DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Dacorum Borough Council

Treasury Management Strategy Statement

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy

2017/18

Index

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. A primary function of the Treasury Management service is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially, before considering investment return.

The second main function of the Treasury Management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning, to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. The management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.

1.2 Clauses to be formally adopted

1. Dacorum Borough Council will create and maintain the following for effective treasury management:

    - a treasury management policy statement, stating the policies, objectives and approach to risk management of its treasury management activities;
    - suitable treasury management practices (TMPs), setting out the manner in which the organisation will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, and prescribing how it will manage and control those activities

2. Full Council will receive reports on its treasury management policies, practices and activities, including, as a minimum, a mid-year review and an annual report after its close, in the form prescribed in its TMPs.

3. Responsibility is delegated to the Section 151 Officer for the implementation and regular monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices, and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions. They will act in accordance with the policy statement and TMPs and, if he/she is a CIPFA member, CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

4. This organisation nominates Cabinet to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy, policies and monitoring before recommendation to Full Council.

1.3 Treasury Management Policy Statement

Dacorum defines its treasury management activities as:

> *The management of the organisation's investments, cash flows, 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.*

Successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. 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.

Effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of Dacorum's 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.

1.4 Reporting requirements

The Council is required to receive and approve, as a minimum, three main reports each year, which incorporate a variety of policies, estimates and actuals.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement (this report) - The first, and most important report, covers:

- the capital plans (including prudential indicators);
- a minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time);
- the treasury management strategy (how the investments and borrowings are to be organised) including treasury indicators; and
- an investment strategy (the parameters on how investments are to be managed).

A mid year treasury management report – This will update members with the progress of the capital position, amending prudential indicators as necessary, and whether the treasury strategy is meeting the strategy or whether any policies require revision.

An annual treasury report – This provides details of a selection of actual prudential and treasury indicators and actual treasury operations compared to the estimates within the strategy.

Scrutiny – The above reports are required to be adequately scrutinised before being recommended to the Council. This role is undertaken by the Cabinet .

1.5 Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/18

The strategy for 2017/18 covers two main areas:

Capital issues:

- the capital plans and the prudential indicators;
- the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy.

Treasury management issues:

- the current treasury position;
- treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- prospects for interest rates;
- the borrowing strategy;
- policy on borrowing in advance of need;
- debt rescheduling;
- the investment strategy;
- creditworthiness policy; and
- policy on use of external service providers.

1.6 Training

The CIPFA Code requires the responsible officer to ensure that members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management. The training needs of treasury management officers are periodically reviewed.

1.7 Treasury management consultants

The Council uses Capita Asset Services, Treasury Solutions as its external treasury management advisors.

The Council recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subjected to regular review.

The Council also recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers.

2 The Capital Prudential Indicators 2017/18 – 2019/20

The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

2.1 Capital expenditure

The first prudential indicator is a summary of the Council's capital expenditure plans, both those agreed previously, and those forming part of this budget cycle. The table below summarises the capital expenditure plans and how these plans are being financed by capital or revenue resources. Any shortfall of resources results in a funding borrowing need. Members are asked to approve the capital expenditure forecasts:

Capital expenditure	**2015/16 Actual £m**	**2016/17 Forecast £m**	**2017/18 Estimate £m**	**2018/19 Estimate £m**	**2019/20 Estimate £m**
Non-HRA	19.003	19.458	11.582	17.220	2.375
HRA	30.513	22.804	40.940	38.832	29.114
Total	**49.516**	**42.262**	**52.522**	**56.052**	**31.489**
Financed by:					
Capital grants & S106	3.860	2.880	1.088	2.648	0.675
Capital receipts & reserves	21.871	28.089	32.857	28.887	24.895
Revenue	17.176	5.796	15.967	19.143	5.919
Borrowing	6.609	5.497	2.610	5.374	0.000
Net financing need for the year	**49.516**	**42.262**	**52.522**	**56.052**	**31.489**

2.2 The Council's borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement)

The second prudential indicator is the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure above, which is not immediately paid for, will increase the CFR.

The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the borrowing need in line with each assets life.

The CFR includes any other long term liabilities (e.g. PFI schemes, finance leases). Whilst these increase the CFR, and therefore the Council's borrowing requirement, these types of scheme include a borrowing facility and so the Council is not required to separately borrow for these schemes. The Council currently has £0.188m of such schemes within the CFR.

