THE LONDON BOROUGH
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Treasury Management Strategy Statement

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy: 2022/23

Contents

Introduction

1.1 Background

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

The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council. Although the Council does not borrow to finance its general fund capital spending plans, officers still plan and forecast the longer-term cash flow position in order to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations and that it maintains balances (working capital) at a prudent and sustainable level.

Having obtained the requisite permissions to re-open its Housing Revenue Account (HRA) during 2020/21 the Council will provide immediate finance through internal borrowing, with no external borrowing required. Repayments and interest will be made through the internal movement of funds to the general fund.

CIPFA defines treasury management as:

> *"The management of the local authority's borrowing, 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."*

1.2 Statutory and Reporting requirements

The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) and supporting regulations requires the Council to 'have regard to' the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to set Prudential and Treasury Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Council is currently required to receive and approve, as a minimum, three main reports each year, which incorporate a variety of policies, estimates and actuals. These reports are required to be adequately scrutinised by Members before being recommended to the Council. This role is undertaken by the Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy Development & Scrutiny Committee.

Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Treasury Strategy (this report) - This covers:

- the capital plans (including prudential indicators);
- a Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time);
- the Treasury Management Strategy (how the investments and borrowings are to be organised) including treasury indicators; and
- an investment strategy (the parameters on how investments are to be managed).

A Part-Year Treasury Management Report (approved by Council in December 2021) – This will update members with the progress of the capital position, amending prudential indicators as necessary, and whether the treasury strategy is meeting the strategy or whether any policies require revision.

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

Capital Strategy
The CIPFA 2017 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes require all local authorities to prepare a capital strategy report which will provide the following:

- a high-level long-term overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services
- an overview of how the associated risk is managed
- the implications for future financial sustainability

The aim of this report is to ensure that all elected members on the full council fully understand the overall strategy, governance procedures and risk appetite entailed by this Strategy.

The Capital Strategy will include capital expenditure, investments and liabilities and treasury management in sufficient detail to allow all members to understand how stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability will be secured.

1.3 Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23

The strategy for 2022/23 covers two main areas:

Capital issues

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

Treasury management issues

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

These elements cover the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Prudential Code, DLUHC MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and DLUHC Investment Guidance.

1.4 Treasury management consultants

The Council uses Link Group, Treasury solutions as its external treasury management advisors.

The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon the services of our external service providers. All decisions will be undertaken with regards to all available information, including, but not solely, our treasury advisers.

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 Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented and subjected to regular review.

1.5 Elective Professional Client Status

From 3rd January 2018 the Financial Conduct Authority is obligated to treat all Local Authorities as “retail clients” under European Union legislation, the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive II (MiFID II). The client status of the Local Authority relates to its knowledge and experience with regards to the use of regulated investment products and the decision-making processes it has in place for making such investments. The directive is focused on products such as Certificates of Deposit, Gilts, Corporate Bonds and investment funds, including Money Market Funds.

The Council will opt up to “elective professional” status in order to continue to have access to these funds as an investment option as they are not available to retail clients. The Council had opted up to elective professional status with all relevant counterparties, including its advisers and brokers, prior to the deadline. This will be kept under regular review and counterparties will be added or removed as necessary for the Council’s investment needs.

The Capital Prudential Indicators 2022/23 – 2024/25

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

2.1 Capital Expenditure

This prudential indicator is a summary of the Council’s capital expenditure plans, both those agreed previously, and those forming part of this budget cycle. Members are asked to approve the capital expenditure forecasts as per the quarterly capital monitoring and review reports to Executive. The data shown below was reported to the Executive in November 2021 (2021/22 – Q2 Capital Monitoring)

Capital expenditure £m	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Estimate	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate
Non-HRA[1]	19.7	34.5	44	24.3	21.8
HRA[2]	-	-	-	-	-
Total	19.7	34.5	44	24.3	21.8

[1] Based on the capital monitoring position reported to the Executive on 24/11/21

[2] Note: The HRA Business Plan has yet to be drafted and approved and it is therefore not currently possible to estimate HRA Capital Expenditure.

The table below is indicative and it summarises the above capital expenditure plans and how these plans are being financed by capital or revenue resources. Any shortfall of resources results in a funding borrowing need; for Bromley there is no shortfall and hence no borrowing need within this forecast period. The current capital financing position is included in the quarterly capital monitoring reports to the Executive.

Financing of capital expenditure £m[3]	**2020/21 Actual**	**2021/22 Estimate**	**2022/23 Estimate**	**2023/24 Estimate**	**2024/25 Estimate**
Total Expenditure	19.7	34.5	44	24.3	21.8
Financed by:					
Capital receipts	1.1	3.9	25.4	22	18.1
Capital grants/ contributions / internal borrowing	13.5	17.9	18.6	2.3	2.2
Revenue contributions	5.1	12.7	-	-	-
General fund	-	-	-	-	1.5
Net financing need	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**

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

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

If the CFR is positive, the Council may borrow from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) or the market (external borrowing) or from internal balances on a temporary basis (internal borrowing). The Council's CFR represents liabilities arising from finance leases entered into in recent years in respect of various items of plant and equipment (primarily equipment in schools and vehicles and plant built into highways and waste contracts). The Council currently has no external borrowing as such. Any capital expenditure above, which has not immediately been paid for, will increase the CFR.

