

**MEETING: 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2012**

---

**SUBJECT: TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2012/2013, INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL 'TREASURY MANAGEMENT' INDICATORS FOR 2012/2013 TO 2014/2015**

**REPORT OF THE FINANCE OFFICER**

---

**1. Purpose of the Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Authority on the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy (including both borrowing and investment strategies) proposed for 2012/2013 and to note the Prudential 'Treasury Management' Indicators for 2012/2013 to 2014/2015 and to provide comments to the Authority on the proposed policy and indicators where appropriate.

**2. Description of Decision**

2.1 The Authority is requested to approve:

- Annual Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2012/2013 (including specifically the Annual Borrowing and Investment Strategies);
- Prudential 'Treasury Management' Indicators for 2012/2013 to 2014/2015.

**3. Treasury Management**

3.1 Treasury management is defined as "the management of the authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

The Treasury Management function is a specialist service that is carried out by Sunderland City Council on behalf of the Authority.

**3.2 Statutory requirements**

The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) and supporting regulations requires the Authority to 'have regard to' the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to set Prudential and Treasury Management indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Authority's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable, these are set out in more detail in Appendix 1.

The Act also requires the Authority to adopt a Treasury Management Policy Statement (detailed in Appendix 2) and to set out its Treasury Management

Strategy comprising the Authority's strategy for borrowing and the Authority's policies for managing its investments and giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments (Appendix 3).

The Department of Communities and Local Government issued revised investment guidance which came into effect from 1 April 2010 and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has updated its Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice in November 2011. Revisions made in the Code of Practice were largely regulatory updates to reflect developments resulting from the Localism Act 2011 and in particular changes to the way that local authority housing finance will operate. The Authority has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice and there are no major changes required to Treasury Management practices and arrangements that the Authority already has in place.

### **3.3 CIPFA Code of Practice requirements**

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised November 2009) was adopted by the Authority on 22nd March 2010.

The primary requirements of the Code are as follows:

1. The Authority will create and maintain, as the cornerstones 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 (TMP's), 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.

The content of the policy statement (is detailed in Appendix 2) and the TMP's follow the recommendations contained in Sections 6 and 7 of the Code, subject only to amendment where necessary to reflect the particular circumstances of the Authority. Such amendments which are minor in nature do not result in the Authority deviating from the Code's key principles however.

2. The Authority will receive reports on treasury management policies, practices and activities, including, as a minimum, an annual strategy and plan in advance of the year, a mid-year review and an annual report after its close, in the form prescribed in its TMP's.
3. The Authority delegates responsibility for the implementation and regular monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices to this Committee, and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Finance Officer, who acts in accordance with the organisation's Policy Statement, TMPs and CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

4. The Authority has previously nominated the Governance Committee to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies.

### **Treasury Management Strategy for 2012/2013**

- 3.4 The Treasury Management Strategy comprises a Borrowing and an Investment Strategy. These set out the Authority's policies for managing its borrowing and investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of investments.
- 3.5 There are no major changes being proposed to the overall Treasury Management Strategy in 2012/2013 which maintains the prudent approach adopted by the Authority in previous years. Particular areas that inform the strategy include the extent of potential borrowing included in the Authority's capital programme, the availability of borrowing, and the current and forecast world and UK economic position, in particular forecasts relating to interest rates and security of investments.
- 3.6 The proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2012/2013 is set out in Appendix 3 and is based upon the views of the Finance Officer, supplemented with market data, market information and leading market forecasts provided by the Authority's treasury adviser, Sector Treasury Services.
- 3.7 The strategy is subject to regular review to ensure compliance to the agreed treasury management strategy and that the strategy adapts to changing financial markets as appropriate. It is pleasing to note that the current average rate of borrowing at 3.42% is low in comparison with other local authorities whilst the current rate earned on investments is higher than the overall benchmark rate. In addition debt rescheduling undertaken by the lead authority, Sunderland City Council, has achieved significant revenue savings in interest charges and discounts and these interest savings have been secured for many years to come. Market conditions are also under constant review so that the Authority can take a view on the optimum time to carry out further borrowing or debt rescheduling as appropriate.

### **4. Suggested Reason for Decision**

- 4.1 To comply with statutory requirements.

### **5. Alternative Options**

- 5.1 No alternatives are submitted for the Authority's consideration

### **Background Papers**

Various Notifications regarding Capital Resources for 2012/2013  
Sector City Watch (Monthly)  
Local Government Act 2003  
The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities

Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (2011 Edition)  
Treasury Management in the Public services Guidance Notes for Local Authorities including Police Authorities and Fire Authorities (2011 Edition)  
Localism Act 2011

**Prudential ‘Treasury Management’ Indicators 2012/2013 to 2014/2015**

The indicators below relate to Treasury Management (all indicators relating to capital financing have been removed for clarity and can be found in the Capital Programme 2012/2013 including Prudential Indicators for 2012/2013 to 2014/2015 report made to the Authority on 21st February 2012.

- P5 In respect of its external debt, it is recommended that the Authority approves the following authorised limits for its total external debt, gross of investments for the next three financial years, and agrees the continuation of the previously agreed limit for the current year since no change to this is necessary. These limits separately identify borrowing from other long-term liabilities such as PFI schemes and finance leases. The Authority is asked to approve these limits and to delegate authority to the Finance Officer, within the total limit for any individual year, to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long term liabilities, in accordance with option appraisal and best value for the authority. Any such changes made will be reported to the Authority at the next meetings following the change.

	<b>Authorised Limit for External Debt</b>			
	<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Borrowing	25,622	30,525	30,543	30,804
Other long term liabilities	20,741	25,115	25,224	25,284
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,363</b>	<b>55,640</b>	<b>55,767</b>	<b>56,088</b>

The Finance Officer reports that these authorised limits are consistent with the Authority’s current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in this report for capital expenditure and financing, and with its approved treasury management policy statement and practices. The Finance Officer also confirms that they are based on the estimate of most likely, prudent, but not worst case scenario, with, in addition, sufficient headroom over and above this to allow for operational management, for example unusual cash movements. Risk analysis and risk management strategies have been taken into account, as have plans for capital expenditure, estimates of the Capital Financing Requirement and estimates of cash flow requirements for all purposes.

In taking its decisions on the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2012/2013, the Authority is asked to note that the authorised limit determined for 2012/2013 of £55.640 million, (see above), will be the statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

- P6 The Authority is also asked to approve the following operational boundary for external debt for the same time period and agrees the continuation of the

previously agreed limit for the current year since no change to this is necessary. The proposed operational boundary for external debt is based on the same estimates as the authorised limit, but reflects directly the estimate of the most likely, prudent but not worst case scenario level, without the additional headroom included within the authorised limit to allow for example for unusual cash movements, and equates to the maximum of external debt projected by this estimate. The operational boundary represents a key management tool for in year monitoring. Within the operational boundary, figures for borrowing and other long-term liabilities are separately identified. The Authority is also asked to delegate authority to the Finance Officer, within the total operational boundary for any individual year, to effect movement between the separately agreed figures for borrowing and other long term liabilities, similar to the authorised limit set out above.