The Council is asked to approve the CFR projections below:

£m	2015/16 Actual £m	2016/17 Estimate £m	2017/18 Estimate £m	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m
Capital Financing Requirement					
CFR – non housing	3.200	11.908	14.518	19.892	19.892
CFR – housing	349.950	346.739	346.172	344.104	340.519
Total CFR	353.150	358.647	360.690	363.996	360.411
Movement in CFR		**5.497**	**2.043**	**3.306**	**(3.585)**

Movement in CFR is represented by					
Net financing need for the year		5.497	2.043	3.306	(3.585)
Use of set aside capital receipts		0.00	0.000	0.000	0.000
Movement in CFR		**5.497**	**2.043**	**3.306**	**(3.585)**

2.3 Minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy statement

The Council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year (the CFR) through a revenue charge (the minimum revenue provision - MRP), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments if required (voluntary revenue provision - VRP).

DCLG regulations have been issued which require the full Council to approve an MRP Statement in advance of each year. A variety of options are provided to councils, so long as there is a prudent provision. The Council is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement*:*

The MRP policy will be*:*

- **Asset life method** – MRP will be based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with the regulations;

This option provide for a reduction in the borrowing need over approximately the asset's life.

There is no requirement on the HRA to make a minimum revenue provision.

2.4 Core funds and expected investment balances

The use of funds to either finance capital expenditure or to support the revenue budget will have an ongoing impact on investments, unless resources are supplemented each year from new sources (asset sales etc.). Detailed below are estimates of the year end balances and anticipated day to day cash flow balances.

Year End Resources	2015/16 Actual £m	2016/17 Estimate £m	2017/18 Estimate £m	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m
Fund balances / reserves	24.996	37.932	25.718	17.148	18.023
Capital receipts	18.531	20.019	19.627	19.347	20.096
Provisions	4.722	5.000	5.000	4.000	3.000
Other	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total core funds	**48.249**	**62.951**	**50.345**	**40.495**	**41.119**
Working capital		5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000
(Under)/over borrowing		7.299	8.212	4.027	4.215
Expected investments		**75.250**	**63.557**	**49.522**	**50.334**

2.5 Affordability prudential indicators

The previous sections cover the overall capital and control of borrowing prudential indicators, but within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances. The Council is asked to approve the following indicators:

2.6 Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream

This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term costs net of investment income) against the net revenue stream.

	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Estimate	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
Non-HRA	(0.78%)	1.13%	1.11%	1.01%	0.84%
HRA	19.73%	20.25%	20.26%	20.43%	20.67%

2.7 Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on council tax

This indicator identifies the revenue costs associated with proposed changes to the three year capital programme recommended in this budget report compared to the Council's existing approved commitments and previous plans. The assumptions are based on the budget, but will invariably include some estimates, such as the level of Government support, which are not published over a three year period.

The decreases in the indicator reflects the impact of the increases of New Homes Bonus allocation, reducing the borrowing requirement and therefore the interest costs.

Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on the Band D council tax

	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Estimate	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
Council tax - Band D	(£34.88)	0.35	(£3.03)	(£3.02)	(£3.00)

2.8 Estimates of the incremental impact of capital investment decisions on housing rent levels

Similar to the council tax calculation, this indicator identifies the trend in the cost of proposed changes in the housing capital programme recommended in this budget report compared to the Council's existing commitments and previous plans, expressed as a discrete impact on weekly rent levels. This indicator shows the revenue impact on any newly proposed changes, although any discrete impact will be constrained by rent controls.

There are significant changes shown in the table, which reflects the reprofiling to the Council's new build programme and increased forecast on Right to Buy receipts.

Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on housing rent levels

	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Estimate	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
Weekly housing rent levels	(£1.44)	(£0.04)	(£1.07)	£11.46	(£13.82)

2.9 HRA ratios

	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Estimate	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate
HRA debt £m	349.950	346.739	346.172	344.104	340.518
HRA revenues £m	58.037	56.846	56.250	55.678	54.977
Ratio of debt to revenues %	603	610	615	618	619
Number of HRA dwellings	10,182	10,082	9,982	9,882	9,782
Debt per dwelling £	34,369	34,392	34,680	34,821	34,811

3 Borrowing

The capital expenditure plans set out in Section 2 provide details of the service activity of the Council.

The treasury management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet this service activity. This will involve both the organisation of the cash flow and, where capital plans require, the organisation of approporiate borrowing facilities.

