

Report

Audit Committee



Part 1

Date: 30 May 2017

Subject **Report on Treasury Management covering the Financial Year 2016/17**

Purpose To inform Audit Committee of treasury activities undertaken during the financial year 2016/17.

Author Assistant Head of Finance

Ward General

Summary During the year to 31 March 2017, the Council continued to invest surplus funds with its own bankers (Santander), and institutions with long-term credit ratings in at least the 'A-' Category.

As at 31 March 2017, the Council has short-term investments of £2.30m, this was to invest surplus funds that had come into the Council on over a minimal timescale. Temporary borrowing has continued to be required to fund normal day to day activities.

All borrowing undertaken was as expected, and within the Council's agreed limits.

Proposal **Audit Committee is asked to:**

- 1. note the Annual Report on Treasury Management for the Financial Year 2016/17.**
- 2. note that 2016/17 Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management were in line with those set by Council in February 2016 .**

Action by Head of Finance

Timetable For the periods indicated.

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Treasury Advisors
- Head of Finance

Background

1. In June 2009 the Authority adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2011 Edition (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management annual report after the end of each financial year.
2. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
3. The Authority has borrowed substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are therefore central to the Authority's treasury management strategy.
4. The 2016/17 Treasury Management Strategy was approved by the Council as part of the overall Medium Term Financial Plan and 2016/17 budget in February 2016 and can be viewed via the following link

<https://msmodgovdb01.corporate.newport/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=130&Year=0>.

5. This report presents the following information.
 - details of capital financing, borrowing, debt rescheduling and investment transactions
 - reports on the risk implications of treasury decisions and transactions
 - details the outturn position on treasury management transactions in 2016/2017
 - confirms compliance with treasury limits set and Prudential code

Annual Review Report 2016/17

Short and Long Term Borrowing

6. In recent years the Council's strategy has been to fund capital expenditure from reducing investments (its own surplus 'cash' balances) rather than undertaking more expensive new long term borrowing. This is because the rates achievable on the Council's investments are lower than the rates that would be payable on long term borrowing. As well as being a more cost-effective approach, using this strategy also minimises cash holdings which has some inherent risk attached to it.

In the shorter term, the Council's short term cash flow requirements are dealt with by short term loans when required. In any month, the Council is both a short-term investor and short-term borrower as it pursues its Treasury Strategy of maintaining low cash holdings, whilst holding off the need for long-term borrowing.

7. Whilst the strategy minimises investment counterparty risk, the risk of interest rate exposure is increased as the current low longer term borrowing rates may rise in the future. The market position is being constantly monitored in order to minimise this risk.
8. As anticipated and mentioned above, the Council has had to undertake short-term borrowing in order to cover normal day to day cash flow activity. Total temporary borrowing of £185.8 million was raised during the year, of which with the exception of borrowing related to Queensberry, nil remained outstanding at the 31 March 2017.
9. As anticipated during 2016/17 the Council has also been required to maintain borrowing associated with funding of the approved loan to Queensberry Real Estates (Newport) Ltd (QRE). The borrowing associated with this loan is kept separate from the Council's other borrowing requirements as shown in Table 1. The loan is anticipated to be paid off via capital receipts in early 2017/18, therefore the Council is not required to make MRP

charges to the revenue budget in relation to the Friars Walk Development loan as the Council's borrowing in relation to this will be paid off in full at the end of the scheme within agreed timescales.

10. A total of £146.13million of long-term loans were outstanding as at 31 March 2017, and there were a further £63.08million of short-term loans in relation to borrowing for Queensberry.
11. Total borrowing has remained within the approved limits for external debt as shown in Appendix C and Table 1 to this report compares borrowings and investments as at 31 March 2016 and 2017, showing a decrease to net borrowing of £12.43million.
12. Appendix A summarises the loan debt activity for 2016/17. The key points to note are:
 - the average rate of interest on debt was 4.33% compared with 4.41% for the previous year.
 - Long-term loan repayments in 2016/17 totalled £1.299million.
13. During the year the value of the Council's LOBO money market loans has reduced to £30m due to a £5m LOBO with Barclays being converted to fixed rate borrowing at the same rate. No loans were called during the period. All £30m outstanding is subject to potential change of interest rates by the lender (which would automatically trigger a right to the Council to repay these loans) prior to the end of this financial year. Should a change of interest rate be requested, then it will be considered in detail and a decision on how we proceed will be made in conjunction with our treasury advisors.

