

## Appendix A

### Treasury Limits and Prudential Indicators for approval

Please note last years approved figures are shown in brackets.

Treasury Management Indicators	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22
	£m		£m		£m
<b>Authorised Limit - external debt</b>					
Borrowing	1,351.4	(1,672.7)	1,412.7	(1,684.5)	1,412.9
Other long term liabilities	170.0	(216.0)	170.0	(216.0)	170.0
TOTAL	1,521.4	(1,888.7)	1,582.7	(1,900.5)	1,582.9
<b>Operational Boundary - external debt</b>					
Borrowing	940.8	(1,381.4)	1,151.7	(1,435.0)	1,275.0
Other long term liabilities	170.0	(216.0)	170.0	(216.0)	170.0
TOTAL	1,110.8	(1,597.4)	1,321.7	(1,651.0)	1,445.0
<b>Actual external debt</b>	716.5	(1,192.0)	977.4	(1,259.6)	1,141.5
<b>Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 364 days</b>	0	(0)	0	(0)	0
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>					
Non - HRA	475.5	(455.5)	370.3	(160.1)	207.4
HRA	30.1	(41.9)	48.7	(44.3)	36.6
TOTAL	505.6	(497.4)	419.0	(204.4)	244.0
<b>Capital Financing Requirement (as at 31 March)</b>					
Non – HRA	1,331.9	(1,664.4)	1,477.1	(1,730.5)	1,611.1
HRA	298.1	(298.1)	299.2	(299.3)	300.0
TOTAL	1,630.0	(1,962.5)	1,776.3	(2,029.8)	1,911.1

Maturity structure of borrowing during 2019-20	Upper Limit		Lower limit	
	under 12 months	80%	(70%)	0%
12 months and within 24 months	70%	(100%)	0%	(0%)
24 months and within 5 years	50%	(80%)	0%	(0%)
5 years and within 10 years	50%	(70%)	0%	(0%)
10 years and above	80%	(80%)	40%	(0%)
<b>Has the Authority adopted the CIPFA Treasury Management Code?</b>				Yes

The status of the indicators will be included in Treasury Management reporting during 2019/20. They will also be included in the Council's Global Revenue Budget monitoring.

**Definitions and Purpose of the Treasury Management Indicators noted above (Indicators are as recommended by the CIPFA Prudential Code last revised in 2017)**

**Authorised Limit - external debt**

The local authority will set for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years an authorised limit for its total external debt, excluding investments, separately identifying borrowing from other long-term liabilities. This prudential indicator is referred to as the Authorised Limit.

**Operational Boundary - external debt**

The local authority will also set for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years an operational boundary for its total external debt, excluding investments, separately identifying borrowing from other long-term liabilities. This prudential indicator is referred to as the Operational Boundary.

Both the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary need to be consistent with the authority's plans for capital expenditure and financing; and with its treasury management policy statement and practices. The Operational Boundary should be based on the authority's estimate of most likely, i.e. prudent, but not worst case scenario. Risk analysis and risk management strategies should be taken into account.

The Operational Boundary should equate to the maximum level of external debt projected by this estimate. Thus, the Operational Boundary links directly to the Authority's plans for capital expenditure; its estimates of capital financing requirement; and its estimate of cash flow requirements for the year for all purposes. The Operational Boundary is a key management tool for in-year monitoring.

It will probably not be significant if the Operational Boundary is breached temporarily on occasions due to variations in cash flow. However, a sustained or regular trend above the Operational Boundary would be significant and should lead to further investigation and action as appropriate. Thus, both the Operational Boundary and the Authorised Limit will be based on the authority's plans. The authority will need to assure itself that these plans are affordable and prudent. The Authorised Limit will in addition need to provide headroom over and above the Operational Boundary sufficient for example for unusual cash movements.

**Actual external debt**

After the year end, the closing balance for actual gross borrowing plus (separately), other long-term liabilities is obtained directly from the local authority's Balance Sheet.

The prudential indicator for Actual External Debt considers a single point in time and hence is only directly comparable to the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary at that point in time. Actual debt during the year can be compared.

### **Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 364 days**

The authority will set an upper limit for each forward financial year period for the maturing of investments made for a period longer than 364 days. This indicator is referred to as the prudential limit for Principal Sums Invested for periods longer than 364 days.

The purpose of this indicator is so the authority can contain its exposure to the possibility of loss that might arise as a result of its having to seek early repayment or redemption of principal sums invested.

### **Maturity structure of new borrowing**

The authority will set for the forthcoming financial year both upper and lower limits with respect to the maturity structure of its borrowing. These indicators are referred to as the Upper and Lower limits respectively for the Maturity Structure of Borrowing.

### **Local Prudential Indicators**

The Council has not yet introduced Local Prudential Indicators to reflect local circumstances, but will review on a regular basis the need for these in the future.

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## **Appendix B**

### **Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy**

The Council implemented the new Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) guidance in 2011/12 and has assessed its MRP for 2019/20 in accordance with the main recommendations contained within the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 21(1A) of the Local Government Act 2003.

The Council is required to make provision for repayment of an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year through a revenue charge (the Minimum Revenue Provision - MRP).