3.1 Current portfolio position

The Council's treasury portfolio position at 31 March 2016, with forward projections are summarised below. The table shows the actual external debt, against the underlying capital borrowing need, highlighting any over or under borrowing.

	2015/16 Actual £m	2016/17 Estimate £m	2017/18 Estimate £m	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m
External Debt					
Debt at 1 April	346.739	366.706	366.129	365.379	363.135
Expected change in Debt	19.779	(0.765)	(0.938)	(2.432)	(3.942)
Other long-term liabilities	0.188	0.188	0.188	0.188	0.188
Actual gross debt at 31 March	**366.706**	**366.129**	**365.379**	**363.135**	**359.381**
The Capital Financing Requirement	353.150	358.647	360.690	363.996	360.411
Under / (over) borrowing	**(13.556)**	**(7.482)**	**(4.689)**	**0.861**	**1.030**

There are a number of key indicators to ensure that the Council operates its activities within well-defined limits.

One of these is that the Council needs to ensure that its gross debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2017/18 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years, but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue purposes. The Council complies with this indicator.

3.2 Treasury Indicators: Limits to borrowing activity

The operational boundary. This is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed.

Operational boundary	2016/17 Estimate £m	2017/18 Estimate £m	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m
Debt	365.941	365.191	362.947	359.193
Other long term liabilities	0.188	0.188	0.188	0.188
Total	366.129	365.379	363.135	359.381

The authorised limit for external debt. This represents a limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term.

Authorised limit	2016/17 Estimate £m	2017/18 Estimate £m	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m
Debt	378.000	378.000	375.000	373.000
Other long term liabilities	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Total	379.000	379.000	376.000	374.000

The Council is also limited to a maximum HRA CFR through the HRA self-financing regime. This limit is currently £354.015m.

Treasury management limits on activity

There are three debt related treasury activity limits. The purpose of these are to restrain the activity of the treasury function within certain limits, thereby managing risk and reducing the impact of any adverse movement in interest rates. However, if these are set to be too restrictive they will impair the opportunities to reduce costs / improve performance. The indicators are:

- Upper limits on variable interest rate exposure. This identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rates based upon the debt position;
- Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure. This is similar to the previous indicator and covers a maximum limit on fixed interest rates;
- Maturity structure of borrowing. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing, and are required for upper and lower limits.

The Council is asked to approve the following treasury indicators and limits:

£m		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Interest rate exposures				
		Upper	**Upper**	**Upper**
Limits on fixed interest rates based on net debt		100%	100%	100%
Limits on fixed interest rates: • **Debt only** • **Investments only**		 100% 100%	 100% 100%	 100% 100%
Limits on variable interest rates • **Debt only** • **Investments only**		 5% 40%	 5% 40%	 5% 40%
Maturity structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2017/18				
			Lower	**Upper**
Under 12 months			0%	1%
12 months to 2 years			0%	1%
2 years to 5 years			0%	3%
5 years to 10 years			2%	5%
10 years and above			5%	90%
Maturity structure of variable interest rate borrowing 2017/18				
			Lower	Upper
Under 12 months			0%	1%
12 months to 2 years			0%	2%
2 years to 5 years			0%	2%
5 years to 10 years			0%	0%
10 years and above			0%	0%

3.3 Borrowing strategy

The Council is currently in a slightly over-borrowed position as described in 3.1. This means that the CFR, has been over funded with loan debt. This was to secure preferential self-financing borrowing rates and maintain General Fund capital balances.

The Corporate Director (Finance & Operations) will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances, specifically in relation to refinancing, delaying capital expenditure and taking on new borrowings.

Any decisions will be reported to the appropriate decision making body at the next available opportunity.

3.4 Policy on borrowing in advance of need

The Council will not borrow more than, or in advance of, its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates, and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.

Borrowing in advance will be made within the constraints that the Council would not look to borrow more than 36 months in advance of need. Risks associated with any borrowing in advance activity will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism.

3.5 Prospects for Interest Rates

The Councils Treasury Advisors provided the following as their view for interest rates.

	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	Mar-20
Bank rate	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	0.75%
5yr PWLB rate	1.60%	1.60%	1.60%	1.60%	1.60%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.80%	1.80%	1.90%	1.90%	2.00%	2.00%
10yr PWLB rate	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.40%	2.40%	2.50%	2.50%	2.60%	2.60%	2.70%
25yr PWLB rate	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%
50yr PWLB rate	2.70%	2.70%	2.70%	2.70%	2.80%	2.80%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%

The Monetary Policy Committee, (MPC), cut Bank Rate to 0.25% on 4th August in order to counteract what it forecast was going to be a sharp slowdown in growth in the second half of 2016. It also gave a strong steer that it was likely to cut Bank Rate again by the end of the year. However, economic data since August has indicated much stronger growth in the second half 2016 than that forecast; also. Consequently, Bank Rate was not cut again in November or December and, on current trends, it now appears unlikely that there will be another cut.