The operational boundary limit for 2012/2013 will be £50.640 million and will be closely monitored and a report will be made to the Authority if it is exceeded at any point. It is not anticipated that there will be any issues in terms of remaining within the operational limit for 2012/2013.

	<b>Operational boundary for external debt</b>			
	<b>Amended</b>			
	<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Borrowing	20,622	25,525	25,543	25,804
Other long term liabilities	22,741	25,115	25,224	25,284
<b>Total</b>	<b>43,363</b>	<b>50,640</b>	<b>50,767</b>	<b>51,088</b>

P7 The Authority's actual external debt at 31 March 2011 was £16.945 million (calculated on the basis that all Authority debt is classed as external), comprising £16.889 million borrowing and £0.056 million in respect of other long term liabilities.

The Authority includes an element for long term liabilities relating to PFI schemes and finance leases in its calculation of the operational and authorised boundaries to allow flexibility over future financing. It should be noted that actual external debt is not directly comparable to the authorised limit and operational boundary, since the actual external debt reflects the position at one point in time and allowances need to be made for cash flow variations.

P9 Sunderland City Council, on the Authority's behalf, has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services. The revised Code was adopted by the Fire and Rescue Authority on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010.

The objective of the Code is to provide a framework for local authority capital finance that will ensure for individual local authorities that:

- (a) capital expenditure plans are affordable;

- (b) all external borrowing and other long term liabilities are within prudent and sustainable levels;
- (c) treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with professional good practice;

and that in taking decisions in relation to (a) to (c) above the local authority is

- (d) accountable, by providing a clear and transparent framework.

Further, the framework established by the Code should be consistent with and support:

- (e) local strategic planning;
- (f) local asset management planning;
- (g) proper option appraisal.

In exceptional circumstances the objective of the Code is to provide a framework that will demonstrate that there is a danger of not ensuring the above, so that the Authority can take timely remedial action.

- P10 It is recommended that the Authority also adopts the proposed lead authority's upper limit on its fixed interest rate exposures of £130 million in 2012/2013, £190 million in 2013/2014 and £200 million in 2014/2015.
- P11 It is further recommended that the Authority also adopts the proposed lead authority's upper limit on its variable interest rate exposures of £60 million in 2012/2013, £50 million in 2013/2014 and £60 million in 2014/2015.
- P12 It is recommended that the upper and lower limits are set in total for the maturity structure of borrowings as follows:

Amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period expressed as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate at the start of the period:

	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	50%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	60%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	80%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	100%	0%
10 years and within 20 years	100%	0%
20 years and within 30 years	100%	0%
30 years and within 40 years	100%	0%
40 years and within 50 years	100%	0%
over 50 years	100%	0%

- P13 A maximum maturity limit of £75 million is set for each financial year (2012/2013, 2013/2014 and 2014/2015) for long term investments, (those



over 364 days), made by the authority. This gives additional flexibility in undertaking the Treasury Management function. Should any external fund managers be appointed during the year, these limits will be apportioned accordingly. The type of investments to be allowed are detailed in the Annual Investment Strategy (Appendix 3).



**Treasury Management Policy Statement**

In line with CIPFA recommendations, on the 22nd March 2010 the Authority adopted the following Treasury Management Policy Statement, which defines the policies and objectives of its treasury management activities:

- The Authority defines its treasury management activities as: The management of the Authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks".
- The Authority 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.
- The Authority 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 Authority has an agreed Borrowing and Investment Strategy, the high level policies of which are as follows:

The basis of the agreed Borrowing Strategy is to:

- continuously monitor prevailing interest rates and forecasts;
- secure long-term funds to meet the Authority's future borrowing requirement when market conditions are favourable;
- use a benchmark financing rate of 4.50% for long term borrowing (i.e. all borrowing for a period of one year or more);
- take advantage of debt rescheduling opportunities, as appropriate.

The general policy objective for the Authority in considering potential investments is the prudent investment of its treasury balances.

- the Authority's investment priorities in order of importance are:
  - 1) The security of capital
  - 2) The liquidity of its investments and then,
  - 3) The Authority aims to achieve the optimum yield on its investments but this is commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity
- the Authority has a detailed Lending List and criteria must be observed when placing funds – these are determined using expert TM advice, view of money market conditions and using detailed rating agency information as well as using our own market intelligence.

- Limits are also placed on the amounts that can be invested with individual and grouped financial institutions based on the Lending List and detailed criteria

The Authority needs to re-affirm its commitment to the above Treasury Management Policy Statement each year.

**Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2012/2013****1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Local Government Act 2003 and subsequent guidance requires the Authority to set out its Treasury Management Strategy for Borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy. This sets out the Authority's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

The suggested strategy for 2012/2013 is set out below and is based upon the Finance Officer's views on interest rates, supplemented with leading market forecasts and other financial data available and also advice provided by the Authority's treasury adviser, Sector Treasury Services.

- 1.2 The treasury management strategy covers:

**A. Borrowing Policy and Strategy**

- treasury limits for 2012/2013 to 2014/2015
- the past and current treasury management position
- the borrowing requirement 2012/2013
- prudential and treasury management indicators for 2012/2013 to 2014/2015
- prospects for interest rates
- the borrowing strategy
- policy on borrowing in advance of need
- debt rescheduling

**B. Annual Investment Policy and Strategy**

- Investment policy and objectives
- the investment strategy
- investment types
- investments defined as capital expenditure
- investment limits
- provision for credit related losses
- creditworthiness policy
- monitoring of credit ratings
- past performance and current position
- outlook and proposed investment strategy
- external fund managers
- policy on use of external service providers

**2. Borrowing Policy and Strategy****2.1 Treasury Limits for 2012/2013 to 2014/2015**

It is a statutory duty under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003 and supporting regulations, for the Authority to determine and keep under review how much it can afford to borrow. The amount so determined is termed the

“Affordable Borrowing Limit”. In England and Wales the Authorised Limit represents the legislative limit specified in the Act.

The Authority must have regard to the Prudential Code when setting the Authorised Limit, which essentially requires it to ensure that total capital investment remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, that the impact upon its future council tax is ‘acceptable’.

Whilst termed an “Affordable Borrowing Limit”, the capital plans to be considered for inclusion incorporate financing by both external borrowing and other forms of liability, such as credit arrangements. The Authorised Limit is set, on a rolling basis, for the forthcoming financial year and two successive financial years and details can be found in Appendix 1 (P5) of this report. The Authority is asked to approve these limits and to delegate authority to the Finance Officer, within the total limit for any individual year, to action movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long term liabilities where this would be appropriate. Any such changes made will be reported to the Authority at their next meeting following the change.