The Council is asked to approve the CFR projections below:

£m	**2020/21 Actual**	**2021/22 Estimate**	**2022/23 Estimate**	**2023/24 Estimate**	**2024/25 Estimate**
Capital Financing Requirement					
CFR – non housing	25.7	14.9	14.1	13.3	12.5
CFR – housing	-	10	10	10	10
Total CFR	25.7	24.9	24.1	23.3	22.5
Movement in CFR	16.1	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8

Movement in CFR represented by					
Net financing need for the year (above)	17.5	-	-	-	-

[3] Table data based on the Capital Financing Position reported to Executive on 24/11/21

Less MRP/VRP and other financing movements	-1.4	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8
Movement in CFR	16.1	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8

2.3 Minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy statement

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

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

The Council is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement:

The MRP will be based on the estimated lives of the assets, in accordance with the regulations, and will follow standard depreciation accounting procedures. Estimated life periods will be determined under delegated powers. To the extent that expenditure is not on the creation of an asset and is of a type that is subject to estimated life periods that are referred to in the guidance, these periods will generally be adopted by the Council. However, the Council reserves the right to determine useful life periods and prudent MRP in exceptional circumstances where the recommendations of the guidance would not be appropriate.

In practice, the Council's capital financing MRP is assessed as 4% of the outstanding balance on the finance leases the Council has entered into. A Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP) may also be made in respect of additional repayments.

Note: There is no requirement on the HRA to make a minimum revenue provision but there is a requirement for a charge for depreciation to be made (although there are transitional arrangements in place).

2.4 Core Funds and Expected Investment Balances

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

Year End Resources	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Estimate	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Fund balance	20	20	20	20	18.6
Capital receipts	1.9	11.8	10.3	20.9	1
Capital grants	8.4	13.6	13.6	-	-
Provisions	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8
Other (earmarked reserves)	269.8	240	200	180	160
Total core funds	**315.9**	**301.2**	**259.7**	**236.7**	**195.4**
Working capital[4]	64.2	138.8	130.3	103.3	94.6

[4] Working capital balances shown are estimated year end; these may be higher mid-year.

Under/over borrowing	-	-	-	-	-
Investments	**380.1**	**440**	**390**	**340**	**290**

2.5 Affordability prudential indicators

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

2.5.1 Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream

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

%	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Estimate	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate
Non-HRA	-	-	-	-	-
HRA	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-

Treasury Management Strategy

The capital expenditure plans set out in Section 2 provide details of the service activity of the Council. The treasury management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet this service activity and the Council's capital strategy. This will involve both the organisation of the cash flow and, where capital plans require, the organisation of appropriate borrowing facilities. The strategy covers the relevant treasury / prudential indicators, the current and projected debt positions and the annual investment strategy.

3.1 Current portfolio position

The overall treasury management portfolio as at 31 March 2021 is summarised below, together with forward projections. The table shows the actual external borrowing (the treasury management operations) against the capital borrowing (the Capital Financing Requirement) highlighting any over or under borrowing.

	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Estimate	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
External borrowing					
Borrowing at 1 April	-	-	-	-	-
Expected change in borrowing	-	-	-	-	-

Other long-term liabilities (OLTL)	25.7	24.9	24.1	23.3	22.5
Expected change in OLTL	16.1	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8
Actual borrowing at 31 March	-	-	-	-	-
CFR – the borrowing need	25.7	24.9	24.1	23.3	22.5
Under / (over) borrowing	25.7	24.9	24.1	23.3	22.5
Investments	**380.1**	**440**	**390**	**340**	**290**
Net investments	**354.4**	**415.1**	**365.9**	**316.7**	**267.5**
Change in Net investments	27.9	60.7	-49.2	-49.2	-49.2

Within the prudential indicators, there are a number of key indicators to ensure that the Council operates its activities within defined limits. One of these is that the Council needs to ensure that its gross debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2021/22 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years, but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue or speculative purposes.

The Director of Finance reports that the Council complied with this prudential indicator in the current year and does not envisage non-compliance in the future. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in this year's budget report.

3.2 Treasury Indicators: limits to borrowing activity

3.2.1 The Operational Boundary

This is the total figure that external borrowing is not normally expected to exceed. In most cases, this would be a similar figure to the CFR, but may be lower or higher depending on the levels of actual borrowing.

Operational boundary £m	2021/22 Estimate	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2023/25 Estimate
Borrowing	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Other long-term liabilities	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Total Operational Boundary	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0

3.2.2 The Authorised Limit for external borrowing

A further key prudential indicator represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a limit beyond which external borrowing is prohibited and this limit needs to be set or revised by the full Council. It reflects the level of external borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term.

1. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all councils' plans, or those of a specific council, although this power has not yet been exercised.
2. The Council is asked to approve the following Authorised Limit:

Authorised limit £m	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Borrowing	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0
Other long-term liabilities	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0
Total Authorised Limit	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0

3.3 Prospects for Interest Rates

The Council has appointed Link Group as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. Link provided the following forecasts on 20th December 2021. These are forecasts for certainty rates, gilt yields plus 80 bps.

Link Group Interest Rate View 20.12.21	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25
BANK RATE	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25
3 month ave earnings	0.20	0.30	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
6 month ave earnings	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10
12 month ave earnings	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.10	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
5 yr PWLB	1.40	1.50	1.50	1.60	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00
10 yr PWLB	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.30
25 yr PWLB	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.30	2.30	2.40	2.40	2.50	2.50
50 yr PWLB	1.50	1.70	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.30	2.30

Additional notes by Link on this forecast table: -

- LIBOR and LIBID rates will cease from the end of 2021. Work is currently progressing to replace LIBOR with a rate based on SONIA (Sterling Overnight Index Average). In the meantime, our forecasts are based on expected average earnings by local authorities for 3 to 12 months.
- Our forecasts for average earnings are averages i.e., rates offered by individual banks may differ significantly from these averages, reflecting their different needs for borrowing short term cash at any one point in time.