During the two-year period 2017 – 2019, when the UK is negotiating the terms for withdrawal from the EU, it is likely that the MPC will do nothing to dampen growth prospects, (i.e. by raising Bank Rate), which will already be adversely impacted by the uncertainties of what form Brexit will eventually take.

Economic and interest rate forecasting remains difficult with so many external influences weighing on the UK.

The current economic outlook and structure of market interest rates and government debt yields have several key treasury management implications:

- Investment returns are likely to remain low during 2017/18 and beyond;

- Borrowing interest rates have been on a generally downward trend during most of 2016. Gilt yields have since risen sharply due to a rise in concerns around a ‘hard Brexit’, the fall in the value of sterling, and an increase in inflation expectations.

- There will remain a cost of carry to any new long-term borrowing that causes a temporary increase in cash balances as this position will, most likely, incur a revenue cost – the difference between borrowing costs and investment returns.

3.6 Debt rescheduling

As short term borrowing rates will be considerably cheaper than longer term fixed interest rates, there may be potential opportunities to generate savings by switching from long term debt to short term debt. However, these savings will need to be considered in the light of the current treasury position and the size of the cost of debt repayment (premiums incurred).

The reasons for any rescheduling to take place will include:

- the generation of cash savings and / or discounted cash flow savings;
- helping to fulfil the treasury strategy;
- enhance the balance of the portfolio (amend the maturity profile and/or the balance of volatility).

Consideration will also be given to identify if there is any residual potential for making savings by running down investment balances to repay debt prematurely as short term rates on investments are likely to be lower than rates paid on current debt.

All rescheduling and early repayment of debt will be reported to Cabinet, at the earliest meeting following its action.

4 Annual Investment Strategy

4.1 Investment policy

The Council's investment priorities will be security first, liquidity second and then return. The strategy generates a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which will also enable diversification and the avoidance of concentration risk.

In order to minimise the risk to investments, the Council clearly stipulates the minimum acceptable credit quality of counterparties for inclusion on the lending list.

The creditworthiness methodology used to create the counterparty list fully accounts for the ratings, watches and outlooks published by the three main ratings agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's) with a full understanding of what these reflect in the eyes of each agency. These are monitored on a real time basis with knowledge of any changes notified electronically to Dacorum as the agencies notify modifications.

The Council applies minimum acceptable credit criteria in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which also enables diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the Short Term and Long Term ratings.

Officers continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate.

The Council will engage with its advisors to monitor market pricing such as "credit default swaps" (CDS) and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings. This is fully integrated into the credit methodology provided by the advisors, Capita Asset Services in producing its colour codings which show the varying degrees of suggested creditworthiness.

Other information sources used will include the financial press, share price and other such information pertaining to the banking sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.

Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed in appendix 2 under the 'specified' and 'non-specified' investments categories.

4.2 Creditworthiness policy

Dacorum uses the creditworthiness service provided by Capita Asset Services. This service employs a modelling approach using credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies.

The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:

- credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies;
- CDS spreads to give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings;
- sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

This approach produces a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the suggested duration for investments. The Council will use counterparties within the following durational bands:

- Yellow 5 years
- Purple 2 years
- Blue 1 year (Nationalised or semi nationalised UK Banks only)
- Orange 1 year
- Red 6 months
- Green 100 days
- No colour not to be used

All credit ratings will be monitored weekly. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of Capita's creditworthiness service. If a downgrade results in the counterparty / investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, new investments will not be placed with the counterparty.

Sole reliance will not be placed on the use of this external service. In addition the Council will also use market data and market information, information on government support for banks and the credit ratings of that supporting government.

4.3 Country limits

The Section 151 Officer will determine approved counterparties from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA- from Fitch (or equivalent) as appropriate, with durations following the same colour coded criteria, details of which are set out in 4.2. Officers will remove counterparties from this list should ratings change in accordance with this policy, and counterparties will only be added with approval from the Section 151 Officer.

4.4 Investment strategy

In-house funds: Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e. rates for investments up to 12 months).