Also, the Authority is asked to approve the Operational Boundary Limits which are included in the Prudential Indicators in Appendix 1 (P6). This operational boundary represents a key management tool for in year monitoring. Within the operational boundary, figures for borrowing and other long-term liabilities are separately identified and the Authority is also asked to delegate authority to the Finance Officer, within the total operational boundary for any individual year, to action movement between the separately agreed figures for borrowing and other long-term liabilities, in a similar fashion to the authorised limit.

## **2.2 The Past and Current Treasury Management Position**

### **2.2.1 Interest Rates 2011/2012**

PWLB Interest rates gradually fell during the first half of 2011/2012 and were at their lowest level in early October 2011. Rates have increased slightly since but have generally remained fairly static with only minor variations.

The interest rates offered by the PWLB to local authorities with a Housing Revenue Account, will be temporarily reduced in March 2012. The reduced rate will only apply to borrowing to allow local authorities to leave the existing subsidy system for council housing finance to allow them to be ‘self financing’. As the Authority does not have any housing stock it is unaffected by these changes in PWLB interest rates.

<b>Loan Type</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 %</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 %</b>	<b>Difference %</b>
7 Day Notice	0.40	0.30	0.10
1 Month	0.50	0.63	0.15
PWLB – 1 Year	1.89	1.19	0.70
5 Years	3.61	1.97	1.64
10 Years	4.75	3.03	1.72
25 Years	5.35	3.99	1.36
50 Years	5.29	4.05	1.24

The Bank of England Base Rate has remained at 0.50% since 5th March 2009 with little sign that it will be raised in the short term.

### 2.2.2 Long Term Borrowing 2011/2012

The Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Statement for 2011/2012 included a benchmark rate of 5.5% for all long-term borrowing.

The Authority's strategy for 2011/2012 is to adopt a pragmatic approach and to respond to any changing circumstances to seek to secure benefit for the Authority.

So far in 2011/2012, Sunderland City Council has taken out one new loan, detailed in the table below. No debt rescheduling has been undertaken as rates have not been considered sufficiently favourable. The new borrowing, at one of the lowest rate of interest for 50 year loans since the Coalition Government increased rates in October 2010, will support borrowing requirements within the lead authority's capital programme. The loan, at 3.99%, was 1.51% below the 5.50% target set for long term borrowing and represents a lower cost of borrowing going forward. Any loan of this duration especially below the 4% level is regarded as an opportune time to acquire longer term debt as levels historically are rarely seen below this rate.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lender</b>	<b>Amount £m</b>	<b>Period (Years)</b>	<b>Rate %</b>	<b>Benchmark Rate %</b>	<b>Margin %</b>
20/01/2012	PWLB	10.0	50	3.99	5.50	(1.51)
<b>Total</b>		<b>10.0</b>				

There are currently nine market, Lender's Option / Borrower's Option (LOBO's), loans totalling £39.5 million. The lender has the option to alter the rate on these loans at set intervals and these can either be accepted at the new rate or be repaid without penalty. The following table shows the LOBO's that were subject to a potential rollover in this financial year but have not been replaced as the option was not exercised.

Roll Over Dates	Lender	Amount £m	Rate %	Roll Over Periods
21/04/2011 and 21/10/2011	Barclays	5.0	4.50	Every 6 months
10/12/2011	Barclays	9.5	4.37	every 3 years
27/01/2012	Dexia	5.0	4.32	every 3 years
<b>Total</b>		<b>19.5</b>		

### 2.2.3 Current Portfolio Position

The treasury portfolio position for Sunderland City Council which the Fire and Rescue Authority forms part of, at 31st December 2011 comprised:

		Principal (£m)	Total (£m)	Average Rate (%)
<b>Borrowing</b>				
Fixed Rate Funding	PWLB	138.0		
	Market (LOBO's)	24.5		
	Other	0.3	162.8	3.83
Variable Rate Funding	PWLB	0.0		
	Market (LOBO's)	15.0		
	Temporary/			
	Other	30.0	45.0	1.98
<b>Total Borrowing</b>			<b>207.8</b>	<b>3.42</b>
<b>Total Investments</b>	In House		<b>195.0</b>	<b>1.63</b>
<b>Net Position</b>			<b>(12.8)</b>	

Currently there is a difference between gross debt and net debt of £12.777 million, however this position is expected to change over the next few years as both the lead authority and the Authority will have to manage their finances with significantly less government grant in both capital and revenue funding. This could impact in the form of increased borrowing and reductions to reserves, with the result that the net borrowing position will increase.

There are a number of risks and benefits associated with having both a large amount of debt whilst at the same time having a considerable amount of investments.

Benefits of having a high level of investments are;

- § liquidity risk – having a large amount of investments means that the Authority is at less of a risk should money markets become restricted or borrowing less generally available, this mitigates against liquidity risk;

- § interest is received on investments which helps the Authority to address its Strategic Priorities;
- § the Authority has greater freedom in the timing of its borrowing as it can afford to wait until the timing is right rather than be subject to the need to borrow at a time when interest rates are not advantageous.

Risks associated with holding a high level of investments are;

- § the Counterparty risk – institutions cannot repay the Authority investment placed with them;
- § interest rate risk – the rate of interest earned on the investments will be less than that paid on debt, thus causing a loss to the Authority.

The Authority has mitigated these risks by formulating its Treasury Management Investment Strategy and by detailed monitoring of counterparties through its borrowing and investment strategies and treasury management working practices and procedures.

### 2.3 Borrowing Requirement 2012/2013

The borrowing requirement for Sunderland City Council which the Fire and Rescue Authority also forms part of, is as follows:

		2012/13 £m	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m
1.	Capital Borrowing (potential)	49.8	47.6	22.3
2.	Replacement borrowing (PWLB)	5.0	5.0	10.0
3.	Replacement borrowing (Market)	0.0	0.0	0.0
4.	Market LOBO replacement (potential)	20.0	10.0	19.5
<b>TOTAL – KNOWN (2+3)</b>		<b>0.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>
<b>TOTAL – POTENTIAL (1+4)</b>		<b>67.2</b>	<b>69.8</b>	<b>57.6</b>

### 2.4 Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators for 2012/2013 – 2014/2015

Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators (as set out in Appendix 1, P5 - P7 and P9 – P13) are a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code and are relevant for the purposes of setting an integrated treasury management strategy and to ensure that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice.

The Authority is also required to indicate if it has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. The original 2001 Code was adopted on 20th November 2002 and the revised 2009 Code was adopted by the Authority on 22nd March 2010. The Code has been revised in November 2011 and the Authority must re-affirm its full adherence to the code annually (as set out in Appendix 2).