Over the last two years, the coronavirus outbreak has done huge economic damage to the UK and to economies around the world. After the Bank of England took emergency action in March 2020 to cut Bank Rate to 0.10%, it left Bank Rate unchanged at its subsequent meetings until raising it to 0.25% at its meeting on 16th December 2021.

As shown in the forecast table above, the forecast for Bank Rate now includes four increases, one in December 2021 to 0.25%, then quarter 2 of 2022 to 0.50%, quarter 1 of 2023 to 0.75%, quarter 1 of 2024 to 1.00% and, finally, one in quarter 1 of 2025 to 1.25%.

Forecasts for PWLB rates and gilt and treasury yields
Since the start of 2021, we have seen a lot of volatility in gilt yields, and hence PWLB rates. As the interest forecast table for PWLB certainty rates above shows, there is forecast to be a steady, but slow, rise in both Bank Rate and gilt yields during the forecast period to March 2025, though there will doubtless be a lot of unpredictable volatility during this forecast period.

While monetary policy in the UK will have a major impact on gilt yields, there is also a need to consider the potential impact that rising treasury yields in America could have on our gilt yields. As an average since 2011, there has been a 75% correlation between movements in US 10-year treasury yields and UK 10-year gilt yields. This is a significant upward risk exposure to our forecasts for longer term PWLB rates. However, gilt yields and treasury yields do not always move in unison.

US treasury yields. During the first part of 2021, US President Biden's, and the Democratic party's, determination to push through a $1.9trn (equivalent to 8.8% of GDP) fiscal boost for the US economy as a recovery package from the Covid pandemic was what unsettled financial markets. However, this was in addition to the $900bn support package already passed in December 2020. This was then followed by additional Democratic ambition to spend $1trn on infrastructure, (which was eventually passed by both houses later in 2021), and an even larger sum on an American families plan over the next decade; this is still caught up in Democrat / Republican haggling. Financial markets were alarmed that all this stimulus was happening at a time when:

1. A fast vaccination programme had enabled a rapid opening up of the economy during 2021.
2. The economy was growing strongly during the first half of 2021 although it has weakened overall during the second half.
3. It started from a position of little spare capacity due to less severe lockdown measures than in many other countries.
4. And the Fed was still providing substantial stimulus through monthly QE purchases during 2021.

It was not much of a surprise that a combination of these factors would eventually cause an excess of demand in the economy which generated strong inflationary pressures. This has eventually been recognised by the Fed at its December meeting with an aggressive response to damp inflation down during 2022 and 2023.

Investment and borrowing rates

- **Investment returns** are expected to improve in 2022/23. However, while markets are pricing in a series of Bank Rate hikes, actual economic circumstances may see the MPC fall short of these elevated expectations.

- **Borrowing interest rates** fell to historically very low rates as a result of the COVID crisis and the quantitative easing operations of the Bank of England and still remain at historically low levels. The policy of avoiding new borrowing by running down spare cash balances has served local authorities well over the last few years.

- On 25.11.20, the Chancellor announced the conclusion to the review of margins over gilt yields for PWLB rates which had been increased by 100 bps in October 2019. The standard and certainty margins were reduced by 100 bps but a prohibition was introduced to deny access to borrowing from the PWLB for any local authority which had purchase of assets for yield in its three-year capital programme. The current margins over gilt yields are as follows:

  - **PWLB Standard Rate** is gilt plus 100 basis points (G+100bps)
  - **PWLB Certainty Rate** is gilt plus 80 basis points (G+80bps)
  - **PWLB HRA Standard Rate** is gilt plus 100 basis points (G+100bps)
  - **PWLB HRA Certainty Rate** is gilt plus 80bps (G+80bps)
  - **Local Infrastructure Rate** is gilt plus 60bps (G+60bps)

3.4 Borrowing Strategy

The Council currently has no plans to borrow to finance either general fund or HRA capital expenditure It finances all expenditure from external grants and contributions, capital receipts or internal balances. The Council does, however, have a Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) of £25.7m (as at 31st March 2021), which is the outstanding liability on finance leases

The uncertainty over future interest rates increases the risks associated with treasury activity. As a result the Council will take a cautious approach to its treasury strategy and will monitor interest rates in financial markets.

3.4.1 Treasury indicators for debt

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

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

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

£m	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Interest rate Exposures			
	Upper	Upper	Upper
Limits on fixed interest rates based on net debt	100%	100%	100%
Limits on variable interest rates based on net debt	20%	20%	20%
Maturity Structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2020/21			
		Lower	**Upper**
Under 12 months (temporary borrowing only)		100%	100%
12 months to 2 years		N/A	N/A
2 years to 5 years		N/A	N/A
5 years to 10 years		N/A	N/A
10 years and above		N/A	N/A

3.5 Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need

The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs, purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates, and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds. Risks associated with any borrowing in advance activity will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism.

Annual Investment Strategy

4.1 Investment Policy

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC - this was formerly the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)) and CIPFA have extended the meaning of 'investments' to include both financial and non-financial investments. This report deals solely with treasury (financial) investments, (as managed by the treasury management team). Non-financial investments, essentially the purchase of income yielding assets, are reported separately.

The Council's investment policy has regard to the following:

- DLUHC's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance")
- CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2017 ("the Code")
- CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance Notes 2018

The Council's investment priorities will be security first, portfolio liquidity second and then yield, (return).