Investments

14. As per the agreed strategy and mentioned above, the Council will be a short-term investor to maintain low cash balances as required, by 31 March 2017 these valued £2.60million due to funds received by the Council which were invested on overnight terms.
15. In August 2016 the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) cut interest rates to an historic low of 0.25% (further details in Appendix B). Within this economic environment, the Councils approved Treasury Strategy remains to reduce investments held, rather than increase borrowing. This strategy was driven by the gap between investment rates of below 0.50% and borrowing rates of around 2%-4%.
16. The average interest rate achieved on the Council's short-term investments was 0.30%, this return is slightly above the base rate of 0.25%, which decreased from 0.5% during the year.
17. The Council held no long-term (more than 364 days) investments at 31st March 2017.
18. Security of capital remained the Council's main investment objective. This was maintained by following the Council's counterparty policy as set out in its Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2016/17. Investments during the year included:
 - Deposits with the Debt Management Office
 - Deposits with other public institutions such as local authorities, police and fire authorities
 - Call accounts and deposits with banks and a single building society all considered systemically important to the UK banking system

Credit Risk

19. Counterparty credit quality was assessed and monitored with reference to credit ratings (the Authority's minimum long-term counterparty rating is [A-] across rating agencies Fitch, S&P and Moody's); for financial institutions analysis of funding structure and susceptibility to bail-in, credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press.
20. All of these factors were continually assessed and changes were made as needed to the Council's approved lending list by either suspending any institutions affected temporarily or permanently and/or by varying the amount and time limits for lending.

Summary of activities in 2017/18

21. As noted above, Treasury Management has operated in line with the approved Strategy set by Council in 2017/18 and the Treasury Management limits and targets set were complied with over the period.

Future Council borrowing requirements

22. Local Authorities measure their underlying need for long-term borrowing through their 'Capital Financing Requirement' (CFR), shown in Table 2. This takes into account the amount of planned capital expenditure that needs to be funded through borrowing, (as opposed to external funding - from cash grants, capital receipts or S106 contributions for example) irrespective of whether the borrowing itself is undertaken externally or through dis-investing. Due to the possibility of repayment of the Queensberry loan in 2017/18
23. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) as shown in Table 2, while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Authority's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing.

The Authority had a slightly decreased CFR during 2016/17 of £279.1million, reduced from £282.0million in 2016/17 due to the capital programme and the on-going loan to Queensbury Real Estates (Newport) Ltd, but holds minimal investments and was therefore able to reduce borrowing slightly during 2016/17. During 2017/18 the proposed sale of the development will reduce the CFR significantly and dependent on timing of loan re-payments and capital receipts, significant investments are likely to be required during the forecast period in Table 2. However, as shown in the table, there is an inherent need to borrow with new borrowing required during the next three financial years.

CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities recommends that the Authority's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. Table 2 shows that the Authority expects to comply with this recommendation during 2017/18.

Table 1- Treasury Portfolio 2016-2017

31/03/2016		31/03/2017
£m		£m
	External Borrowing:	
(72.44)	Public Work Loan Board	(71.13)
(35.00)	Market Loans (Loans held with various Financial Organisations. Maturity dates range from 2042 – 2078)	(35.00)
(40.00)	Newport City Stock Issue (Bonds paying interest at 8.8% with a maturity date of 2019)	(40.00)
-	Temporary Borrowing	-
(72.97)	Queensberry Borrowing	(63.08)
(0.14)	Other Loans (IFRS)	-
(220.55)	Total Loan Debt	(209.21)
(49.51)	Other Long Term Liabilities (including PFI schemes)	(47.62)
(270.06)	Total External Debt	(256.83)
3.10	Investments Managed in house	2.30
(266.96)	(Net Borrowing) Net Investment Position	(254.53)