MHCLG Regulations require full Council to approve an MRP Statement, in advance of each year. If the Council wishes to amend its policy during the year this would need to be approved by full Council. A variety of options are available to councils to replace the previous Regulations, so long as there is a prudent provision. The options are:

- **Option 1:** Regulatory Method – can only be applied to capital expenditure incurred prior to April 2008 or Supported Capital Expenditure. This is calculated as 4% of the non-housing CFR at the end of the preceding financial year, less some transitional factors relating to the movement to the new Prudential Code in 2003.
- **Option 2:** CFR Method – a provision equal to 4% of the non-housing CFR at the end of the preceding financial year.
- **Option 3:** Asset Life Method – MRP is calculated based on the life of the asset, on either an equal instalment or an annuity basis.
- **Option 4:** Depreciation Method – MRP is calculated in accordance with the depreciation accounting required for the asset.

Options 1 and 2 may be used only for supported expenditure, which is capital expenditure for which the Council has been notified by Government that the costs of that expenditure will be taken into account in the calculation of Government funding due to the Council.

It is important to note that the Council can deviate from these options provided that the approach taken ensures that there is a prudent provision. The Council has historically followed option 1 for supported expenditure based on the level of support provided by Government through Revenue Support Grant (RSG).

The assets created or acquired under Supported Capital Expenditure predominantly had long asset lives of c. 50 years, such as land or buildings, and an MRP of 4% suggests a significantly shorter asset life. As the level of notional RSG the Council receives has reduced in recent years, it was considered prudent to review the approach to MRP on supported borrowing to reflect the Government support received.

It was therefore agreed that from 2017/18 a provision of 2% of the non-housing CFR as at the end of the preceding financial year is to be made. This is in line with many other local authorities who have reviewed the basis for their MRP and have applied similarly revised policies.

It is the Council's policy that MRP relating to an asset will start to be incurred in the year after the capital expenditure on the asset is incurred or, in the case of new assets, in the year following the asset coming into use, in accordance with MHCLG's guidance.

The Council recognises that there are different categories of capital expenditure, for which it will incur MRP as follows:

- For non HRA Supported Capital Expenditure: MRP policy will be charged at a rate of 2% on a similar basis to option 1 of the guidance (the regulatory method) but at a lower rate, better reflecting the asset lives of the assets funded through Supported Borrowing.
- For non HRA unsupported capital expenditure incurred the MRP policy will be:
- Asset Life Method – MRP will be based on a straight line basis or annuity method so linking the MRP to the future flow of benefits from the asset, dependant on the nature of the capital expenditure, in accordance with option 3 of the guidance.
- If the expenditure is capital by virtue of a Ministerial direction, has been capitalised under a Capitalisation Directive, or does not create a council asset, MRP will be provided in accordance with option 3 of the guidance with asset lives calculated as per the table below:

<b>Expenditure type</b>	<b>Maximum period over which MRP to be made</b>
Expenditure capitalised by virtue of a direction under s16 (2) (b).	20 years.
Regulation 25(1) (a). Expenditure on computer programs.	Same period as for computer hardware.
Regulation 25(1) (b). Loans and grants towards capital expenditure by third parties.	The estimated life of the assets in relation to which the third party expenditure is incurred.
Regulation 25(1) (c). Repayment of grants and loans for capital expenditure.	25 years or the period of the loan if longer.
Regulation 25(1) (d). Acquisition of share or loan capital.	20 years, or the estimated life of the asset acquired.
Regulation 25(1) (e). Expenditure on works to assets not owned by the authority.	The estimated life of the assets.
Regulation 25(1) (ea). Expenditure on assets for use by others.	The estimated life of the assets.

Regulation 25(1) (f). Payment of levy on Large Scale Voluntary Transfers (LSVTs) of dwellings.	25 years.
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- For PFI service concessions and some lessee interests: Following the move to International Accounting Standards arrangements under private finance initiatives (PFIs) service concessions and some lessee interests (including embedded leases) are accounted for on the Council's Balance Sheet. Where this occurs, a part of the contract charge or rent payable will be taken to reduce the Balance Sheet liability rather than being charged as revenue expenditure. The MRP element of these schemes will be the amount of contract charge or rental payment charged against the Balance Sheet liability. This approach will produce an MRP charge comparable to that under option 3 in that it will run over the life of the lease or PFI scheme.

In some exceptional cases, the Council will deviate from the policy laid out above provided such exceptions remain prudent. Any exceptions are listed below:

- Where capital expenditure is incurred through providing loans to organisations, and where those loans are indemnified or have financial guarantees protecting against loss, no MRP will be charged in relation to the capital expenditure. Similarly, loans given by the Council where any losses incurred on the investment will impact solely on a third party, such as those provided under the City Deal arrangement with the HCA, will not require an MRP charge.

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**Treasury Management Policy Statement**

1. This organisation defines its treasury management activities as:  
The management of the organisation'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. This organisation regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the organisation, and any financial instruments entered into to manage these risks.
3. This organisation acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving value for money in treasury management, and to employing suitable comprehensive performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management.

The Council will invest its monies prudently, considering security first, liquidity second, and yield last, carefully considering its investment counterparties. It will similarly borrow monies prudently and consistent with the Council's service objectives.