In accordance with the above guidance from the DLUHC and CIPFA, and in order to minimise the risk to investments, the Council applies minimum acceptable credit criteria in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which also enables diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the Short Term and Long Term ratings.

Ratings will not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution; it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To achieve this consideration the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as "credit default swaps" and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.

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

Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed in Annex 2 under the 'specified' and 'non-specified' investments categories. Counterparty limits will be as set through the Council's treasury management practices – schedules.

The intention of the strategy is to provide security of investment and minimisation of risk.

4.2 Creditworthiness policy

Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed in Annex 2 under the 'Specified' and 'Non-Specified' Investments categories. Counterparty limits will be as set through the Council's Treasury Management Practices – Schedules.

Investment Counterparty Selection Criteria - The primary principles governing the Council's investment criteria are the security and liquidity of its investments, although the yield or return on the investment is also a key consideration. After these main principles, the Council will ensure that:

- It maintains a policy covering both the categories of investment types it will invest in, criteria for choosing investment counterparties with adequate security, and monitoring their security. This is set out in the Specified and Non-Specified investment sections below; and
- It has sufficient liquidity in its investments. For this purpose, it will set out procedures for determining the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed. These procedures also apply to the Council's prudential indicators covering the maximum principal sums invested.

The Director of Finance will maintain a counterparty list in compliance with the following criteria and will revise the criteria and submit them to Council for approval as necessary. These criteria are separate to those that determine which types of investment instrument are either Specified or Non-Specified as they provide an overall pool of counterparties considered high quality which the Council may use, rather than defining what types of investment instruments are to be used.

The rating criteria require at least one of the ratings provided by the three ratings agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors) to meet the Council's minimum credit ratings criteria. This approach is supported by Link and is in compliance with a CIPFA Treasury Management Panel recommendation in March 2009 and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Credit rating information is supplied by Link, on all active counterparties that comply with the criteria below. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria would be omitted from the counterparty (dealing) list. Any rating changes, rating watches (notification of a likely change), rating outlooks (notification of a possible longer-term change) are provided to officers almost immediately after they occur and this information is considered before dealing. For instance, a negative rating watch applying to counterparty at the minimum Council criteria may be suspended from use, with all others being reviewed in light of market conditions.

In addition, the Council receives weekly credit lists as part of the creditworthiness service provided by Link. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utlilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moodys and Standard and Poors. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:

- credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies;
- CDS (Credit Default Swap) spreads to give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings (these provide an indication of the likelihood of bank default);
- sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

This modelling approach combines credit ratings, credit watches and credit outlooks in a weighted scoring system which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads for which the end product is a series of colour code bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties and a recommendation on the maximum duration for investments. The Council would not be able to replicate this level of detail using in-house resources, but uses this information, together with its own view on the acceptable level of counterparty risk, to inform its creditworthiness policy. The

Council will also apply a minimum sovereign rating of A- to investment counterparties.

The criteria for providing a pool of high-quality investment counterparties (both Specified and Non-specified investments) are:

- **Banks 1** - good credit quality **–** the Council will only use banks which:
  a) are UK banks;
  b) are non-UK and domiciled in a country with a minimum long-term sovereign rating of A- or equivalent;
  c) have, as a minimum, at least one of the following Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poors credit ratings (where rated):

    - Short term – Fitch F3; Moody's P-3; S&P A-3
    - Long term – Fitch BBB+; Moody's Baa3; S&P BBB+

- **Banks 2** – Part nationalised UK bank – Royal Bank of Scotland. This bank can be included provided it continues to be part nationalised.

- **Bank subsidiary and treasury operation** - The Council will use these where the parent bank has provided an appropriate guarantee or has the necessary ratings in Banks 1 above.

- **Building societies** - The Council will use all societies that meet the ratings in Banks 1 above.

- **Money Market Funds** – The Council will use AAA-rated Money Market Funds, including VNAV funds.

- **UK Government** (including gilts and the DMADF)

- **Other Local Authorities, Parish Councils, etc.**

- **Housing Associations**

- **Collective (pooled) investment schemes**

- **Supranational institutions**

- **Corporate Bonds**

- **Sovereign Bonds**

- **Certificates of Deposit, Commercial Paper and Floating Rate Notes**

The Council's detailed eligibility criteria for investments with counterparties are included in Annex 2.

All credit ratings will be continuously monitored. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of the Link creditworthiness service.

- if a downgrade results in the counterparty no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use for new investments will be withdrawn immediately.
- in addition to the use of Credit Ratings, the Council will be advised of information in movements in Credit Default Swap against the iTraxx benchmark and other market data on a weekly basis. Extreme market movements may result in downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council's lending list.

Sole reliance will not be placed on the external advisers. In addition, this Council will also use market data and market information, information on government support for banks and the credit ratings of that government support. The Council forms a view and determines its investment policy and actions after taking all these factors into account.

4.3 Country limits

The Council has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA- from Fitch Ratings (or equivalent from other agencies if Fitch does not provide). The list of countries that qualify using these credit criteria as at the date of this report is shown in Annex 2. This list will be amended by officers should ratings change in accordance with this policy.

4.4 Investment Strategy

In-house funds: The Council's core portfolio is around £350m although cashflow variations during the course of the year have the effect from time to time of increasing the total investment portfolio to a maximum of around £450m. Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e., rates for investments up to 12 months).