Table 2: Balance Sheet Summary and Forecast

	31.3.17 Actual £m	31.3.18 Estimate £m	31.3.19 Estimate £m	31.3.20 Estimate £m
Gross CFR	279.1	278.5	275.8	272.7
Less Other Liabilities	47.6	45.3	43.4	42.6
Revised CFR	231.5	233.2	232.4	230.1
Less: External borrowing *	-209.2	-146.3	-144.9	-103.4
Internal (over) borrowing	22.3	86.9	87.5	126.7
Less: Usable reserves	-106.0	-89.4	-86.7	-83.8
Less: Working capital	81.4	7.7	7.7	7.7
Investments / (New Borrowing)	2.3	-5.2	-8.5	-50.6
Net Borrowing Requirement	206.9	151.5	153.4	154.0

* shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

- Gross CFR – This is calculated based on the Capital Assets held by the Council plus any planned additional capital expenditure during the year.
- Deferred Liabilities – This is calculated based on actual PFI Schemes and Finance lease liabilities, plus any planned new leases or schemes for each year.
- External Borrowing – This is calculated based on actual borrowing, plus any planned borrowing for each financial year.
- Useable Reverses – This is calculated based on actual reserve balances, plus any planned movements for each financial year.

Advisors

24. Arlingclose were the Council's treasury management advisors during 2016/17. In that period, the service provided by Arlingclose continued to meet the requirements of the tender and our expectations.

Prudential Code Indicators

25. Appendix C to this report summarises the prudential code indicators relevant to Treasury Management for 2016/17 as previously set and compares them to the actual position. The figures indicate that the Council was in compliance with all of the indicators in 2016/17.

Financial Summary

There are no cost implications arising from this report

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Investment counterparty not repaying investments	High but depending on investment value	Low	The Council only invests with Institutions with very high credit scores. It employs advisors to monitor money market movements and changes to credit scores and acts immediately should things change adversely. The lower levels of funds available for investment will also alleviate the risk.	Head of Finance, Treasury staff, treasury advisors
Interest Rates moving adversely against expectations	Low	Low	Treasury advice is that base and short term Interest rates are expected to remain at current levels for a significant period and could possibly drop to nil. The Treasury strategy approved allows for the use of short term borrowing once investment funds are exhausted to take advantage of these low rates.	Head of Finance, Treasury staff, treasury advisors

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

It is the Council's policy to ensure that the security of the capital sums invested is fully recognised and has absolute priority. The Council follows the advice of the Welsh Assembly Government that any investment decisions take account of security, liquidity and yield in that order.

Options Available

The Prudential Code and statute requires that, during and at the end of each financial year, reports on these matters are presented to members for consideration. Thus the only option available is to consider this report.

Preferred Option and Why

The preferred choice is to receive and note the contents of the report.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

Comments of the Chief Financial Officer are those as detailed in the report.

The report confirms the Council operated in line with its Treasury Management Strategy approved by Council in 2017/18 and kept to its Treasury Management limits and targets.

The current financial year 2017/18 is the final year of its current capital programme and officers are working on the new 5 year programme which Cabinet will need to review and approve in due course. A key issue in that will be the requirement for the Council to fund capital expenditure from borrowing and the affordability of that and impact on the Medium Term Revenue budget.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no legal implications. This annual Treasury Management Report is in accordance with the requirement of the Local Government Act 2003 and is consistent with relevant Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Guidance, Treasury Management principles and the Council's Investment Strategy. The Annual report confirms that the Council's capital financing and investment activity in 2014/15 was in line with the pre-set Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are no human resources implications within the report.

Comments of Cabinet Member

N/A.

Local issues

There are no local issues from this report.