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**Treasury Management Scheme of Delegation**

**i Full Council**

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

**ii Responsible body – Audit Committee**

- approval of/amendments to the organisation's adopted clauses, treasury management policy statement and treasury management practices
- budget consideration and approval
- approval of the division of responsibilities
- receiving and reviewing regular monitoring reports and acting on recommendations
- approving the selection of external service providers and agreeing terms of appointment

**iii Body with responsibility for scrutiny - Resource and Governance Scrutiny**

**Committee**

- reviewing the treasury management policy and procedures and making recommendations to the responsible body

**iv City Treasurer**

- delivery of the function

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**The Treasury Management role of the Section 151 Officer**

**The S151 (responsible) Officer**

- recommending clauses, treasury management policy/practices for approval, reviewing the same regularly, and monitoring compliance
- 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 and skills, 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

The points noted above reflect the specific responsibilities of the S151 Officer prior to the 2017 CIPFA Treasury Management Code revisions. The CIPFA Prudential Code revision which followed the MHCLG revised guidance on local government investments represents a major extension of the functions of the S151 Officer role, especially in respect of non-financial investments which CIPFA define as being part of treasury management.

The additional functions of the S151 Officer role are:

- preparation of a capital strategy with a long term timeframe to include capital expenditure, capital financing, non-financial investments and treasury management
- ensuring that the capital strategy is prudent, sustainable, affordable and prudent in the long term and provides value for money
- ensuring that due diligence has been carried out on all treasury and non-financial investments and is in accordance with the risk appetite of the authority
- ensuring that the authority has appropriate legal powers to undertake expenditure on non-financial assets and their financing
- ensuring the proportionality of all investments so that the authority does not undertake a level of investing which exposes the authority to an excessive level of risk compared to its financial resources
- ensuring that an adequate governance process is in place for the approval, monitoring and ongoing risk management of all non-financial investments and long term liabilities

- provision to members of a schedule of all non-treasury investments including material investments in subsidiaries, joint ventures, loans and financial guarantees
- ensuring that members are adequately informed and understand the risk exposures taken on by an authority
- ensuring that the authority has adequate expertise, either in house or externally provided, to carry out the above
  
- creation of Treasury Management Practices which specifically deal with how non treasury investments will be carried out and managed, to include the following:
  - Risk management including investment and risk management criteria for any material non-treasury investment portfolios;
  - Performance measurement and management including methodology and criteria for assessing the performance and success of non-treasury investments;
  - Decision making, governance and organisation including a statement of the governance requirements for decision making in relation to non-treasury investments; and arrangements to ensure that appropriate professional due diligence is carried out to support decision making;
  - Reporting and management information including where and how often monitoring reports are taken;
  - Training and qualifications including how the relevant knowledge and skills in relation to non-treasury investments will be arranged.

## **Economic Background as at January 2019 – Link Asset Services**

### **GLOBAL OUTLOOK**

World growth has been doing reasonably well, aided by strong growth in the US. However, US growth is likely to fall back in 2019 and, together with weakening economic activity in China and the Eurozone, overall world growth is likely to weaken.

Inflation has been weak during 2018 but, at long last, unemployment falling to remarkably low levels in the US and UK has led to a marked acceleration of wage inflation. The US Fed has therefore increased rates nine times and the Bank of England twice. However, the ECB is unlikely to start raising rates until late in 2019 at the earliest.

### **KEY RISKS - central bank monetary policy measures**

Looking back on nearly ten years since the financial crash of 2008 when liquidity suddenly dried up in financial markets, it can be assessed that central banks' monetary policy measures to counter the sharp world recession were successful. The key monetary policy measures they used were a combination of lowering central interest rates and flooding financial markets with liquidity, particularly through unconventional means such as quantitative easing (QE), where central banks bought large amounts of central government debt and smaller sums of other debt.

The key issue now is that that period of stimulating economic recovery and warding off the threat of deflation, is coming towards its close. A new period is well advanced in the US, and started more recently in the UK, of reversing those measures i.e. by raising central rates and, (for the US), reducing central banks' holdings of government and other debt. These measures are now required in order to stop the trend of a reduction in spare capacity in the economy and of unemployment falling to such low levels, that the re-emergence of inflation is viewed as a major risk. It is, therefore, crucial that central banks get their timing right and do not cause shocks to market expectations that could destabilise financial markets.

In particular, a key risk is that because QE-driven purchases of bonds drove up the price of government debt, and therefore caused a sharp drop in income yields, this also encouraged investors into a search for yield and into investing in riskier assets such as equities. Consequently, prices in both bond and equity markets rose to historically high valuation levels simultaneously. This meant that both asset categories were exposed to the risk of a sharp downward correction and we have indeed, seen a sharp fall in equity values in the last quarter of 2018. It is important, therefore, that central banks only gradually unwind their holdings of bonds in order to prevent destabilising the financial markets.

It is also likely that the timeframe for central banks unwinding their holdings of QE debt purchases will be over several years. They need to balance their timing to neither squash economic recovery, by taking too rapid and too strong action, or, conversely, let inflation run away by taking action that was too slow and/or too weak.

The potential for central banks to get this timing and strength of action wrong are now key risks. At the time of writing, (early January 2019), financial markets are very concerned that the Fed is being too aggressive with its policy for raising interest rates and was likely to cause a recession in the US economy.

The world economy also needs to adjust to a sharp change in liquidity creation over the last five years where the US has moved from boosting liquidity by QE purchases, to reducing its holdings of debt, (currently about \$50bn per month). In addition, the European Central Bank ended its QE purchases in December 2018.

## UK

The flow of positive economic statistics since the end of the first quarter of 2018 has shown that pessimism was overdone about the poor growth in quarter 1 when adverse weather caused a temporary downward blip. Quarter 1 at 0.1% growth in GDP was followed by a return to 0.4% in quarter 2 and by a strong performance in quarter 3 of +0.6%. However, growth in quarter 4 is expected to weaken significantly.