Investment returns expectations.
The suggested budgeted investment earnings rates for returns on investments placed for periods up to about three months during each financial year, (based on a first increase in Bank Rate in quarter 2 of 2022), are as follows.:

Average earnings in each year	Now	Previously
2022/23	0.50%	0.50%
2023/24	0.75%	0.75%
2024/25	1.00%	1.00%
2025/26	1.25%	1.25%
Long term later years	2.00%	2.00%

Investment treasury indicator and limit - total principal funds invested for greater than 365 days. These limits are set with regard to the Council's liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment, and are based on the availability of funds after each year-end.

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

As at year end	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/23
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Principal sums invested > 365 days	170.0	170.0	170.0	170.0

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

4.5 End of year investment report

After the end of the financial year, the Council will report on its investment activity as part of its Annual Treasury Report.

4.6 Scheme of Delegation

(i) Full board/council

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

(ii) Boards/committees/council/responsible body

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

(iii) Body/person(s) with responsibility for scrutiny

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

4.7 Role of the Section 151 Officer

The S151 officer is responsible for:

- 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;
- preparation of a capital strategy to include capital expenditure, capital financing, and treasury management, with a long-term timeframe;
- ensuring that the capital strategy is prudent, sustainable, affordable and prudent in the long term and provides value for money
- ensuring that due diligence has been carried out on all treasury and is in accordance with the risk appetite of the authority
- ensure that the authority has appropriate legal powers to undertake expenditure on non-financial assets and their financing
- ensuring the proportionality of all investments so that the authority does not undertake a level of investing which exposes the authority to an excessive level of risk compared to its financial resources
- ensuring that an adequate governance process is in place for the approval, monitoring and ongoing risk management of all non-financial investments and long-term liabilities
- provision to members of a schedule of all non-treasury investments including material investments in subsidiaries, joint ventures, loans and financial guarantees
- ensuring that members are adequately informed and understand the risk exposures taken on by an authority
- ensuring that the authority has adequate expertise, either in house or externally provided, to carry out the above
- creation of Treasury Management Practices which specifically deal with how non treasury investments will be carried out and managed, to include the following:
    - Risk management (TMP1 and schedules), including investment and risk management criteria for any material non-treasury investment portfolios;
    - Performance measurement and management (TMP2 and schedules), including methodology and criteria for assessing the performance and success of non-treasury investments;
    - Decision making, governance and organisation (TMP5 and schedules), including a statement of the governance requirements for decision making in relation to non-treasury investments; and arrangements to ensure that appropriate professional due diligence is carried out to support decision making;
    - Reporting and management information (TMP6 and schedules), including where and how often monitoring reports are taken;
    - Training and qualifications (TMP10 and schedules), including how the relevant knowledge and skills in relation to non-treasury investments will be arranged.

ANNEX 1: Economic Background

COVID-19 vaccines.

These were the game changer during 2021 which raised high hopes that life in the UK would be able to largely return to normal in the second half of the year. However, the bursting onto the scene of the Omicron mutation at the end of November, rendered the initial two doses of all vaccines largely ineffective in preventing infection. This has dashed such hopes and raises the spectre again that a fourth wave of the virus could overwhelm hospitals in early 2022. What we now know is that this mutation is very fast spreading with the potential for total case numbers to double every two to three days, although it possibly may not cause so much severe illness as previous mutations. Rather than go for full lockdowns which heavily damage the economy, the government strategy this time is focusing on getting as many people as possible to have a third (booster) vaccination after three months from the previous last injection, as a booster has been shown to restore a high percentage of immunity to Omicron to those who have had two vaccinations. There is now a race on between how quickly boosters can be given to limit the spread of Omicron, and how quickly will hospitals fill up and potentially be unable to cope. In the meantime, workers have been requested to work from home and restrictions have been placed on large indoor gatherings and hospitality venues. With the household saving rate having been exceptionally high since the first lockdown in March 2020, there is plenty of pent-up demand and purchasing power stored up for services in sectors like restaurants, travel, tourism and hotels which had been hit hard during 2021, but could now be hit hard again by either, or both, of government restrictions and/or consumer reluctance to leave home. Growth will also be lower due to people being ill and not working, similar to the 'pingdemic' in July. The economy, therefore, faces significant headwinds although some sectors have learned how to cope well with Covid. However, the biggest impact on growth would come from another lockdown if that happened. The big question still remains as to whether any further mutations of this virus could develop which render all current vaccines ineffective, as opposed to how quickly vaccines can be modified to deal with them and enhanced testing programmes be implemented to contain their spread until tweaked vaccines become widely available.

A SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF THE FUTURE PATH OF BANK RATE

- In December, the Bank of England became the first major western central bank to put interest rates up in this upswing in the current business cycle in western economies as recovery progresses from the Covid recession of 2020.
- The next increase in Bank Rate could be in February or May, dependent on how severe an impact there is from Omicron.
- If there are lockdowns in January, this could pose a barrier for the MPC to putting Bank Rate up again as early as 3rd February.
- With inflation expected to peak at around 6% in April, the MPC may want to be seen to be active in taking action to counter inflation on 5th May, the release date for its Quarterly Monetary Policy Report.
- The December 2021 MPC meeting was more concerned with combating inflation over the medium term than supporting economic growth in the short term.