### 2.5 Prospects for Interest Rates

The Authority's treasury advisors are Sector Treasury Services and part of their service is to assist the Authority to formulate a view on interest rates. A



number of current City forecasts for short term (Bank Rate) and longer fixed interest rates are set out in Appendix 4. The following gives the Sector Treasury Services Bank Rate forecast for the next 4 financial year ends (March):

2012	0.50%
2013	0.50%
2014	1.25%
2015	2.50%

There are downside risks to these forecasts (i.e. start of increases in Bank Rate is delayed even further) if economic growth remains weaker for longer than expected. However, should the pace of growth pick up more sharply than expected there could be upside risk, particularly if Bank of England inflation forecasts for two years ahead exceed the Bank of England's 2% target rate. A detailed view of the current economic background is contained within Appendix 5 to this report for information.

## 2.6 Borrowing Strategy

### 2.6.1 Borrowing rates

The Sector forecast in respect of interest rates for loans charged by the PWLB is as follows: -

Annual Average %	Bank Rate	PWLB Borrowing Rates		
		5 year	25 year	50 year
March 2012	0.50	2.30	4.20	4.30
June 2012	0.50	2.30	4.20	4.30
Sept 2012	0.50	2.30	4.30	4.40
Dec 2012	0.50	2.40	4.30	4.40
March 2013	0.50	2.50	4.40	4.50
June 2013	0.50	2.60	4.50	4.60
Sept 2013	0.75	2.70	4.60	4.70
Dec 2013	1.00	2.80	4.70	4.80
March 2014	1.25	2.90	4.80	4.90
June 2014	1.50	3.10	4.90	5.00

A more detailed forecast from Sector is included in Appendix 4.

The main sensitivities of the forecast are likely to be;

- if it were felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper rise in long and short term rates than that currently forecast, perhaps arising from a greater than expected increase in world economic activity or a sudden increase in inflation risks, then the portfolio position will be re-appraised with the likely action that fixed rate borrowing will be undertaken whilst interest rates are still relatively cheap.
- if it were felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp fall in long and short term rates, e.g. due to a marked increase of risks around a relapse into recession or, a risk of deflation, then long term borrowing

will be postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short term borrowing will be considered.

In conjunction with the Authority's treasury advisers, the Authority will monitor both the prevailing interest rates and the market forecasts.

With long-term interest rate forecasts set to remain around their current levels the Finance Officer, taking into account the advice of the Authority's treasury adviser considers a benchmark financing rate of 4.50% for any further long-term borrowing for 2012/2013 to be appropriate.

Consideration will be given to various options, including utilising some investment balances to fund the borrowing requirement in 2012/2013. The need to adapt to changing circumstances and revisions to profiling of capital expenditure is required, and flexibility needs to be retained to adapt to any changes that may occur.

The Finance Officer, taking advice from the Authority's treasury advisers will continue to monitor rates closely, and whilst implementing the borrowing strategy, will adopt a pragmatic approach in identifying the low points in the interest rate cycle at which to borrow.

## **2.7 Policy on borrowing in advance of need**

The Authority will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be considered carefully to ensure value for money can be demonstrated and that the Authority can ensure the security of such funds.

Risks associated with any borrowing in advance of activity will be subject to prior appraisal and borrowing undertaken will be reported to Authority as part of agreed treasury management reporting arrangements.

## **2.8 Debt Rescheduling**

The reasons for any rescheduling of debt will include:

- the generation of cash savings at minimum risk;
- in order to help fulfil the Treasury Management Strategy; and
- in order to enhance the balance of the long-term portfolio (by amending the maturity profile and/or the balance of volatility).

In previous years, debt rescheduling has achieved significant savings in interest charges and discounts and these interest savings have been secured for many years to come. For example, since November 2008 the lead authority has rescheduled debt worth £59.5 million with an ongoing reduction in interest costs of just under £1.0 million per annum. The introduction by the PWLB in 2007 of a spread between the rates applied to new borrowing and repayment of debt, which has now been compounded since 20 October 2010 by a considerable further widening of the difference between new borrowing and repayment rates, has meant that PWLB debt

restructuring is much less attractive than it was before both of these measures were introduced. Consideration will also be given to other options where interest savings may be achievable by using LOBO (Lenders Option Borrowers Option) loans, and / or other market loans, in rescheduling exercises rather than solely using PWLB borrowing as the source of replacement financing but this would only be the case where this would represent best value to the Authority.

The latest interest rate projections for 2012/2013 show short term borrowing rates will be considerably cheaper than longer term rates and as such there may be potential for some 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 size of premiums incurred, their short term nature, and the likely cost of refinancing those short term loans, once they mature, compared to the current rates of longer term debt in the existing debt portfolio.

The Authority is keeping a watching brief on market conditions in order to secure further debt rescheduling when, and if, appropriate opportunities arise. The timing of all borrowing and investment decisions inevitably includes an element of risk, as those decisions are based upon expectations of future interest rates. The policy to date has been very firmly one of risk spread and this prudent policy will be continued.

Any rescheduling undertaken will be reported to the Authority, as part of the agreed treasury management reporting procedure.

### **3. Annual Investment Policy and Strategy**

#### **3.1 Investment Policy and Objectives**

When considering its investment policy and objectives, the Authority has taken regard to the Department of Communities and Local Government's (CLG) Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance") and the CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code").

The Authority's investment objectives are: -

- (a) the security of capital, and
- (b) the liquidity of its investments.

The Authority also aims to achieve the optimum return on its investments but commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. The risk appetite of the Authority is regarded as low in order to give priority to security of its investments.

The borrowing of monies purely to invest or onward-lend and make a return is unlawful and the Authority will not engage in such activity.

### **3.2 Investment Strategy**

This Strategy sets out:

- the procedures for determining the use of each class of investment (advantages and associated risk), particularly if the investment falls under the category of “non-specified investments”;
- the maximum periods for which funds may be prudently committed in each class of investment;
- the amount or percentage limit to be invested in each class of investment;
- whether the investment instrument is to be used by the lead authority’s in-house officers and/or by the appointed external fund managers, (if used); and, if non-specified investments are to be used in-house, whether prior professional advice is to be sought from the Authority’s treasury advisers;
- the minimum amount to be held in short-term investments (i.e. an investment which the Authority may require to be repaid or redeemed within 12 months of making the investment).

### **3.3 Investment Types**

The Authority is allowed to invest in two types of investment, namely Specified Investments and Non-specified Investments.

Specified Investments are those investments that are for a period of less than one year, are not classed as capital expenditure, and are placed with high credit rated counterparties.

Non-specified Investments are any investments which are not classified as specified investments. As the Authority only uses high credit rated counterparties this means in effect that any investments placed with those counterparties for a period of one year or more will be classed as Non-specified Investments. The Authority will not invest in any type of investment that will be classed as capital expenditure (see 3.4 below).