Investment returns expectations: Bank Rate is forecast to stay flat at 0.25% until quarter 2 2019 and not to rise above 0.75% by quarter 1 2020. Bank Rate forecasts for financial year ends (March) are:

- 2017/18 0.25%
- 2018/19 0.25%
- 2019/20 0.50%

The suggested budgeted investment earnings rates for returns on investments placed for periods up to 100 days during each financial year are as follows:

	Now
2017/18	0.25%
2018/19	0.25%
2019/20	0.50%
2020/21	0.75%
2021/22	1.00%
2022/23	1.50%
2023/24	1.75%
Later years	2.75%

Investment treasury indicator and limit: Total principal funds invested for greater than 364 days. These limits are set with regard to the Council's liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment, and are based on the availability of funds after each year-end.

The Council is asked to approve the treasury indicator and limit:

Maximum principal sums invested > 364 days			
£m	**2017/18**	**2018/19**	**2019/20**
Principal sums invested > 364 days	20% of portfolio	20% of portfolio	20% of portfolio

For its cash flow generated balances, the Council will seek to utilise its business reserve instant access and notice accounts, money market funds and short-dated deposits (overnight to 100 days) in order to benefit from the compounding of interest.

4.5 Investment risk benchmarking

These benchmarks are simple guides to minimise risk; so they may be breached from time to time, depending on movements in interest rates and counterparty criteria.

The purpose of the benchmark is that officers will monitor the position and amend the operational strategy to manage risk as conditions change. Any breach of the benchmarks will be reported to Cabinet, with supporting reasons in the mid-year and annual report.

Security - The Council's maximum security risk benchmark for the current portfolio, when compared to historic default tables is 0.02%.

Liquidity – in respect of this area the Council seeks to maintain:

- Maximum bank overdraft - £0.25m
- Liquid deposits of at least £5m available with a week's notice.
- Weighted average life benchmark is expected to be around 100 days

Yield - local measures of yield benchmarks for investments is to achieve internal returns above the 7 day LIBID rate.

4.6 External fund managers

The Council does not currently use fund managers. If deemed appropriate to use fund managers in the future, the decision will be passed through Cabinet for recommendation to Full Council.

Appendix 1: Economic Background (provided by Capita Asset Services)

UK

GDP growth is expected to have strengthened in 2016 with the latest Bank of England forecast for growth in 2016 as a whole is +2.2%.

The referendum vote for Brexit in June 2016 delivered an immediate shock fall in confidence indicators and business surveys at the beginning of August, which were interpreted by the Bank of England in its August Inflation Report as pointing to an impending sharp slowdown in the economy. However, the following monthly surveys, September showed an equally sharp recovery in confidence, so it is generally expected that the economy will post reasonably strong growth numbers through the second half of 2016 and also in 2017, albeit at a slower pace than in the first half of 2016.

The Monetary Policy Committee, (MPC), meeting of 4th August resulted in a package of measures that included a cut in Bank Rate from 0.50% to 0.25%, a renewal of quantitative easing, with £70bn made available for purchases of gilts and corporate bonds, and a £100bn tranche of cheap borrowing being made available for banks to use to lend to businesses and individuals.

The latest MPC decision included a forward view that Bank Rate could go either up or down depending on how economic data evolves in the coming months. Our central view remains that Bank Rate will remain unchanged at 0.25% until the first increase to 0.50% in quarter 2 2019. However, we would not, as yet, discount the risk of a cut in Bank Rate if economic growth were to take a significant dip downwards, though we think this is unlikely.

After a fairly flat three months leading up to October, retail sales in October surged at the strongest rate since September 2015 and were again strong in November.

The Chancellor has said he will do 'whatever is needed' i.e. to promote growth; there are two main options he can follow – fiscal policy e.g. cut taxes, increase investment allowances for businesses, and/or increase government expenditure on infrastructure, housing etc. This will mean that the PSBR deficit elimination timetable will need to slip further into the future as promoting growth, (and ultimately boosting tax revenues in the longer term), will be a more urgent priority.

The newly appointed Chancellor, Phillip Hammond, announced, in the aftermath of the referendum result and the formation of a new Conservative cabinet, that the target of achieving a budget surplus in 2020 would be eased in the Autumn Statement on 23 November. This was duly confirmed in the Statement which also included some increases in infrastructure spending.