Scrutiny Committees

N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment

These proposals do not require Equalities Impact Assessment.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

N/A

Consultation

As per report

Background Papers

Credit Rating Data received via Arlingclose

Report to Cabinet February 2016: Medium Term Financial Plan and 2016/17 budget

Report on Treasury Management for the period to 30 September 2016

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Loan Debt Activity 2016/2017

Appendix B – Economic Summary 2016/2017

Appendix C – Prudential Code – Review of 2016/2017 Treasury Management Indicators

Dated: 9 May 2017

LOAN DEBT AND INVESTMENT ACTIVITY 2016/17 FINANCIAL YEAR

Newport City Council Debt	Outstanding as at 01/04/16	Raised	Repaid	Outstanding as at 31/03/2017
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Public Works Loans Board	72,437	0	(1,299)	71,138
Market Loans	35,000	-	-	35,000
Stock Issue	40,000	-	-	40,000
Queensberry Borrowing	72,975	185,800	(195,700)	63,075
Other Loans (IFRS)	138	-	(138)	-
Total Long Term Loans	220,550	185,800	(197,137)	209,213

Temporary Debt	-			-
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Total Long Term and Temporary Debt	220,550	185,800	(197,137)	209,213
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Total Investments Administered Newport City Council	Outstanding as at 01/04/16	Raised	Repaid	Outstanding as at 31/03/2017
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
ST Investments	3,100	412,940	(413,740)	2,300

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY REVIEW – 2016/17

Economic background: Politically, 2016/17 was an extraordinary twelve month period which defied expectations when the UK voted to leave the European Union and Donald Trump was elected the 45th President of the USA. Uncertainty over the outcome of the US presidential election, the UK's future relationship with the EU and the slowdown witnessed in the Chinese economy in early 2016 all resulted in significant market volatility during the year. Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, which sets in motion the 2-year exit period from the EU, was triggered on 29th March 2017.

UK inflation had been subdued in the first half of 2016 as a consequence of weak global price pressures, past movements in sterling and restrained domestic price growth. However the sharp fall in the Sterling exchange rate following the referendum had an impact on import prices which, together with rising energy prices, resulted in CPI rising from 0.3% year/year in April 2016 to 2.3% year/year in March 2017.

In addition to the political fallout, the referendum's outcome also prompted a decline in household, business and investor sentiment. The repercussions on economic growth were judged by the Bank of England to be sufficiently severe to prompt its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to cut the Bank Rate to 0.25% in August and embark on further gilt and corporate bond purchases as well as provide cheap funding for banks via the Term Funding Scheme to maintain the supply of credit to the economy.

Despite growth forecasts being downgraded, economic activity was fairly buoyant and GDP grew 0.6%, 0.5% and 0.7% in the second, third and fourth calendar quarters of 2016. The labour market also proved resilient, with the ILO unemployment rate dropping to 4.7% in February, its lowest level in 11 years.

Following a strengthening labour market, in moves that were largely anticipated, the US Federal Reserve increased rates at its meetings in December 2016 and March 2017, taking the target range for official interest rates to between 0.75% and 1.00%.

Financial markets: Following the referendum result, gilt yields fell sharply across the maturity spectrum on the view that Bank Rate would remain extremely low for the foreseeable future. After September there was a reversal in longer-dated gilt yields which moved higher, largely due to the MPC revising its earlier forecast that Bank Rate would be dropping to near 0% by the end of 2016. The yield on the 10-year gilt rose from 0.75% at the end of September to 1.24% at the end of December, almost back at pre-referendum levels of 1.37% on 23rd June. 20- and 50-year gilt yields also rose in Q3 2017 to 1.76% and 1.70% respectively, however in Q4 yields remained flat at around 1.62% and 1.58% respectively.

After recovering from an initial sharp drop in Q2, equity markets rallied, although displaying some volatility at the beginning of November following the US presidential election result. The FTSE-100 and FTSE All Share indices closed at 7342 and 3996 respectively on 31st March, both up 18% over the year. Commercial property values fell around 5% after the referendum, but had mostly recovered by the end of March.

Money market rates for overnight and one week periods remained low since Bank Rate was cut in August. 1- and 3-month LIBID rates averaged 0.36% and 0.47% respectively during 2016-17. Rates for 6- and 12-months increased between August and November, only to gradually fall back to August levels in March, they averaged 0.6% and 0.79% respectively during 2016-17.