At their November quarterly Inflation Report meeting, the MPC repeated their well-worn phrase that future Bank Rate increases would be gradual and would rise to a much lower equilibrium rate, (where monetary policy is neither expansionary of contractionary), than before the crash; indeed they gave a figure for this of around 2.5% in ten years time, but declined to give a medium term forecast. However, with so much uncertainty around Brexit, they warned that the next move could be up or down, even if there was a disorderly Brexit.

While it would be expected that Bank Rate could be cut if there was a significant fall in GDP growth as a result of a disorderly Brexit, so as to provide a stimulus to growth, they warned they could also raise Bank Rate in the same scenario if there was a boost to inflation from a devaluation of sterling, increases in import prices and more expensive goods produced in the UK replacing cheaper goods previously imported, and so on. In addition, the Chancellor could potentially provide fiscal stimulus to support economic growth, though at the cost of increasing the budget deficit above currently projected levels.

It is unlikely that the MPC would increase Bank Rate in February 2019, ahead of the deadline in March for Brexit. Getting parliamentary approval for a Brexit agreement on both sides of the Channel will take well into spring 2019. However, in view of the hawkish stance of the MPC at their November meeting, the next increase in Bank Rate is now forecast to be in May 2019, (on the assumption that a Brexit deal is agreed by both the UK and the EU). The following increases are then forecast to be in February and November 2020 before ending up at 2.0% in February 2022.

Inflation. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation has been falling from a peak of 3.1% in November 2017 to 2.3% in November. In the November Bank of England quarterly Inflation Report, inflation was forecast to still be marginally above its 2% inflation target two years ahead, (at about 2.1%), given a scenario of minimal increases in Bank Rate. This inflation forecast is likely to be amended upwards due to the Bank's report being produced prior to the Chancellor's announcement of a significant fiscal stimulus in the Budget; this is likely to add 0.3% to GDP growth at a time when there is little spare capacity left in the economy, particularly of labour.



As for the labour market figures in October, unemployment at 4.1% was marginally above a 43 year low of 4% on the Independent Labour Organisation measure. A combination of job vacancies hitting an all-time high, together with negligible growth in total employment numbers, indicates that employers are now having major difficulties filling job vacancies with suitable staff. It was therefore unsurprising that wage inflation picked up to 3.3%, (3 month average regular pay, excluding bonuses). This meant that in real terms, (i.e. wage rates less CPI inflation), earnings are currently growing by about 1.0%, the highest level since 2009. This increase in household spending power is likely to feed through into providing some support to the overall rate of economic growth in the coming months. This tends to confirm that the MPC was right to start on a cautious increase in Bank Rate in August as it views wage inflation in excess of 3% as increasing inflationary pressures within the UK economy.

In the political arena, there is a risk that the current Conservative minority government may be unable to muster a majority in the Commons over Brexit. However, our central position is that Prime Minister May's government will endure, despite various setbacks, along the route to reaching an orderly Brexit in March 2019. If, however, the UK faces a general election in the next 12 months, this could result in a potential loosening of monetary and fiscal policy and therefore medium to longer dated gilt yields could rise on the expectation of a weak pound and concerns around inflation picking up.

## USA

President Trump's massive easing of fiscal policy is fuelling a, (temporary), boost in consumption which has generated an upturn in the rate of strong growth which rose from 2.2%, (annualised rate), in quarter 1 to 4.2% in quarter 2 and 3.5%, (3.0% y/y), in quarter 3, but also an upturn in inflationary pressures. The strong growth in employment numbers and the reduction in the unemployment rate to 3.9%, near to a recent 49 year low, has fed through to an upturn in wage inflation which hit 3.1% in November, however, CPI inflation overall fell to 2.2% in November and looks to be on a falling trend to drop below the Fed's target of 2% during 2019.

The Fed has continued on its series of increases in interest rates with another 0.25% increase in December to between 2.25% and 2.50%, this being the fifth increase in 2018 and the ninth in this cycle. However, they did also reduce their forecast for further increases from three to two. This latest increase compounded investor fears that the Fed is over doing the rate and level of increases in rates and that it is going to cause a US recession as a result. There is also much evidence in previous monetary policy cycles, of the Fed's series of increases doing exactly that. Consequently, we have seen stock markets around the world plunging under the weight of fears around the Fed's actions, the trade war between the US and China, an expectation that world growth will slow, Brexit etc.

The tariff war between the US and China has been generating a lot of heat during 2018, but it is not expected that the current level of actual action would have much in the way of a significant effect on US or world growth. However, there is a risk of escalation if an agreement is not reached soon between the US and China.

## **Eurozone**

Growth was 0.4% in quarters 1 and 2 but fell back to 0.2% in quarter 3, though this was probably just a temporary dip. In particular, data from Germany has been mixed and it could be negatively impacted by US tariffs on a significant part of manufacturing exports e.g. cars. For that reason, although growth is still expected to be in the region of nearly 2% for 2018, the horizon is less clear than it seemed just a short while ago. Having halved its quantitative easing purchases of debt in October 2018 to €15bn per month, the European Central Bank ended all further purchases in December 2018. The ECB is forecasting inflation to be a little below its 2% top limit through the next three years so it may find it difficult to warrant a start on raising rates by the end of 2019 if the growth rate of the EU economy is on a weakening trend.