The type of investments to be used by the in-house team will be limited to term deposits, interest bearing accounts, and Money Market Funds, treasury bills and gilt edged securities and will follow the criteria as set out in Appendix 6.

### **3.4 Investments Defined as Capital Expenditure**

The acquisition of share capital or loan capital in any body corporate is defined as capital expenditure under Section 16(2) of the Local Government Act 2003. Such investments have to be funded out of capital or revenue resources and are classified as ‘non-specified investments’.

A loan or grant by this Authority to another body for capital expenditure by that body is also deemed by regulation to be capital expenditure by the Authority. It is therefore important for the Authority to clearly identify if the loan has been made for policy reasons or if it is an investment for treasury

management purposes. The latter will be governed by the framework set by the Authority for 'specified' and 'non-specified' investments.

The Authority will not use (or allow any external fund managers it may appoint to use) any investment which will be deemed as capital expenditure.

### **3.5 Investment Limits**

One of the recommendations of the Code is that local authorities should set limits for the amounts of investments that can be placed with institutions by country, sector and group. These limits are applied in the lead authority's Counterparty criteria set out in Appendix 6.

The minimum amount of overall investments that will be held in short-term investments (less than one year) is £50 million. As the lead authority has decided to restrict most of its investments to term deposits, it will maintain liquidity by having a minimum of 30% of these short-term investments maturing within 6 months.

A maximum limit of £75 million is to be set for in-house non-specified investments over 364 days up to a maximum period of 2 years. This amount has been calculated by reference to the total cash flows available and projected, including the potential use of earmarked reserves. The Finance Officer will monitor long-term investment rates and identify any investment opportunities if market conditions change.

### **3.6 Provisions for Credit Related Losses**

If any of the investments appear at risk of loss due to default, (i.e. a credit-related loss, and not one resulting from a fall in price due to movements in interest rates), then the lead authority will make revenue provision of an appropriate amount in accordance with proper accounting practice or any prevailing government regulations, if applicable. This position has not occurred and the lead authority mitigates this risk with its prudent investment policy.

### **3.7 Creditworthiness policy**

The creditworthiness policy adopted by the lead authority takes into account not only the credit ratings issued by all three credit rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's), but also, available market data and intelligence such as Credit Default Swap levels and share prices, the level of government support to financial institutions and advice from its Treasury Management advisors.

Set out in Appendix 6 is the detailed criteria that will be used, subject to approval, in determining the level of investments that can be invested with each counterparty or institution. Where a counterparty is rated differently by any of the 3 rating agencies, the lowest rating will be used to determine the level of investment.

### 3.8 Monitoring of Credit Ratings

- All credit ratings are monitored on a daily basis. The Authority has access to all three credit ratings agencies and is alerted to changes through its use of the Sector Treasury Services credit worthiness service.
- If a counterparty's rating is downgraded with the result that it no longer meets the Authority's minimum criteria, the Authority will cease to place funds with that counterparty. The Authority will also immediately inform its external fund manager(s), if used, to cease placing funds with that counterparty.
- If a counterparty's rating is downgraded with the result that, their rating is still sufficient for the counterparty to remain on the Approved Lending List, then the counterparty's authorised investment limit will be reviewed accordingly. A downgraded credit rating may result in the lowering of the counterparty's investment limit and vice versa. The Authority will also immediately inform its external fund manager(s), if used, of any such change(s).

Should fund managers be employed by the Authority, the Authority will establish with its fund manager(s) their credit criteria and the frequency of their monitoring of credit ratings so as to be satisfied as to their adherence to the Authority's policy.

The rating agencies have reaffirmed the UK's AAA sovereign rating. They have, though, warned that this could be reviewed if Government policy were to change, or was seen to be failing to achieve its desired outcome. Should the UK Government AAA sovereign rating be withdrawn the Authority's Investment Strategy and Lending List criteria will be reviewed and any changes necessary will be reported to the Authority.

### 3.9 Past Performance and Current Position

During 2011/2012 the Authority did not employ any external fund managers, all funds being managed by the in-house team. The performance of the fund managed by Sunderland City Council's in-house team is shown below and compares this with the relevant benchmarks and performance from the previous year:

	<b>2010/11 Return %</b>	<b>2010/11 Benchmark %</b>	<b>2011/12 Return %</b>	<b>2011/12 Benchmark %</b>
			<b>Year to date</b>	<b>Year to date</b>
Performance	0.36	0.36	0.80	0.37

During 2012/2013 the Authority will continue to review the optimum arrangements for the investment of its funds whilst fully observing the investment strategy in place. The Authority uses the 7 day London Interbank Bid (LIBID) rate as a benchmark for its investments.



As a result the increased rate of return achieved on investments held by the Authority, there is additional interest of £0.112 million for the year which has already been included in the 2011/2012 budget. The improved rate is expected to be maintained for 2012/2013.

### **3.10 Outlook and Proposed Investment Strategy**

Based on its cash flow forecasts, the Authority together with the City Council anticipates its fund balances in 2012/2013 are likely to range between £120 million and £270 million. This represents a cautious approach and provides for funding being received in excess of the level budgeted for, and also for unexpected and unplanned levels of capital underspending in the year or re-profiling of spend into future years. In 2012/2013, with short-term interest rates forecast to be materially below long-term rates, it is possible that some investment balances may be used to fund some long-term borrowing or used for debt rescheduling. Such funding is wholly dependent upon market conditions and will be assessed and reported to the Authority if and when the appropriate conditions arise.

The Authority is not committed to any investments, which are due to commence in 2012/2013, (i.e. it has not agreed any forward deals).

Activities likely to have a significant effect on investment balances are:

- Capital expenditure during the financial year, (dependent upon timing), will affect cash flow and short term investment balances;
- Any re-profiling of capital expenditure from, and to, other financial years will also affect cash flow, (no re-profiling has been taken into account in current estimates);
- Any unexpected capital receipts or income;
- Timing of new long-term borrowing to fund capital expenditure;
- Possible funding of long-term borrowing from investment balances (dependent upon appropriate market conditions).

The Finance Officer, in conjunction with the Authority's treasury adviser Sector Treasury Services, and taking into account the minimum amount to be maintained in short-term investments, will continue to monitor investment rates closely and to identify any appropriate investment opportunities that may arise.

It is proposed that delegated authority continues to be given to the Finance Officer to vary the Lending List Criteria and Lending List itself should circumstances dictate, on the basis that changes be reported to the Authority retrospectively, in accordance with normal Treasury Management reporting procedures.

### **3.11 External fund managers**

At present the lead authority does not use external fund managers.