What is clear is that consumer disposable income will come under pressure, as the latest employers' survey is forecasting median pay rises for the year ahead of only 1.1% at a time when inflation will be rising significantly higher than this. The CPI figure has been on an upward trend in 2016 and reached 1.2% in November. However, prices paid by factories for inputs rose to 13.2% though producer output prices were still lagging behind at 2.3% and core inflation was 1.4%, confirming the likely future upwards path.

Gilt yields, and consequently PWLB rates, have risen sharply since hitting a low point in mid-August. There has also been huge volatility during 2016 as a whole. The year started with 10 year gilt yields at 1.88%, fell to a low point of 0.53% on 12 August, and hit a new peak on the way up again of 1.55% on 15 November. Inflation expectations also rose sharply as a result of the continuing fall in the value of sterling.

House prices have been rising during 2016 at a modest pace but the pace of increase has slowed since the referendum; a downturn in prices could dampen consumer confidence and expenditure.

Brexit timetable and process

- March 2017: UK government notifies the European Council of its intention to leave under the Treaty on European Union Article 50.
- March 2019: two-year negotiation period on the terms of exit. This period can be extended with the agreement of all members i.e. not that likely.
- UK continues as an EU member during this two-year period with access to the single market and tariff free trade between the EU and UK.
- 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 may also exit without any such agreements.
- 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 exit from the EU: the UK parliament would repeal the 1972 European Communities Act.
- The UK will then no longer participate in matters reserved for EU members, such as changes to the EU's budget, voting allocations and policies.
- It is possible that some sort of agreement could be reached for a transitional time period for actually implementing Brexit after March 2019 so as to help exporters to adjust in both the EU and in the UK.

Appendix 2: Credit and Counterparty Risk Management

A variety of investment instruments will be used, subject to the credit quality of the institution, and depending on the type of investment made it will fall into one of the above categories.

The criteria, time limits and monetary limits applying to institutions or investment vehicles are:

Specified Investments: All such investments will be sterling denominated, with maturities up to maximum of 1 year, meeting the minimum 'high' quality criteria where applicable.

	*** Minimum 'High' Credit Criteria**	**Use**
Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility	--	In-house
Term deposits – UK Government (including other local authorities)	--	In-house
Term deposits – banks and building societies –Banks carrying a credit rating and the Cooperative Bank	See 4.2	In-house
UK Government Gilts	UK sovereign rating	In-house and Fund Managers
Money Market Funds	AAA	In-house and Fund Managers
Cash Fund Management	See 4.2	In-house and Fund Managers
Government Liquidity Funds	See 4.2	In-house and Fund Managers
Local Authority Mortgage Scheme Under this scheme the Council placed funds of £2M; £1M of which with Lloyds Banking Group and £1M with Leeds Building Society for a period of 5 years. This is classified as being as service investment, rather than a treasury management investment, and is therefore outside of the specified/ non-specified categories.		

Term deposits with nationalised banks and banks and building societies

	*** Minimum Credit Criteria**	**Use**	***** Max % of total investments**	**Max. maturity period**
UK part nationalised banks	See Capita's Creditworthy list	In-house	**12.5M per institution**	**12 months**

Non-specified Investments: These are any investments which do not meet the specified investment criteria. A maximum of the lower of 30%of the portfolio, or £20m will be held in aggregate in non-specified investment

	*** Minimum Credit Criteria**	**Use**	**Max. maturity period**
Term deposits – UK Government and Other Local Authorities	--	In-house	5 years
Term deposits – banks and building societies	See 4.2	In-house	5 years
Certificates of deposit issued by banks and building societies covered by UK Government (explicit) guarantee	UK sovereign rating	In-house	5 years
Certificates of deposit issued by banks and building societies	See 4.2	In-house	5 years
Fixed term deposits with variable rate and variable maturities -Callable deposits -Callable range trade accounts	See 4.2	In-house and Fund Managers	5 years
Short term funds	See 4.2	In-house and Fund Managers	5 years
Cash Fund Management	See 4.2	In-house and Fund Managers	5 years
Gilt Funds, Bond Funds and Government Liquidity Funds	See 4.2	In-house and Fund Managers	5 years
UK Government Gilts	UK sovereign rating	In-house and Fund Managers	10 years
Bonds issued by multilateral development banks	AAA	In-house and Fund Managers	10 years
Corporate Bonds	See 4.2	In-house and Fund Managers	10 years

Appendix 3: Treasury management roles and scheme of delegation

Full Council

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

Cabinet

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

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.
- approving the selection of external service providers and agreeing terms of appointment.
- approving the use of non-UK counterparties as appropriate