- Bank Rate increases beyond May are difficult to forecast as inflation is likely to drop sharply in the second half of 2022.
- However, the MPC will want to normalise Bank Rate over the next three years so that it has its main monetary policy tool ready to use in time for the next down-turn; all rates under 2% are providing stimulus to economic growth.
- We have put year end 0.25% increases into Q1 of each financial year from 2023 to recognise this upward bias in Bank Rate - but the actual timing in each year is difficult to predict.
- Covid remains a major potential downside threat in all three years as we ARE likely to get further mutations.
- How quickly can science come up with a mutation proof vaccine, or other treatment, – and for them to be widely administered around the world?
- Purchases of gilts under QE ended in December. Note that when Bank Rate reaches 0.50%, the MPC has said it will start running down its stock of QE.

MPC MEETING 16H DECEMBER 2021

- The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 8-1 to raise Bank Rate by 0.15% from 0.10% to 0.25% and unanimously decided to make no changes to its programme of quantitative easing purchases due to finish in December 2021 at a total of £895bn.
- The MPC disappointed financial markets by not raising Bank Rate at its November meeting. Until Omicron burst on the scene, most forecasters, therefore, viewed a Bank Rate increase as being near certain at this December meeting due to the way that inflationary pressures have been comprehensively building in both producer and consumer prices, and in wage rates. However, at the November meeting, the MPC decided it wanted to have assurance that the labour market would get over the end of the furlough scheme on 30th September without unemployment increasing sharply; their decision was, therefore, to wait until statistics were available to show how the economy had fared at this time.
- **On 10th December we learnt of the disappointing 0.1% m/m rise in GDP** in October which suggested that economic growth had already slowed to a crawl even before the Omicron variant was discovered in late November. Early evidence suggests growth in November might have been marginally better. Nonetheless, at such low rates of growth, the government's "Plan B" COVID-19 restrictions could cause the economy to contract in December.
- **On 14th December, the labour market statistics** for the three months to October and the single month of October were released. The fallout after the furlough scheme was smaller and shorter than the Bank of England had feared. The single-month data were more informative and showed that LFS employment fell by 240,000, unemployment increased by 75,000 and the unemployment rate rose from 3.9% in September to 4.2%. However, the weekly data suggested this didn't last long as unemployment was falling again by the end of October. What's more, the 49,700 fall in the claimant count and the 257,000 rise in the PAYE measure of company payrolls suggests that the labour market strengthened again in November. The other side of the coin was a further rise in the number of vacancies from 1.182m to a record 1.219m in the three months to November which suggests that the supply of labour is struggling to keep up with demand, although the single-month figure for November fell for the first time since February, from 1.307m to 1.227m.

- These figures by themselves, would probably have been enough to give the MPC the assurance that it could press ahead to raise Bank Rate at this December meeting. However, the advent of Omicron potentially threw a spanner into the works as it poses a major headwind to the economy which, of itself, will help to cool the economy. The financial markets, therefore, swung round to expecting no change in Bank Rate.
- **On 15th December we had the CPI inflation** figure for November which spiked up further from 4.2% to 5.1%, confirming again how inflationary pressures have been building sharply. However, Omicron also caused a sharp fall in world oil and other commodity prices; (gas and electricity inflation has generally accounted on average for about 60% of the increase in inflation in advanced western economies).
- **Other elements of inflation are also transitory** e.g., prices of goods being forced up by supply shortages, and shortages of shipping containers due to ports being clogged have caused huge increases in shipping costs. But these issues are likely to clear during 2022, and then prices will subside back to more normal levels. Gas prices and electricity prices will also fall back once winter is passed and demand for these falls away.
- Although it is possible that the Government could step in with some **fiscal support for the economy**, the huge cost of such support to date is likely to pose a barrier to incurring further major economy wide expenditure unless it is very limited and targeted on narrow sectors like hospitality, (as announced just before Christmas). The Government may well, therefore, effectively leave it to the MPC, and to monetary policy, to support economic growth – but at a time when the threat posed by rising inflation is near to peaking!
- This is the adverse set of factors against which the MPC had to decide on Bank Rate. For the second month in a row, the MPC blind-sided financial markets, this time with a surprise increase in Bank Rate from 0.10% to 0.25%. What's more, the hawkish tone of comments indicated that the MPC is now concerned that inflationary pressures are indeed building and need concerted action by the MPC to counter. This indicates that there will be more increases to come with financial markets predicting 1% by the end of 2022. The 8-1 vote to raise the rate shows that there is firm agreement that inflation now poses a threat, especially after the CPI figure hit a 10-year high this week. The MPC commented that "there has been significant upside news" and that "there were some signs of greater persistence in domestic costs and price pressures".
- On the other hand, it did also comment that "the Omicron variant is likely to weigh on near-term activity". But it stressed that at the November meeting it had said it <u>would</u> raise rates if the economy evolved as it expected and that now "these conditions had been met". It also appeared more worried about the possible boost to inflation form Omicron itself. It said that "the current position of the global and UK economies was materially different compared with prior to the onset of the pandemic, including elevated levels of consumer price inflation". It also noted the possibility that renewed social distancing would boost demand for goods again, (as demand for services would fall), meaning "global price pressures might persist for longer". (Recent news is that the largest port in the world in China has come down with an Omicron outbreak which is not only affecting the port but also factories in the region.)