## **China**

Economic growth has been weakening over successive years, despite repeated rounds of central bank stimulus; medium term risks are increasing. Major progress still needs to be made to eliminate excess industrial capacity and the stock of unsold property, and to address the level of non-performing loans in the banking and credit systems. Progress has been made in reducing the rate of credit creation, particularly from the shadow banking sector, which is feeding through into lower economic growth. There are concerns that official economic statistics are inflating the published rate of growth.

## **Japan**

Has been struggling to stimulate consistent significant GDP growth and to get inflation up to its target of 2%, despite huge monetary and fiscal stimulus. It is also making little progress on fundamental reform of the economy. It is likely that loose monetary policy will endure for some years yet to try to stimulate growth and modest inflation.

## **Emerging Countries**

Argentina and Turkey are currently experiencing major headwinds and are facing challenges in external financing requirements well in excess of their reserves of foreign exchange. However, these countries are small in terms of the overall world economy, (around 1% each), so the fallout from the expected recessions in these countries will be minimal.

## **INTEREST RATE FORECASTS**

The interest rate forecasts provided by Link Asset Services are predicated on an assumption of an agreement being reached on Brexit between the UK and the EU. In the event of an orderly non-agreement exit, it is likely that the Bank of England would take action to cut Bank Rate from 0.75% in order to help economic growth deal with the adverse effects of this situation. This is also likely to cause short to medium term gilt yields to fall. If there was a disorderly Brexit, then any cut in Bank Rate would be likely to last for a longer period and also depress short and medium gilt yields

correspondingly. It is also possible that the government could act to protect economic growth by implementing fiscal stimulus.

### **The balance of risks to the UK**

- The overall balance of risks to economic growth in the UK is probably neutral.
- The balance of risks to increases in Bank Rate and shorter term PwLB rates, are probably also even and are broadly dependent on how strong GDP growth turns out, how slowly inflation pressures subside, and how quickly the Brexit negotiations move forward positively.

One risk that is both an upside and downside risk, is that all central banks are now working in very different economic conditions than before the 2008 financial crash as there has been a major increase in consumer and other debt due to the exceptionally low levels of borrowing rates that have prevailed for ten years since 2008. This means that the neutral rate of interest in an economy, (i.e. the rate that is neither expansionary nor deflationary), is difficult to determine definitively in this new environment, although central banks have made statements that they expect it to be much lower than before 2008. Central banks could therefore either over or under do increases in central interest rates.

### **Downside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PwLB rates currently include:**

- Brexit – if it were to cause significant economic disruption and a major downturn in the rate of growth.
- Bank of England monetary policy takes action too quickly, or too far, over the next three years to raise Bank Rate and causes UK economic growth, and increases in inflation, to be weaker than we currently anticipate.
- A resurgence of the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis, possibly in Italy, due to its high level of government debt, low rate of economic growth and vulnerable banking system, and due to the election in March of a government which has made a lot of anti-austerity noise. The EU rejected the initial proposed Italian budget and demanded cuts in government spending which the Italian government initially refused. However, a fudge was subsequently agreed, but only by delaying the planned increases in expenditure to a later year. This can has therefore only been kicked down the road to a later time. The rating agencies have started on downgrading Italian debt to one notch above junk level. If Italian debt were to fall below investment grade, many investors would be unable to hold it. Unsurprisingly, investors are becoming increasingly concerned by the words and actions of the Italian government and consequently, Italian bond yields have risen at a time when the government faces having to refinance large amounts of debt maturing in 2019.
- Weak capitalisation of some European banks. Italian banks are particularly vulnerable; one factor is that they hold a high level of Italian government debt - debt which is falling in value. This is therefore undermining their capital ratios and

raises the question of whether they will need to raise fresh capital to plug the gap.

- German minority government. In the German general election of September 2017, Angela Merkel's CDU party was left in a vulnerable minority position dependent on the fractious support of the SPD party, as a result of the rise in popularity of the anti-immigration AfD party. Then in October 2018, the results of the Bavarian and Hesse state elections radically undermined the SPD party and showed a sharp fall in support for the CDU. As a result, the SPD is reviewing whether it can continue to support a coalition that is so damaging to its electoral popularity. After the result of the Hesse state election, Angela Merkel announced that she would not stand for re-election as CDU party leader at her party's convention in December 2018, (a new party leader has now been elected). However, this makes little practical difference as she is still expected to aim to continue for now as the Chancellor. However, there are five more state elections coming up in 2019 and EU parliamentary elections in May/June; these could result in a further loss of electoral support for both the CDU and SPD which could also undermine her leadership.
- Other minority Eurozone governments. Spain, Portugal, Ireland, the Netherlands and Belgium all have vulnerable minority governments dependent on coalitions which could prove fragile. Sweden is also struggling to form a government due to the anti-immigration party holding the balance of power, and which no other party is willing to form a coalition with. The Belgian coalition collapsed in December 2018 but a minority caretaker government has been appointed until the May EU wide general elections.
- Austria, the Czech Republic and Hungary now form a strongly anti-immigration bloc within the EU while Italy, in 2018, also elected a strongly anti-immigration government. Elections to the EU parliament are due in May/June 2019.
- Further increases in interest rates in the US could spark a sudden flight of investment funds from more risky assets e.g. shares, into bonds yielding a much improved yield. Throughout the last quarter of 2018, we saw sharp falls in equity markets interspersed with occasional partial rallies. Emerging countries which have borrowed heavily in dollar denominated debt, could be particularly exposed to this risk of an investor flight to safe havens e.g. UK gilts.
- There are concerns around the level of US corporate debt which has swollen massively during the period of low borrowing rates in order to finance mergers and acquisitions. This has resulted in the debt of many large corporations being downgraded to a BBB credit rating, close to junk status. Indeed, 48% of total investment grade corporate debt is now rated at BBB. If such corporations fail to generate profits and cash flow to reduce their debt levels as expected, this could tip their debt into junk ratings which will increase their cost of financing and further negatively impact profits and cash flow.
- Geopolitical risks, especially North Korea, but also in Europe and the Middle East, which could lead to increasing safe haven flows.

