

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

Detailed Prudential Indicators 2024/2025 to 2027/2028

Appendix B

All Local Authorities are required to have regard to the Prudential Code when carrying out their duties under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003. The key objectives of the Code are to ensure that the capital investment plans of Local Authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable. A further key objective is to ensure that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice.

It should be noted that all of the Prudential Indicators continue to fully reflect the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) which were introduced from 1st April 2010. Should any of the Authority's Prudential Indicators be exceeded during the year, they will be reported to Authority at the next appropriate meeting as required by the Code.

The Indicators that must be observed include:

- P1 The actual capital expenditure that was incurred in 2022/2023 was £5.025million and the estimates of capital expenditure to be incurred for the current and future years that are recommended for approval are:

	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
	Actual	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Capital Expenditure	5,025	11,408	10,890	3,432	3,946	6,060

The provision for capital expenditure from 2024/2025 onwards is based on the Capital Programme 2024/2025 to 2027/2028 being approved by the Authority.

- P2 Estimates of the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream for the current and future years, and the actual figures for 2022/2023 are:

	Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream				
2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
Actual	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
7.03%	6.16%	6.08%	5.90%	5.50%	5.80%

The estimates of financing costs include current commitments and the proposals in the revenue budget and this capital programme report. The projected forecasts provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Authority's overall finances. They show a fairly consistent and similar position of anticipated ratios of financing costs to net revenue streams in future years as a result of the current economic downturn, leading to lower interest rates on investments and forecast flat lined and inflation proofed government grant funding settlements. It should be noted that ratios will vary depending on the interest rates obtained on investments and the level of investments and also future actual levels in government grant funding beyond 2024/25.

The level of financing costs however is considered to be affordable and has been taken into account when assessing the Medium Term Financial Strategy (please see the report on the Revenue Budget 2024/2025 elsewhere on today's agenda).

- P3 Estimates of the end of year Capital Financing Requirement for the Authority for the current and future years and the actual Capital Financing Requirement as at 31st March 2023 are:

Capital Financing Requirement					
31/03/23	31/03/24	31/03/25	31/03/26	31/03/27	31/03/28
£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Actual	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
29,380	27,550	25,426	23,225	21,018	18,361

The Capital Financing Requirement measures the Authority's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. In accordance with best practice, Sunderland City Council, on the Authority's behalf, does not associate individual borrowing taken out with particular items or types of expenditure. The Authority has an integrated Treasury Management Strategy and has fully adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services. There are, at any point in time, a number of cash flows, both positive and negative, and the treasury position in terms of its borrowings and investments is managed in accordance with the approved treasury management strategy and practices. In day to day cash management, no distinction can be made between revenue cash and capital cash. External borrowing arises as a consequence of all the financial transactions taking account of the Authority's needs, and not simply those arising from capital spending. In contrast, the Capital Financing Requirement reflects the Authority's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose.

The Capital Financing Requirement includes other long term liabilities (e.g. PFI schemes and finance leases) brought onto the balance sheet. Whilst this increases the Capital Financing Requirement, and therefore the Authority's borrowing requirement, these types of scheme include a borrowing facility so the Authority is not required to separately borrow for these schemes. The Authority had £14.597 million of such schemes included in its Capital Financing Requirement at 31st March 2023.

- P4 CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities includes the following comparator between gross debt and the capital financing requirement as a key indicator of prudence:

"In order to ensure that over the medium term debt will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years."

The Authority had no difficulty meeting this requirement in 2022/2023, nor are there any difficulties envisaged for the current (2023/2024) or future years

(2024/2025 to 2027/2028). This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in this report.

- 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.

The 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 Director, 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 its next meeting following the change. The figures, below, have been calculated with reference to the overall Authorised Limit for Sunderland City Council which, covers all separate bodies, including the Fire and Rescue Authority, which is subject to the Prudential Code.

	Authorised Limit for External Debt				
	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Borrowing	17,348	17,253	16,959	16,606	16,714
Other long term liabilities	13,032	11,297	9,468	7,620	5,305
Total	30,380	28,550	26,427	24,226	22,019

The Finance Director reports that these authorised limits are consistent with the Authority's current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in this report on the Capital Programme for capital expenditure and financing, and with its approved treasury management policy statement and practices. The Finance Director 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 2024/2025, the Authority is asked to note that the authorised limit determined for 2024/2025, will be the statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 and will be set at £28.550 million.

- 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. It equates to the projected maximum external debt and 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 Director, 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 2024/2025 will be £23.550 million and will be closely monitored and a report will be made to 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 2023/2024.

	Operational Boundary for External Debt				
	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Borrowing	12,348	12,253	11,959	11,606	11,714
Other long term liabilities	13,032	11,297	9,468	7,620	5,305
Total	25,380	23,550	21,427	19,226	17,019

P7 The Authority’s actual external debt at 31 March 2023 was £24.943 million (calculated on the basis that all Authority debt is classed as external), comprising £10.346 million borrowing and £14.597 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.

P8 The estimate of the incremental impact of new capital decisions proposed in this report, over and above capital investment decisions that have previously been taken by the Authority are:

For the Band D Council Tax Precept			
2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
£0.60	£0.58	£0.55	£0.53

The estimates show the revenue effect of all capital expenditure arising from all schemes commencing in 2024/2025 and the following three financial years. The impact on the Band D Council Tax Precept detailed above takes account of estimated government grant funding.

These forward estimates are not fixed and do not commit the Authority. They are based on the Authority’s existing commitments, current plans and the capital plans detailed in Appendix A. There are no known significant variations beyond this timeframe that would result from past events and decisions for the proposals in the budget report.

CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice – Indicators 2024/2025 to 2027/2028

- P9 It is recommended that the Authority sets upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of its borrowings, consistent with Sunderland City Council’s policy, 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 above	100%	0%

- P10 Sunderland City Council has set a maximum maturity limit of £75 million for each financial year (2024/2025, 2025/2026, 2026/2027 and 2027/2028) for long term investments (those over 365 days) made. This gives additional flexibility to the Authority in undertaking its Treasury Management function. It is proposed that the Authority funds may be invested within the limits set by the Sunderland City Council as set out in the Annual Investment Strategy.