Should this position arise in the future then the lead authority will appoint the external fund manager/s and they will have to agree to strict investment



limits and investment criteria. These external fund managers will work to the following parameters:

- The institutions on the Approved Lending list of the external manager must correspond to those agreed with the lead authority (i.e. only institutions on the Approved Lending List to be included as shown in Appendix 7);
- they will be allowed to invest in term deposits, Certificates of Deposit (CD's) and government gilt securities;
- An investment limit of £3 million per institution (per manager);
- A maximum limit of 50% fund exposure to government gilts;
- A maximum proportion of the fund invested in instruments carrying rates of interest for periods longer than 364 days shall not exceed 50%. Again, it is proposed to only recommend the use of fixed term deposits up to a maximum of 2 years.

### **3.12 Policy on the use of external service providers**

The Authority uses Sector as its external treasury management advisers. The Authority recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the Authority at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers.

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

## **4. Scheme of delegation**

- 4.1 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement has been prepared in accordance with the revised Code. Accordingly, the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) is approved annually by the Authority and the Authority now receive, as a minimum, a mid-year TMS report and an annual Treasury Management outturn report for the previous year by no later than the 30th September of the following year. In addition quarterly reports are made to the Authority and the Governance Committee and monitoring reports are reviewed by members in both executive and scrutiny functions respectively. The aim of these reporting arrangements is to ensure that those with ultimate responsibility for the treasury management function appreciate fully the implications of treasury management policies and activities, and that those implementing policies and executing transactions have properly fulfilled their responsibilities with regard to delegation and reporting.

The Authority adopted the following reporting arrangements in accordance with the requirements of the Code: -

<b>Area of Responsibility</b>	<b>Authority/ Committee/ Officer</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Treasury Management Policy Statement (revised)	Full Authority	Reaffirmed annually and updated as appropriate
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy	Full Authority	Annually before the start of the year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy – mid year report	Full Authority	Mid year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy – updates or revisions at other times	Full Authority	As appropriate
Annual Treasury Management Outturn Report	Full Authority	Annually by 30/9 after the end of the financial year
Treasury Management Monitoring Reports	Finance Officer	Monthly
Treasury Management Practices	Finance Officer	Annually
Scrutiny of Treasury Management Strategy	Governance Committee	Annually before Full Authority
Scrutiny of Treasury Management Performance	Governance Committee	Quarterly

## **5. The Treasury Management Role of the Section 151 Officer**

5.1 The Finance Officer is the Authority's Section 151 Officer and has specific delegated responsibility in the Authority's Constitution to manage the borrowing, financing, and investment requirements of the Authority in accordance with the Treasury Management Policy agreed by the Authority. This includes;

- 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.

## **Interest Rate Forecasts**

### **Introduction**

The data set out below shows a variety of forecasts published by Sector Treasury Services, Capital Economics (an independent forecasting consultancy) and UBS (which represents summarised figures drawn from the population of all major City banks and academic institutions).

The forecast within this strategy statement has been drawn from these diverse sources and officers' own views.

## 1. Individual Forecasts

Sector's Interest Rate View															
	Now	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Dec-12	Mar-13	Jun-13	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14	Jun-14	Sep-14	Dec-14	Mar-15
Sector's Bank Rate View	<b>0.50%</b>	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	1.00%	1.25%	1.50%	2.00%	2.25%	2.50%
3 Month LIBID	<b>0.87%</b>	0.70%	0.70%	0.70%	0.70%	0.70%	0.75%	0.80%	0.90%	1.20%	1.40%	1.60%	2.10%	2.40%	2.60%
6 Month LIBID	<b>1.16%</b>	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.10%	1.20%	1.40%	1.60%	1.80%	2.00%	2.50%	2.70%	2.90%
12 Month LIBID	<b>1.65%</b>	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.60%	1.70%	1.80%	1.90%	2.20%	2.40%	2.60%	3.10%	3.20%	3.30%
5yr PWLB Rate	<b>2.25%</b>	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%	2.60%	2.70%	2.80%	2.90%	3.10%	3.30%	3.50%	3.70%
10yr PWLB Rate	<b>3.33%</b>	3.30%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%	3.50%	3.60%	3.70%	3.80%	4.00%	4.20%	4.40%	4.60%	4.80%
25yr PWLB Rate	<b>4.24%</b>	4.20%	4.20%	4.20%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.50%	4.60%	4.70%	4.80%	4.90%	5.00%	5.10%	5.20%
50yr PWLB Rate	<b>4.26%</b>	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.40%	4.50%	4.60%	4.70%	4.80%	4.90%	5.00%	5.10%	5.20%	5.30%
<b>Bank Rate</b>															
Sector's View	<b>0.50%</b>	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	1.00%	1.25%	1.50%	2.00%	2.25%	2.50%
UBS	<b>0.50%</b>	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Economics	<b>0.50%</b>	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	-	-	-	-	-
<b>5yr PWLB Rate</b>															
Sector's View	<b>2.25%</b>	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%	2.60%	2.70%	2.80%	2.90%	3.10%	3.30%	3.50%	3.70%
UBS	<b>2.25%</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Economics	<b>2.25%</b>	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	-	-	-	-	-
<b>10yr PWLB Rate</b>															
Sector's View	<b>3.33%</b>	3.30%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%	3.50%	3.60%	3.70%	3.80%	4.00%	4.20%	4.40%	4.60%	4.80%
UBS	<b>3.33%</b>	3.45%	3.45%	3.50%	3.60%	3.65%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Economics	<b>3.33%</b>	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	-	-	-	-	-
<b>25yr PWLB Rate</b>															
Sector's View	<b>4.24%</b>	4.20%	4.20%	4.20%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.50%	4.60%	4.70%	4.80%	4.90%	5.00%	5.10%	5.20%
UBS	<b>4.24%</b>	4.80%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Economics	<b>4.24%</b>	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	-	-	-	-	-
<b>50yr PWLB Rate</b>															
Sector's View	<b>4.26%</b>	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.40%	4.50%	4.60%	4.70%	4.80%	4.90%	5.00%	5.10%	5.20%	5.30%
UBS	<b>4.26%</b>	4.80%	4.95%	4.95%	5.00%	5.00%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Economics	<b>4.26%</b>	4.40%	4.40%	4.40%	4.40%	4.40%	4.40%	4.40%	4.40%	4.40%	-	-	-	-	-

**2. Survey of Economic Forecasts**

**HM Treasury January 2012**

The current Q4 2011 and 2012 forecasts are based on the December 2011 report. Forecasts for 2011 – 2015 are based on 32 forecasts in the last quarterly forecast – in November 2011.

BANK RATE FORECASTS	quarter ended		annual average Bank Rate		
	actual	Q4 2012	ave. 2013	ave. 2014	ave. 2015
Median	0.50%	0.60%	1.20%	2.10%	3.10%
Highest	0.90%	1.80%	3.10%	4.10%	4.50%
Lowest	0.50%	0.10%	0.50%	0.90%	1.40%

## Economic Background

### 1.1. Global economy

The outlook for the global economy remains uncertain with the UK economy struggling to generate sustained recovery that offers grounds for optimism for the outlook for 2012 and into 2013. Consumer and business confidence levels are still low with little to boost sentiment, as such it is not easy to see potential for a significant increase in the economic growth rate in the short term.

