

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 25 SEPTEMBER 2013

Title of Report	TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY REPORT – APRIL TO AUGUST 2013
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Purpose of Report	To inform Members of the Authority's Treasury Management activity undertaken during the period April to August 2013.
Reason for Decision	To ensure that Members are informed of the Authority's Treasury Management activity during the financial year and have the opportunity to scrutinise that activity.
Council's Priorities	Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Interest earned on balances and interest paid on external debt, impact on the resources available to the Authority.
Link to relevant CAT	Could impact upon all Corporate Action Teams.
Risk Management	Borrowing and investment both carry an element of risk. This risk is moderated through the adoption of the Treasury and Investment Strategies, compliance with the CIPFA code of Treasury Management and the retention of Treasury Management Advisors (Arlingclose) to proffer expert advice.
Equalities Impact Assessment	Not Applicable
Human Rights	Not Applicable
Transformational Government	Not Applicable
Consultees	None

Background Papers	Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2013/14 – Council Meeting 26 February 2013 (presented as part of the Budget and Council Tax 2013/14 Report)
Recommendations	THAT MEMBERS APPROVE THIS REPORT AND COMMENT AS APPROPRIATE.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Authority's Treasury Management activity is underpinned by CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management ("the code"), which requires local authorities to produce Prudential Indicators and a Treasury Management Strategy Statement annually on the likely financing and Investment activity.
- 1.2 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."
- 1.3 The Authority's current Treasury Management Strategy Statement, including the Borrowing Strategy, Debt rescheduling Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Annual Minimum revenue Position Statement were approved by Council on 26 February 2013.
- 1.4 This report is the first in-year report of 2013/14, to inform Members of the Authority's treasury activity and enable scrutiny of activity and performance. It supplements the annual Treasury Stewardship Report, which will be presented to this Committee and Cabinet as soon as possible after the end of the financial year.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This report:
- a) Has been prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the Prudential Code;
 - b) Presents details of capital financing, borrowing, debt rescheduling and investment transactions;
 - c) Gives details of the treasury management transactions for the period April to August 2013;
 - d) Confirms compliance with treasury limits and Prudential Indicators.

3.0 THE U.K. ECONOMY AND EVENTS

- The UK economy showed some improvement, with consumer spending boosting growth. GDP was +0.3% for the first quarter of 2013 and +0.7% for the second quarter.
- Revisions by the Office of National Statistics to GDP back-data showed that the UK avoided a double-dip recession in 2012 but that the downturn in 2008-09 was deeper than previously estimated.
- Some positive signs for household spending emerged. The deterioration in real earnings growth (i.e. earnings less inflation) slowed, implying a slower erosion of purchasing power. Consumer confidence improved and household savings rates remained high, but appear

to be on a downward track, suggesting spending was being driven by borrowing or lower savings. This raises the question about the sustainability of the recovery at these rates of growth.

- Annual CPI was 2.8% in July. Inflation rose in line with expectations and is expected to remain close to this level throughout the autumn.
- There was no change to UK monetary policy with official interest rates and asset purchases maintained at 0.5% and £375bn respectively.
- Mark Carney's tenure as Governor began and he has implemented forward guidance. The main element of the forward guidance is to defer monetary tightening until the ILO Unemployment rate falls below 7%. This is one of a number of caveats to this guidance.
- The global economy appears to have improved over the first half of 2013/14. However, significant economic risks remain, particularly in China and the Eurozone. The Chinese banking system is facing tighter liquidity conditions as officials seek to slow down rampant credit growth and despite the time gained by the ECB to allow individual members and the Eurozone as a whole to reform their economies, the Eurozone debt crisis has not gone away. Up-coming Political events, such as the German general election could derail any progress towards a more balanced and stable economical regional economy.
- The US recovery appears to be in line but political risks remain regarding the debt ceiling and the federal budget.

4.0 THE AUTHORITY'S TREASURY POSITION

4.1 The Authority's gross / net debt and investment positions are as follows:

DEBT	Balance at 01/4/2013 £m	%	Maturing loans £m	Premature redemptions £m	New Borrowing £m	Balance at 31/8/2013 £m	%
Long-term fixed rate	£88.510m	100	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£88.510m	100
Long-term variable rate	£0.000m	0	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	0
Temporary Borrowing	£0.000m	0	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	0
Total borrowing	£88.510m	100	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£88.510m	100
Other long-term liabilities	£0.149m		£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.149m	
TOTAL EXTERNAL DEBT	£88.659m		£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£88.659m	
INVESTMENTS	Balance at 01/4/2013 £m	%	Maturities £m	Sales £m	New Investments £m	Balance at 31/8/2013 £m	%
Internally Managed	£14.053m	100	£54.663m	£0.000m	£62.021m	£21.411m	100
Investments with maturities up to 1 year,	£14.053m	100	£54.663m	£0.000m	£62.021m	£21.411m	100
Investments with maturities in excess of 1 year	£0.000m	0	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	0
Externally Managed Investments	£0.000m	0	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	0
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	£14.053m		£54.663m	£0.000m	£62.021m	£21.411m	
NET DEBT	£74.606m					£67.248m	

4.2 The investment position varies throughout the year as it is dependent upon cash flow. Examples of significant areas that can impact on cash flow are collection of Council tax, business rates, grants, capital receipts, payments to other precepting authorities or central government and interest on treasury activity.