- On top of that, there were no references this month to inflation being expected to be below the 2% target in two years' time, which at November's meeting the MPC referenced to suggest the markets had gone too far in expecting interest rates to rise to over 1.00% by the end of the year.
- These comments indicate that there has been a material reappraisal by the MPC of the inflationary pressures since their last meeting and the Bank also increased its forecast for inflation to peak at 6% next April, rather than at 5% as of a month ago. However, as the Bank retained its guidance that only a "modest tightening" in policy will be required, it cannot be thinking that it will need to increase interest rates that much more. A typical policy tightening cycle has usually involved rates rising by 0.25% four times in a year. "Modest" seems slower than that. As such, the Bank could be thinking about raising interest rates two or three times next year to 0.75% or 1.00%.
- In as much as a considerable part of the inflationary pressures at the current time are indeed transitory, and will naturally subside, and since economic growth is likely to be weak over the next few months, this would appear to indicate that this tightening cycle is likely to be comparatively short.
- As for the timing of the next increase in Bank Rate, the MPC dropped the comment from November's statement that Bank Rate would be raised "in the coming months". That may imply another rise is unlikely at the next meeting in February and that May is more likely. However, much could depend on how adversely, or not, the economy is affected by Omicron in the run up to the next meeting on 3rd February. Once 0.50% is reached, the Bank would act to start shrinking its stock of QE, (gilts purchased by the Bank would not be replaced when they mature).

- **The MPC's forward guidance on its intended monetary policy** on raising Bank Rate versus selling (quantitative easing) holdings of bonds is as follows:

  - Raising Bank Rate as "the active instrument in most circumstances".
  - Raising Bank Rate to 0.50% before starting on reducing its holdings.
  - Once Bank Rate is at 0.50% it would stop reinvesting maturing gilts.
  - Once Bank Rate had risen to at least 1%, it would start selling its holdings.

- **US.** Shortages of goods and intermediate goods like semi-conductors, have been fuelling increases in prices and reducing economic growth potential. In November, CPI inflation hit a near 40-year record level of 6.8% but with energy prices then falling sharply, this is probably the peak. The biggest problem for the Fed is the mounting evidence of a strong pick-up in cyclical price pressures e.g., in rent which has hit a decades high.
- **Shortages of labour** have also been driving up wage rates sharply; this also poses a considerable threat to feeding back into producer prices and then into consumer prices inflation. It now also appears that there has been a sustained drop in the labour force which suggests the pandemic has had a longer-term scarring effect in reducing potential GDP. Economic growth may therefore be reduced to between 2 and 3% in 2022 and 2023 while core inflation is likely to remain elevated at around 3% in both years instead of declining back to the Fed's 2% central target.
- Inflation hitting 6.8% and the feed through into second round effects, meant that it was near certain that the Fed's meeting of 15th December would take aggressive

action against inflation. Accordingly, the rate of tapering of monthly $120bn QE purchases announced at its November 3rd meeting. was doubled so that all purchases would now finish in February 2022. In addition, Fed officials had started discussions on running down the stock of QE held by the Fed. Fed officials also expected three rate rises in 2022 of 0.25% from near zero currently, followed by three in 2023 and two in 2024, taking rates back above 2% to a neutral level for monetary policy. The first increase could come as soon as March 2022 as the chairman of the Fed stated his view that the economy had made rapid progress to achieving the other goal of the Fed – "maximum employment". The Fed forecast that inflation would fall from an average of 5.3% in 2021 to 2.6% in 2023, still above its target of 2% and both figures significantly up from previous forecasts. What was also significant was that this month the Fed dropped its description of the current level of inflation as being "transitory" and instead referred to "elevated levels" of inflation: the statement also dropped most of the language around the flexible average inflation target, with inflation now described as having exceeded 2 percent "for some time". It did not see Omicron as being a major impediment to the need to take action now to curtail the level of inflationary pressures that have built up, although Fed officials did note that it has the potential to exacerbate supply chain problems and add to price pressures.

- **EU.** The slow role out of vaccines initially delayed economic recovery in early 2021 but the vaccination rate then picked up sharply. After a contraction of -0.3% in Q1, Q2 came in with strong growth of 2%. With Q3 at 2.2%, the EU recovery was then within 0.5% of its pre Covid size. However, the arrival of Omicron is now a major headwind to growth in quarter 4 and the expected downturn into weak growth could well turn negative, with the outlook for the first two months of 2022 expected to continue to be very weak.
- **November's inflation figures** breakdown shows that the increase in price pressures is not just due to high energy costs and global demand-supply imbalances for durable goods as services inflation also rose. Headline inflation reached 4.9% in November, with over half of that due to energy. However, oil and gas prices are expected to fall after the winter and so energy inflation is expected to plummet in 2022. Core goods inflation rose to 2.4% in November, its second highest ever level, and is likely to remain high for some time as it will take a long time for the inflationary impact of global imbalances in the demand and supply of durable goods to disappear. Price pressures also increased in the services sector, but wage growth remains subdued and there are no signs of a trend of faster wage growth which might lead to *persistently* higher services inflation - which would get the ECB concerned. The upshot is that the euro-zone is set for a prolonged period of inflation being above the ECB's target of 2% and it is likely to average 3% in 2022, in line with the ECB's latest projection.
- **ECB tapering.** The ECB has joined with the Fed by also announcing at its meeting on 16th December that it will be reducing its QE purchases - by half from October 2022, i.e., it will still be providing significant stimulus via QE purchases for over half of next year. However, as inflation will fall back sharply during 2022, it is likely that it will leave its central rate below zero, (currently -0.50%), over the next two years. The main struggle that the ECB has had in recent years is that inflation has been doggedly anaemic in sticking below the ECB's target rate despite all its major programmes of monetary easing by cutting rates into negative territory and providing QE support.
- The ECB will now also need to consider the impact of Omicron on the economy, and it stated at its December meeting that it is prepared to provide further QE support if the pandemic causes bond yield spreads of peripheral countries,

(compared to the yields of northern EU countries), to rise. However, that is the only reason it will support peripheral yields, so this support is limited in its scope.