At the centre of much of the uncertainty is the ongoing Eurozone sovereign debt crisis which has intensified, rather than dissipated throughout 2011. The main problem has been Greece, where, even with an Eurozone / IMF / ECB bailout package and the imposition of austerity measures aimed at deficit reduction, the lack of progress and the ongoing deficiency in addressing the underlying lack of competitiveness of the Greek economy, has seen an escalation of their problems. These look certain to result in a default of some kind but it currently remains unresolved. Many experts view is that Greece will have to exit the Eurozone in 2012.

There is also growing concern about the situation in Italy and the risk that contagion has not been contained. Italy is the third biggest debtor country in the world but its prospects are limited given the poor rate of economic growth over the last decade and likely difficulties in implementing the required level of fundamental reforms in the economy. There is a rising level of electoral opposition in Germany to bailing out other countries which could hinder any potential rescue package.

### 1.2 UK economy

The Government's austerity measures, aimed at getting the public sector deficit into order over the next four years, have yet to fully impact on the economy. However, coming at a time when economic growth has been weak there are concerns at the risk of a technical recession (two quarters of negative growth) in 2012. It looks likely that the private sector will not make up for the negative impact of these austerity measures given the lack of an export led recovery due to the downturn in our major trading partner – the EU. The housing market, a gauge of consumer confidence, remains weak and the outlook is for house prices to be little changed for a prolonged period.

**Economic Growth** – GDP growth has remained low since the election of 2010 and economic forecasts for 2012 and beyond have been revised lower on a near quarterly basis. With concerns of a potential return to recession, the Bank of England embarked on a second round of Quantitative Easing to stimulate economic activity. It was expected that the expansion of quantitative easing which actually took place in February 2012 was carried out by the government in order to stimulate economic growth.

**Unemployment** – With the impact of the Government's austerity strategy impacting the trend for 2011 of steadily increasing unemployment, there are

limited prospects for any improvement in 2012 given the prospects for weak growth.

**Inflation and Bank Rate** – For the last two years, the MPC's contention has been that high inflation was the outcome of temporary external factors and other one offs (e.g. changes in VAT); that view remains in place with CPI inflation starting quarter 1 of 2012 at 4.8%, having peaked at 5.2% in September 2011. They remain of the view that the rate will fall back to, or below, the 2% target level within the next two years.

**AAA rating** – The rating agencies have, in contrast to reductions in a number of other European countries, reaffirmed the UK's AAA sovereign rating and have expressed satisfaction with Government policy for deficit reduction. They have, though, warned that this could be reviewed if the policy were to change, or was seen to be failing to achieve its desired outcome. This credit position has ensured that the UK government is able to fund itself at historically low levels and, with the safe haven status from Eurozone debt also drawing in external investment, the pressure on rates has been downward, and looks set to remain so for some time.

### **1.3 Economic Forecast**

Economic forecasting remains troublesome with so many external influences weighing on the UK. There does, however, appear to be consensus among analysts that the economy remains weak and whilst there is still a broad range of views as to potential performance, they have all been downgraded throughout 2011. Key areas of uncertainty include:

- a worsening of the Eurozone debt crisis and heightened risk of the breakdown of the bloc or even of the currency itself;
- the wider impact of the Eurozone crisis on financial markets and the banking sector;
- the impact of the Government's austerity plan on confidence and growth and the need to rebalance the economy from services to exporting manufactured goods;
- the under-performance of the UK economy which could undermine the Government's policies that have been based upon levels of growth that increasingly seem likely to be undershot;
- a continuation of high levels of inflation;
- the economic performance of the UK's trading partners, in particular the EU and US, with some analysts suggesting that recession could return to both;
- stimulus packages failing to stimulate growth;
- elections due in the US, Germany and France in 2012 or 2013;
- potential for protectionism i.e. an escalation of the currency war / trade dispute between the US and China.

The overall balance of risks remains weighted to the downside. Lack of economic growth, both domestically and overseas, will impact on confidence putting upward pressure on unemployment. It will also further knock levels of demand which will bring the threat of recession back into focus.



Many forecasters believe that the longer run trend is for gilt yields and PWLB rates to rise due to the high volume of gilt issuance in the UK, and the high volume of debt issuance in other major western countries.

Given the weak outlook for economic growth the prospects for any interest rate changes before mid 2013 is very limited. There is potential for the start of Bank Rate increases to be even further delayed if growth disappoints.

**Lending List Criteria**

**Appendix 6**

**Counterparty Criteria**

The lead Authority takes into account not only the individual institution's credit ratings issued by all three credit rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's), but also all available market data and intelligence, the level of government support and advice from its Treasury Management advisors.

Set out below are the criteria to be used in determining the level of funds that can be invested with each institution. Where an institution is rated differently by the rating agencies, the lowest rating will determine the level of investment.

<b>Fitch / S&amp;P's Long Term Rating</b>	<b>Fitch Short Term Rating</b>	<b>S&amp;P's Short Term Rating</b>	<b>Moody's Long Term Rating</b>	<b>Moody's Short Term Rating</b>	<b><u>Maximum Deposit</u> £m</b>	<b><u>Maximum Duration</u></b>
AAA	F1+	A1+	Aaa	P-1	70	2 Years
AA+	F1+	A1+	Aa1	P-1	50	2 Years
AA	F1+	A1+	Aa2	P-1	40	364 days
AA-	F1+ / F1	A1+ / A-1	Aa3	P-1	20	364 days
A+	F1	A-1	A1	P-1	10	364 days
A	F1 / F2	A-1 / A-2	A2	P-1 / P-2	10	364 days
A-	F1 / F2	A-2	A3	P-1 / P-2	5	6 months
<b>Local Authorities</b> (limit for each local authority)					30	2 years
<b>UK Government</b> (including debt management office, gilts and treasury bills)					70	2 years
<b>Money Market Funds</b> Maximum amount to be invested in Money Market Funds is £50 million with a maximum of £30 million in any one fund.					50	Liquid Deposits

Where the UK Government holds a shareholding in an institution the UK Government's credit rating of AAA will be applied to that institution to determine the amount the Council can place with that institution for a maximum period of 2 years.

Where any banks / building societies are part of the UK Government's Credit Guarantee scheme (marked with \* in the Approved Lending List), these counterparties will have an AA rating applied to them thus giving them a credit limit of £40 million for a maximum period of 364 days

The Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services recommends that consideration should also be given to country, sector, and group limits in addition to the individual limits set out above, these new limits are as follows:

**Appendix 6 (continued)**

**Country Limit**

It is proposed that only countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA+ by all three rating agencies will be considered for inclusion on the Approved Lending List.