- 4.3 In the period April to August 2013, the capacity for investment has currently increased by £7.4m. The volatility of balances is normal throughout the year and a number of factors contribute to this:
- a) The Authority traditionally benefits from the receipt of Council Tax and Business Rates during the first ten months of the financial year;
 - b) Revenue expenditure is more evenly weighted throughout the financial year;
 - c) Capital expenditure is more heavily weighted towards the latter part of the financial year due to the time required to schedule programmes of work or award contracts.
 - d) The patterns of income and expenditure are reflected in the Authority's cash flow projections. This is monitored and revised daily.
- 4.4 The current increased capacity for investment is expected to reverse towards the end of the financial year and this is in line with the Authority's experience.

5.0 BORROWING ACTIVITY

- 5.1 The Authority's Borrowing Strategy 2013/14, approved by Council on 26 February 2013, incorporates a prudent and pragmatic approach to borrowing to minimise borrowing costs without compromising the longer-term stability of the portfolio, consistent with the Authority's Prudential Indicators.
- 5.2 The Authority's estimated borrowing requirement for the current financial year is £1.271m. In the two subsequent financial years this is estimated to be £1.165m in 2014/15 and £0.697m in 2015/16. This is as reported in the Budget and Council Tax report to Council on 26 February 2013.
- 5.3 The Authority has not undertaken any new long-term borrowing during the period.
- 5.4 The Authority's cash flow remained positive during the period. The Authority did not require any temporary loans during the period.

6.0 DEBT RESCHEDULING ACTIVITY

- 6.1 The Authority's Debt Rescheduling Strategy 2013/14, which was approved by Council on 26 February 2013, establishes a flexible approach where the rationale for rescheduling could be one or more of the following:
- Savings in interest costs with minimal risk.
 - Balancing the volatility profile (i.e. the ratio of fixed to variable rate debt) of the debt portfolio.
 - Amending the profile of maturing debt to reduce any inherent refinancing risks.
- 6.2 No opportunities for debt rescheduling were identified which conformed to the above rationale. Accordingly, the Authority has undertaken no debt rescheduling activity during the period.
- 6.3 The Authority's portfolio of fourteen loans - eight PWLB loans and four market loans - will continue to be monitored for debt rescheduling opportunities that comply with the Authority's Policy and rationale.

7.0 INVESTMENT ACTIVITY

7.1 The Authority's Investment Policy and Strategy 2013/14, which was approved by Council on 26 February 2013, establish that the major policy objective is to invest its surplus funds prudently.

7.2 The Authority's Investment Policy and Strategy 2013/14, establishes that the major policy objective is to invest its surplus funds prudently. The Authority's investment priorities are:

- security of the invested capital;
- sufficient liquidity to permit investments; and,
- optimum yield which is commensurate with security and liquidity.

7.3 The counterparties that the Authority currently utilise all meet the criteria set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2013/14 and are monitored by the Authority's Treasury Management Advisors. The minimum long term rating for counterparties is A- or equivalent. The counterparties and amounts currently invested are shown below:

Counterparty	£m
Scottish Widows Investment partnership Money Market Fund (MMF)	0.0
Royal Bank of Scotland MMF	0.0
Black Rock MMF	1.0
Goldman Sachs MMF	5.0
CCLA Investment Management Ltd MMF	1.0
HSBC	2.5
Lloyds Banking Group / Bank of Scotland	4.1
Royal Bank of Scotland	4.8
Nationwide Building Society	3.0
Total Invested	21.4

7.4 The average rate of return on the Authority's investment balances during the period was 0.45%. For comparison purposes, the benchmark return (average 7-day LIBID rate) for the same period was 0.44%. The comparison of rates of return against a benchmark is less relevant when set against the ultimate priority of Security as set out in the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2013/14.

7.5 There were 75 investments made during the period, totalling £62.021m. The average balance held for the period was £19.6m.

7.6 Short term interest rates remain low resulting in a lengthening of investment periods, where cash-flow permits, in order to lock in higher rates of return. Largely, the investments were of short term duration, typically overnight investments, as the Authority and its advisors remain on a state of alert for signs of credit or market distress that may adversely affect the Authority. One fixed term investment of £3m was taken out during the period.

- 7.7 The Authority has estimated to achieve £68,000 of income from its investment activity in 2013/14. Investment activity from April to August 2013 has achieved £42,156 in interest. The current forecast is anticipated to be £79,000.
- 7.8 All investments made during the period complied with the Authority's agreed Annual Investment Strategy, Treasury Management Practices, Prudential Indicators and prescribed limits.

8.0 SUMMARY

- 8.1 For the period April to August 2013, the Authority can confirm that it has complied with its Prudential Indicators, which were approved on 26 February 2013 as part of the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy Statement.
- 8.2 In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice, this report provides members with a summary report of the Treasury Management activity for the period April to August 2013. No indicators have been breached and a prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.
- 8.3 The Authority can confirm that during the period April to August 2013, it has complied with its Treasury Management Strategy Statement, policies and Treasury Management Practices.