## **Upside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PwLB rates**

- Brexit – if both sides were to agree a compromise that removed all threats of economic and political disruption.
- The Fed causing a sudden shock in financial markets through misjudging the pace and strength of increases in its Fed Funds Rate and in the pace and strength of reversal of QE, which then leads to a fundamental reassessment by investors of the relative risks of holding bonds, as opposed to equities. This could lead to a major flight from bonds to equities and a sharp increase in bond yields in the US, which could then spill over into impacting bond yields around the world.
- The Bank of England is too slow in its pace and strength of increases in Bank Rate and, therefore, allows inflation pressures to build up too strongly within the UK economy, which then necessitates a later rapid series of increases in Bank Rate faster than we currently expect.
- UK inflation, whether domestically generated or imported, returning to sustained significantly higher levels causing an increase in the inflation premium inherent to gilt yields.

## **Brexit timetable and process**

- March 2017: UK government notified the European Council of its intention to leave under the Treaty on European Union Article 50 on 29 March 2019.
- 25.11.18 EU27 leaders endorsed the withdrawal agreement
- Dec 2018 vote in the UK Parliament on the agreement was postponed
- 21.12.18 – 8.1.19 UK parliamentary recess
- 14.1.19 vote in Parliament on a 'no deal' scenario
- By 29.3.19 second vote in UK parliament if first vote rejects the deal
- By 29.3.19 if the UK Parliament approves a deal, then ratification by the EU Parliament requires a simple majority
- By 29.3.19 if the UK and EU parliaments agree the deal, the EU Council needs to approve the deal; 20 countries representing 65% of the EU population must agree
- 29.3.19 UK leaves the EU, (or asks the EU for agreement to an extension of the Article 50 period if the UK Parliament rejects the deal and no deal departure?)
- 29.3.19: if an agreement is reached with the EU on the terms of Brexit, then this will be followed by a proposed transitional period ending around December 2020.
- UK continues as a full EU member until March 2019 with access to the single market and tariff free trade between the EU and UK. Different sectors of the UK economy may leave the single market and tariff free trade at different times during the transitional period.
- The UK and EU would attempt to negotiate, among other agreements, a bi-lateral trade agreement over that period.

- The UK would aim for a negotiated agreed withdrawal from the EU, although the UK could also exit without any such agreements in the event of a breakdown of negotiations.
- If the UK exits without an agreed deal with the EU, World Trade Organisation rules and tariffs could apply to trade between the UK and EU - but this is not certain.

On full exit from the EU: the UK parliament would repeal the 1972 European Communities Act.

**Prospects for Interest Rates**

The data below shows a variety of forecasts published by a number of institutions. They include those of Link and Capital Economics (an independent forecasting consultancy). The forecast within this strategy statement has been drawn from these diverse sources and officers' own views. Please Note – The current PWLB rates and forecast shown above have taken into account the 20 basis point certainty rate reduction effective as of the 1st November 2012.

<b>Link Asset Services Interest Rate View</b>													
	<b>Mar-19</b>	<b>Jun-19</b>	<b>Sep-19</b>	<b>Dec-19</b>	<b>Mar-20</b>	<b>Jun-20</b>	<b>Sep-20</b>	<b>Dec-20</b>	<b>Mar-21</b>	<b>Jun-21</b>	<b>Sep-21</b>	<b>Dec-21</b>	<b>Mar-22</b>
Bank Rate View	0.75%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.50%	1.50%	1.75%	1.75%	1.75%	2.00%
3 Month LIBID	0.90%	1.00%	1.10%	1.20%	1.30%	1.40%	1.50%	1.50%	1.60%	1.70%	1.80%	1.90%	2.00%
6 Month LIBID	1.00%	1.20%	1.30%	1.40%	1.50%	1.60%	1.70%	1.70%	1.80%	1.90%	2.00%	2.10%	2.20%
12 Month LIBID	1.20%	1.30%	1.40%	1.50%	1.60%	1.70%	1.80%	1.90%	2.00%	2.10%	2.20%	2.30%	2.40%
5yr PWLB rate	2.10%	2.20%	2.20%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%	2.50%	2.60%	2.60%	2.70%	2.80%	2.80%
10yr PWLB rate	2.50%	2.60%	2.60%	2.70%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%
25yr PWLB rate	2.90%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%	3.50%	3.50%	3.60%	3.60%
50yr PWLB rate	2.70%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%
<b>Bank Rate</b>													
Link Asset Services	0.75%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.50%	1.50%	1.75%	1.75%	1.75%	2.00%
Capital Economics	0.75%	1.00%	1.25%	1.50%	1.70%	1.75%	2.00%	2.00%					
<b>5yr PWLB rate</b>													
Link Asset Services	2.10%	2.20%	2.20%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%	2.50%	2.60%	2.60%	2.70%	2.80%	2.80%
Capital Economics	2.03%	2.15%	2.40%	2.65%	2.70%	2.75%	2.80%	2.85%					
<b>10yr PWLB rate</b>													
Link Asset Services	2.50%	2.60%	2.60%	2.70%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%
Capital Economics	2.43%	2.55%	2.80%	3.05%	3.05%	3.05%	3.05%	3.05%					
<b>25yr PWLB rate</b>													
Link Asset Services	2.90%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%	3.50%	3.50%	3.60%	3.60%
Capital Economics	2.96%	3.08%	3.33%	3.58%	3.53%	3.48.00%	3.43%	3.38%					
<b>50yr PWLB rate</b>													
Link Asset Services	2.70%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%
Capital Economics	2.78%	2.90%	3.15%	3.40%	3.40%	3.40%	3.40%	3.40%					