It is also proposed to set a total limit of £40 million which can be invested in other countries provided they meet the above criteria. A separate limit of £300 million will be applied to the United Kingdom and is based on the fact that the government has done and is willing to take action to protect the UK banking system.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Limit £m</b>
UK	300
Non UK	40

**Sector Limit**

The Code recommends a limit be set for each sector in which the Authority can place investments. These limits are set out below:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Limit £m</b>
Central Government	300
Local Government	300
UK Banks	300
UK Building Societies	150
Money Market Funds	50
Foreign Banks	40

**Group Limit**

Where institutions are part of a group of companies e.g. Lloyds Banking Group, Santander and RBS, then total limit of investments that can be placed with that group of companies will be determined by the highest credit rating of a counterparty within that group, unless the government rating has been applied.

This will apply provided that:

- the government’s guarantee scheme is still in place;
- the UK continues to have a sovereign credit rating of AAA; and
- that market intelligence and professional advice is taken into account.

Proposed group limits are set out in Appendix 7

**Approved Lending List**

**Appendix 7**

	Fitch				Moody's			Standard & Poor's		Limit £m	Max Deposit Period
	L Term	S Term	Individual	Support	L Term	S Term	Fin Strength	L Term	S Term		
<b>UK</b>	AAA	F1+			Aaa			AAA		300	2 years
<b>Lloyds Banking Group</b> (see Note 1)										<b>Group Limit 70</b>	
Lloyds Banking Group plc	A	F1	bbb	1	A2	-	-	A-	A-2	70	2 years
Lloyds TSB Bank Plc	A	F1	bbb	1	A1	P-1	C-	A	A-1	70	2 years
Bank of Scotland Plc	A	F1	-	1	A1	P-1	D+	A	A-1	70	2 years
<b>Royal Bank of Scotland Group</b> (See Note 1)										<b>Group Limit 70</b>	
Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc	A	F1	bbb	1	A3	P-2	-	A-	A-2	70	2 years
The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc	A	F1	bbb	1	A2	P-1	C-	A	A-1	70	2 years
National Westminster Bank Plc	A	F1	-	1	A2	P-1	C-	A	A-1	70	2 years
Ulster Bank Ltd	A-	F1	ccc	1	Baa1	P-2	D-	BBB+	A-2	70	2 years
<b>Santander Group *</b>										<b>Group Limit 40</b>	
Santander UK plc	A+	F1	a+	1	A1	P-1	C-	AA-	A-1+	40	364 days
Cater Allen	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	364 days
Barclays Bank plc *	A	F1	a	1	Aa3	P-1	C	A+	A-1	40	364 days
HSBC Bank plc *	AA	F1+	aa-	1	Aa2	P-1	C+	AA-	A-1+	40	364 days

**Appendix 7(continued)**

	Fitch			Support	Moody's			Standard & Poor's		Limit £m	Max Deposit Period
	L Term	S Term	Individual		L Term	S Term	Fin Strength	L Term	S Term		
Nationwide BS *	A+	F1	a+	1	A2	P-1	C	A+	A-1	40	364 days
Standard Chartered Bank *	AA-	F1+	aa-	1	A1	P-1	B-	AA-	A-1+	40	364 days
Clydesdale Bank / Yorkshire Bank **/**	A+	F1	bbb	1	A2	P-1	C-	BBB	A-2	0	364 days
Co-Operative Bank Plc	A-	F2	a-	3	A3	P-2	C-	-	-	5	6 months
Northern Rock ***	BBB+	F2	bbb+	2	-	-	-	BBB+	A-2	0	
<b>Top Building Societies (by asset value)</b>											
Nationwide BS (see above)											
Yorkshire BS ***	BBB+	F2	bbb+	5	Baa2	P-2	C-	A-	A-2	0	
Coventry BS	A	F1	a	5	A3	P-2	C	-	-	5	6 Months
Skipton BS ***	BBB	F3	bbb	5	Ba1	NP	D+	-	-	0	
Leeds BS	A-	F2	a-	5	A3	P-2	C	-	-	5	6 Months
West Bromwich BS ***	B+	B	b+	5	B2	NP	E+	-	-	0	
Principality BS ***	BBB+	F2	bbb+	5	Ba1	NP	D+	-	-	0	
Newcastle BS ***	BB+	B	bb+	5	-	-	-	-	-	0	
Nottingham BS ***	-	-	-	-	Baa2	P-2	C-	-	-	0	
<b>Foreign Banks have a combined total limit of £40m</b>											
<b>Australia</b>	AAA	-	-	-	Aaa	-	-	AAA		40	364 Days
National Australia Bank	AA	F1+	aa	1	Aa2	P-1	B-	AA-	A-1+	40	364 Days
Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd	AA-	F1+	aa-	1	Aa2	P-1	B-	AA-	A-1+	20	364 Days

**Appendix 7 (continued)**

	Fitch				Moody's			Standard & Poor's		Limit £m	Max Deposit Period
	L Term	S Term	Individual	Support	L Term	S Term	Fin Strenot	L Term	S Term		
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA	F1+	aa	1	Aa2	P-1	B-	AA-	A-1+	40	364 Days
Westpac Banking Corporation	AA	F1+	aa	1	Aa2	P-1	B-	AA-	A-1+	40	364 Days
<b>Canada</b>	AAA				Aaa			AAA		40	364 Days
Bank of Nova Scotia	AA-	F1+	aa-	1	Aa1	P-1	B	AA-	A-1+	20	364 Days
Royal Bank of Canada	AA	F1+	aa	1	Aa1	P-1	B	AA-	A-1+	20	364 Days
Toronto Dominion Bank	AA-	F1+	aa-	1	Aaa	P-1	B+	AA-	A-1+	20	364 Days
Money Market Funds										50	Liquid Deposits
Prime Rate Stirling Liquidity	AAA MMF							AAAm		30	Liquid Deposits
Insight Liquidity Fund					AAA MR1			AAAm		30	Liquid Deposits
Ignis Sterling Liquidity	AAA MMF							AAAm		30	Liquid Deposits

**Notes**

**Note 1**

**Nationalised / Part Nationalised**

The counterparties in this section will have the UK Government's AAA rating applied to them thus giving them a revised credit limit of £70 million

\* Banks / Building Societies which are part of the UK Government's Credit Guarantee scheme  
The counterparties in this section will have an AA rating applied to them thus giving them a revised credit limit of £40 million for a maximum period of 364 days

\*\* The Clydesdale Bank (under the UK section) is owned by National Australia Bank

\*\*\* These will be revisited and used only if they meet the minimum criteria (ratings of A- and above)

Any bank which is incorporated in the United Kingdom and controlled by the FSA is classed as a UK bank for the purposes of the Approved Lending List.

