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy (this report).
4. The annual report for 2016/17 has been produced in compliance with the Code and is set out in Appendix A to this report. The regulatory environment governing treasury management places onus on councillors for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policies and activities. This report is important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by councillors.

ISSUES

5. The Council will continue to take all practical steps to protect its investment portfolio. In this respect, emphasis remains in this order of priority: security, liquidity and yield.
6. Security is defined as 'reducing risk in order to protect the return of capital sums, particularly in relation to the Council's investments'. In practice this means placing investments with organisations which have a high quality credit rating, including banks and other bodies which have a Fitch rating of

A(-) and above. Councils do not usually have credit ratings, but are inherently safe havens for investment.

7. Liquidity means 'ensuring that investments are not committed for excessive time periods in order to facilitate the Council's cashflow requirements and to reflect the risk of not having immediate access to funds'. Councils are discouraged from investing disproportionate sums of money for long periods of time at what seem attractive rates of return.
8. Yield is 'obtaining a reasonable return on investments'. Once again, 2016/17 has been a year of continued low interest rates. The Bank of England's Base Rate reduced from 0.5 percent to 0.25 percent in August 2016. The Council has attempted to gain the best yields without compromising security and liquidity. The average rate achieved was 0.626 percent.
9. The advice from Arlingclose is that the Council must aim towards a good investment spread as this is the best way to protect the Council from a possible capital loss. As a result, the Council held investments in Certificates of Deposit, the CCLA (the council property fund), Money Market Funds, fixed and variable investments and the Treasury's Debt Management Office. Looking forwards, other investment vehicles will be considered that meet the security requirements of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement whilst offering yet further investment opportunities and flexibility.

MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY

10. Where the Council finances capital expenditure by debt, regulations require that it should set aside resources from its revenue budget to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The regulations provide freedom for councils to consider an annual profiling of MRP which best fits the prudent management of their own financial circumstances, providing that they meet the basic test of prudence which is to repay debt over the life of the benefit.
11. The last comprehensive review of the Council's MRP Policy occurred in 2013. Recognising the Council's growing role in pump-priming economic investment within the town and its input in development of the Enterprise Zone, it is now important to update the MRP Policy so that the Council's financial support mechanisms dovetail with the Policy.
12. This is, in essence, a mid-year review of the policy that was approved by Full Council at its meeting of 2 February 2017 alongside the budget. The amendments being made by this review of the policy remain neutral in relation to both capital and revenue budgets.

IMPLICATIONS

Place Services

None specific.

Author: **Graeme Bloomer, Head of Regeneration**

Finance (Includes ICT)

As contained in the report.

Author: **Simon Freeman, Head of Finance**

Housing

None specific.

Author: **Andrew Murray, Head of Housing**

Community Wellbeing (includes Equalities and Social Inclusion)

None specific.

Author: **Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing**

Governance (includes HR)

None specific.

Author: **Brian Keane, Head of Governance**

Background Papers

Treasury Management Strategy 2016/17

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used

A full glossary of terms is included in Annex B to Appendix A.

Appendices

Appendix A – Treasury Management Report 2016/17

Appendix B – Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2017/18 (Revised)

Cabinet Overview Working Group Work Plan 2017/18

	Meeting dates 2017/18				
Title	Thursday 10 August 2017	Thursday 19 October 2017	Tuesday 5 December 2017	Thursday 11 January 2018	Thursday 8 March 2018
Non Housing Asset Management Strategy			Interim report		
Community Engagement Strategy		Scoping Report			
Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Scoping Report		Interim Report		Final Report
Regeneration Strategy	Scoping Report		Interim Report		Update Report
Local Council Tax Support Scheme		Report			
Treasury Management Strategy				Strategy Review	

Agenda Item 6

53