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## **Glossary of Terms**

**Authorised Limit** - This Prudential Indicator represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and needs to be set and revised by Members. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable. It is the expected maximum borrowing need, with some headroom for unexpected movements.

**Bank Rate** - the rate at which the Bank of England offers loans to the wholesale banks, thereby controlling general interest rates in the economy.

**Counterparty** - one of the opposing parties involved in a borrowing or investment transaction.

**Covered Bonds** - Debt instruments secured by assets such as mortgage loans. These loans remain on the issuer's balance sheet and investors have a preferential claim in the event of the issuing institution defaulting.

**Credit Rating** - A qualified assessment and formal evaluation of an institution's (bank or building society) credit history and capability of repaying obligations. It measures the probability of the borrower defaulting on its financial obligations, and its ability to repay these fully and on time.

**Discount** - Where the prevailing interest rate is higher than the fixed rate of a long-term loan, which is being repaid early, the lender can refund the borrower a discount, the calculation being based on the difference between the two interest rates over the remaining years of the loan, discounted back to present value. The lender is able to offer the discount, as their investment will now earn more than when the original loan was taken out.

**Fixed Rate Funding** - A fixed rate of interest throughout the time of the loan. The rate is fixed at the start of the loan and therefore does not affect the volatility of the portfolio, until the debt matures and requires replacing at the interest rates relevant at that time.

**Gilts** - The loan instruments by which the Government borrows. Interest rates will reflect the level of demand shown by investors when the Government auctions Gilts.

**High/Low Coupon** - High/Low interest rate

**LIBID (London Interbank Bid Rate)** - This is an average rate, calculated from the rates at which individual major banks in London are willing to borrow from other banks for a particular time period. For example, 6 month LIBID is the average rate at which banks are willing to pay to borrow for 6 months.

**LIBOR (London Interbank Offer Rate)** - This is an average rate, calculated from the rates which major banks in London estimate they would be charged if they borrowed from other banks for a particular time period. For example, 6 month LIBOR is the average rate which banks believe they will be charged for borrowing for 6 months.

**Liquidity** - The ability of an asset to be converted into cash quickly and without any price discount. The more liquid a business is, the better able it is to meet short-term financial obligations.

**LOBO (Lender Option Borrower Option)** - This is a type of loan where, at various periods known as call dates, the lender has the option to alter the interest rate on the loan. Should the lender exercise this option, the borrower has a corresponding option to repay the loan in full without penalty.

**Market** -The private sector institutions - Banks, Building Societies etc.

**Maturity Profile/Structure** - an illustration of when debts are due to mature, and either have to be renewed or money found to pay off the debt. A high concentration in one year will make the Council vulnerable to current interest rates in that year.

**Monetary Policy Committee** - the independent body that determines Bank Rate.

**Money Market Funds** - Investment instruments that invest in a variety of institutions, therefore diversifying the investment risk.

**Operational Boundary** – This Prudential Indicator is based on the probable external debt during the course of the year. It is not a limit and actual borrowing could vary around this boundary for short times during the year. It should act as an indicator to ensure the Authorised Limit is not breached.

**Premium** - Where the prevailing current interest rate is lower than the fixed rate of a long-term loan, which is being repaid early, the lender can charge the borrower a premium, the calculation being based on the difference between the two interest rates over the remaining years of the loan, discounted back to present value. The lender may charge the premium, as their investment will now earn less than when the original loan was taken out.

**Prudential Code** - The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to ‘have regard to’ the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council’s capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

**PWLB** - Public Works Loan Board. Part of the Government’s Debt Management Office, which provides loans to public bodies at rates reflecting those at which the Government is able to sell Gilts.

**Specified Investments** - Sterling investments of not more than one-year maturity. These are considered low risk assets, where the possibility of loss of principal or investment income is very low.

**Non-specified investments** - Investments not in the above, specified category, e.g., foreign currency, exceeding one year or outside our minimum credit rating criteria.

**Treasury Bills** - These are marketable securities issued by the UK Government and as such counterparty and liquidity risk is very low.

**Variable Rate Funding** - The rate of interest either continually moves reflecting interest rates of the day, or can be tied to specific dates during the loan period. Rates may be updated on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis.

**Volatility** - The degree to which the debt portfolio is affected by current interest rate movements. The more debt maturing within the coming year and needing replacement, and the more debt subject to variable interest rates, the greater the volatility.

**Yield Curve** - A graph of the relationship of interest rates to the length of the loan. A normal yield curve will show interest rates relatively low for short-term loans compared to long-term loans. An inverted Yield Curve is the opposite of this.