Credit background: Various indicators of credit risk reacted negatively to the result of the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union. UK bank credit default swaps saw a modest rise but bank share prices fell sharply, on average by 20%, with UK-focused banks experiencing the largest falls. Non-UK bank share prices were not immune, although the fall in their share prices was less pronounced.

Fitch and Standard & Poor's downgraded the UK's sovereign rating to AA. Fitch, S&P and Moody's have a negative outlook on the UK. Moody's has a negative outlook on those banks and building societies that it perceives to be exposed to a more challenging operating environment arising from the 'leave' outcome.

None of the banks on the Authority's lending list failed the stress tests conducted by the European Banking Authority in July and by the Bank of England in November, the latter being designed with more challenging stress scenarios, although Royal Bank of Scotland was one of the weaker banks in both tests. The tests were based on banks' financials as at 31st December 2015, 11 months out of date for most. As part of its creditworthiness research and advice, the Authority's treasury advisor Arlingclose regularly undertakes analysis of relevant ratios - "total loss absorbing capacity" (TLAC) or "minimum requirement for eligible liabilities" (MREL) - to determine whether there would be a bail-in of senior investors, such as local authority unsecured investments, in a stressed scenario.

Appendix C

PRUDENTIAL CODE – REVIEW OF 2016/2017 TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

The CIPFA Prudential Code covers the control of capital expenditure and Treasury Management issues. This report deals with the Treasury Management aspects of the Code. The Code requires actual outturn against the Indicators set under the Code to be reported to Council.

The Authority confirms compliance with its prudential indicators for 2016/17, which were agreed by Cabinet/Council in February 2016. The following lists each of the indicators and provides the actual position against each, with comments to explain any significant variation.

Capital Financing Requirement

The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) measures the Council's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. The calculation of the CFR is taken from the amounts held in the Balance Sheet relating to capital expenditure and its financing.

	£million
Set in February 2016	280.6
Actual at 31 March 2017	279.1

Fixed and Variable Rate Limits

These indicators set upper limits that apply to the amounts outstanding on both fixed and variable interest rates. The indicators set and actual at 31 March 2017 were:

	Approved Limits for 2016/17 £/%	Maximum during 2016/17 £/%
Upper Limit for Fixed Rate Exposure	100%	100%
Compliance with Limits:		Yes
Upper Limit for Variable Rate Exposure	50%	0%
Compliance with Limits:		Yes

The indicators set upper and lower limits (expressed as a percentage) to the amount of borrowing the Council was prepared to have outstanding in various set periods. The following table shows firstly the levels set in February 2016 (updated December 2016) and then the actual position based on debt outstanding at 31 March 2017.

	Indicator Set		Actual
	Upper Limit %	Lower Limit %	%
Under 12 months	80	0	45
12 months and within 24 months	20	0	0
24 months and within 5 years	70	0	23
5 years and within 10 years	50	0	16
10 years and within 20 years	30	0	6
20 years and within 30 years	20	0	0
30 years and within 40 years	20	0	6
40 years and within 50 years	20	0	2
50 years and above	20	0	2

Upper Limit for Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days

The purpose of this limit is to contain exposure to the possibility of loss that may arise as a result of the Authority having to seek early repayment of the sums invested.

	Total £m
Indicator Set	100
Actual at 31 March 2017	0

Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to set an Affordable Borrowing Limit, irrespective of their indebted status. This is a statutory limit which should not be breached, unless Council authorises an increase to this limit.

The Operational Boundary is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit but reflects the most likely, prudent but not worst case scenario without the additional headroom included within the Authorised Limit.

The Authority confirms that there were no breaches to the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary during 2016/17 at the end of the financial year:

	Authorised Limit 2016/17 £000s	Operational Boundary 2016/17 £000s	Actual External Debt as at 31/03/2017 £000s
Borrowing	350,000	330,000	209,210
Other Long-term Liabilities	47,000	47,000	47,620
Total	397,000	377,000	256,830