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**Treasury Management Implications of HRA Reform**

As discussed in Section 3 of the report, the reform of the HRA finance system has consequences for the treasury management of the Council. As part of the reform, the HRA's debt portfolio needs to be separately identifiable to that of the General Fund, and the HRA will hold some autonomy over the management of its debt portfolio. However, in order to ensure that the treasury management function of the Council remains effective and provides value for money, and given that the Section 151 officer for both the General Fund and the HRA is the Treasurer, the HRA's treasury portfolio must be run in the context of the overall Council portfolio.

This appendix seeks to explain how the debt portfolio of the Council has been split between the General Fund and the HRA, and how the HRA treasury position will be managed going forward.

**The Portfolio Split**

One of the principles behind the reform of HRA finance was to provide some level of treasury autonomy for the HRA, separating its debt from the Council's so that its treasury position could be managed separately. To achieve this, the debt portfolio was to be split at the point that the debt settlement was made.

On the 28 March 2012, the Council received c. £294m which was to be used to reduce the debt held by the Council. The table below shows the Council's treasury portfolio before and after the settlement:

	Pre reform		Post reform
	£'000		£'000
PWLB	199,966		0
Market	549,640		480,215
Stock	8,159		8,159
<b>Gross Debt</b>	<b>757,765</b>		<b>488,374</b>
Deposits	-17,954		-42,839
<b>Net Debt</b>	<b>739,811</b>		<b>445,535</b>

At this point, the debt was to be split according to the relative capital financing requirements (CFRs) of both the General Fund and the HRA. The cash remainder of the settlement could not be used to redeem further market debt so, to ensure that the HRA CFR fell by the full level of the settlement, a notional transaction took place. An amount of debt equivalent to the cash remainder was transferred from the HRA to the General Fund, alongside the cash. This had a neutral effect on the General Fund's net debt.

The table below shows the CFRs before and after the debt settlement, with the HRA CFR falling by the settlement:

<b>CFRs</b>	Pre reform		Post reform	% of total
	£'000		£'000	
General Fund	675,454		675,454	84.47%
HRA	418,463		124,187	15.53%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,093,917</b>		<b>799,641</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
	<i>Of which financed:</i>		488,374	
	<i>Of which unfinanced:</i>		311,267	

As can be seen from the tables below, the debt was to split in a ratio of 84.47:15.53 between the General Fund and the HRA, including the unfinanced CFR element. This is the level of internal borrowing undertaken in lieu of external borrowing, through the use of cash balances to fund expenditure rather than external borrowing. It was decided, for administrative reasons, that all of the Council's remaining stock debt should be held by the General Fund, which increased the relative level of unfinanced CFR held by the HRA.

The final split of the debt portfolio is shown in the table below:

	General Fund	HRA	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Market	405,636	74,579	480,215
<i>% of total market</i>	<i>84.47%</i>	<i>15.53%</i>	
Stock	8,159	0	8,159
<i>% of stock</i>	<i>100.00%</i>	<i>0.00%</i>	
<b>Total Loans</b>	<b>413,795</b>	<b>74,579</b>	<b>488,374</b>
<i>% of total loans</i>	<i>84.73%</i>	<i>15.27%</i>	
Unfinanced CFR	261,659	49,608	311,267
<i>% of unfinanced CFR</i>	<i>84.06%</i>	<i>15.94%</i>	
<b>Total CFR</b>	<b>675,454</b>	<b>124,187</b>	<b>799,641</b>
<i>% of total CFR</i>	<i>84.47%</i>	<i>15.53%</i>	

### Future HRA borrowing

Following the split of the portfolio, the HRA can make borrowing decisions according to the needs of their business plan, provided those decisions are aligned with their treasury strategy and are agreed by the Section 151 officer. The amounts and maturity periods of any future loans will be determined by the HRA, in conjunction with the Treasury Management team and the City Treasurer. Any future borrowing made by the Council will be for either the General Fund or the HRA and not for the Council in general.

## **Use of Temporary Cash Balances and Temporary Borrowing**

Although the HRA's treasury position is now independent of the General Fund, both are managed in the name of the Council as a whole. As such, the day to day treasury position of the Council, whilst having regard to the impact on the HRA and the General Fund, will be run on a Council basis – this simplifies the risk management of the treasury position, and should help to ensure that the treasury function is providing value for money.

To achieve this, the General Fund will deposit and temporarily borrow externally, but the HRA will only be able to deposit with the General Fund and, should it be required, will only be able to access temporary borrowing through the General Fund. In order to ensure that this is fair, interest rates will be applied to any such internal transfers, as summarised below:

- If the General Fund has temporary investments, HRA investments with the General Fund will earn – ***average portfolio temporary investment rate***
- If the General Fund does not have temporary investments, HRA investments with the General Fund will earn – ***7-day LIBID***
- If the General Fund has temporary borrowing, HRA temporary borrowing from the General Fund will be charged – ***average portfolio temporary borrowing rate***
- If the General fund does not have temporary borrowing, HRA temporary borrowing from the General Fund will be charged – ***7-day LIBOR***

The market rates to be used (7-day LIBID and LIBOR) are the benchmark rates used by the Council for investments and temporary borrowing.

## **Future Reporting**

The intention is to continue to report to Members the overall treasury position of the Council, including both the General Fund and the HRA. Separate reports will be provided on the General Fund and the HRA, when required.