- The EU has entered into a period of political uncertainty where a new German government formed of a coalition of three parties with Olaf Scholz replacing Angela Merkel as Chancellor in December 2021, will need to find its feet both within the EU and in the three parties successfully working together. In France there is a presidential election coming up in April 2022 followed by the legislative election in June. In addition, Italy needs to elect a new president in January with Prime Minister Draghi being a favourite due to having suitable gravitas for this post. However, if he switched office, there is a significant risk that the current government coalition could collapse. That could then cause differentials between Italian and German bonds to widen when 2022 will also see a gradual running down of ECB support for the bonds of weaker countries within the EU. These political uncertainties could have repercussions on economies and on Brexit issues.
- **CHINA.** After a concerted effort to get on top of the virus outbreak in Q1 2020, economic recovery was strong in the rest of 2020; this enabled China to recover all the initial contraction. During 2020, policy makers both quashed the virus and implemented a programme of monetary and fiscal support that was particularly effective at stimulating short-term growth. At the same time, China's economy benefited from the shift towards online spending by consumers in developed markets. These factors helped to explain its comparative outperformance compared to western economies during 2020 and earlier in 2021.
- However, the pace of economic growth has now fallen back in 2021 after this initial surge of recovery from the pandemic and looks likely to be particularly weak in 2022. China has been struggling to contain the spread of the Delta variant through using sharp local lockdowns - which depress economic growth. Chinese consumers are also being very wary about leaving home and so spending money on services. However, with Omicron having now spread to China, and being much more easily transmissible, this strategy of sharp local lockdowns to stop the virus may not prove so successful in future. In addition, the current pace of providing boosters at 100 billion per month will leave much of the 1.4 billion population exposed to Omicron, and any further mutations, for a considerable time. The People's Bank of China made a start in December 2021 on cutting its key interest rate marginally so as to stimulate economic growth. However, after credit has already expanded by around 25% in just the last two years, it will probably leave the heavy lifting in supporting growth to fiscal stimulus by central and local government.
- Supply shortages, especially of coal for power generation, were causing widespread power cuts to industry during the second half of 2021 and so a sharp disruptive impact on some sectors of the economy. In addition, recent regulatory actions motivated by a political agenda to channel activities into officially approved directions, are also likely to reduce the dynamism and long-term growth of the Chinese economy.
- **JAPAN.** 2021 has been a patchy year in combating Covid. However, recent business surveys indicate that the economy has been rebounding rapidly in 2021 once the bulk of the population had been double vaccinated and new virus cases had plunged. However, Omicron could reverse this initial success in combating Covid.
- The Bank of Japan is continuing its very loose monetary policy but with little prospect of getting inflation back above 1% towards its target of 2%, any time

soon: indeed, inflation was actually negative in July. New Prime Minister Kishida, having won the November general election, brought in a supplementary budget to boost growth, but it is unlikely to have a major effect.

- **WORLD GROWTH.** World growth was in recession in 2020 but recovered during 2021 until starting to lose momentum in the second half of the year, though overall growth for the year is expected to be about 6% and to be around 4-5% in 2022. Inflation has been rising due to increases in gas and electricity prices, shipping costs and supply shortages, although these should subside during 2022. While headline inflation will fall sharply, core inflation will probably not fall as quickly as central bankers would hope. It is likely that we are heading into a period where there will be a reversal of world globalisation and a decoupling of western countries from dependence on China to supply products, and vice versa. This is likely to reduce world growth rates from those in prior decades.
- **SUPPLY SHORTAGES**. The pandemic and extreme weather events, followed by a major surge in demand after lockdowns ended, have been highly disruptive of extended worldwide supply chains. Major queues of ships unable to unload their goods at ports in New York, California and China built up rapidly during quarters 2 and 3 of 2021 but then halved during quarter 4. Such issues have led to a misdistribution of shipping containers around the world and have contributed to a huge increase in the cost of shipping. Combined with a shortage of semi-conductors, these issues have had a disruptive impact on production in many countries. The latest additional disruption has been a shortage of coal in China leading to power cuts focused primarily on producers (rather than consumers), i.e., this will further aggravate shortages in meeting demand for goods. Many western countries are also hitting up against a difficulty in filling job vacancies. It is expected that these issues will be gradually sorted out, but they are currently contributing to a spike upwards in inflation and shortages of materials and goods available to purchase.

ANNEX 2: Specified and Non-Specified Investments – Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility Criteria for investment counterparties

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

NON-SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS: These are any investments which do not meet the Specified Investment criteria (i.e. non-sterling and placed for periods greater than 1 year).

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

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

SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS
These investments are sterling investments of not more than one-year maturity or those which could be for a longer period but where the Council has the right to be repaid within 12 months if it wishes. These are relatively low risk investments where the possibility of loss of principal or investment income is small. These would include investments with:

1. The UK Government (such as the Debt Management Account deposit facility, a UK Treasury Bill or a Gilt with a maximum of 1 year to maturity).
2. A local authority, parish council or community council (maximum duration of 1 year).
3. Corporate, Sovereign or supranational bonds of no more than 1 year's duration.
4. Pooled investment vehicles (such as money market funds) that have been awarded a high credit rating by a credit rating agency.
5. A bank or building society that has been awarded a high credit rating by a credit rating agency (only investments placed for a maximum of 1 year).
6. Certificates of deposit, commercial paper or floating rate notes (maximum duration of 1 year).

Minimum credit ratings (as rated by Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors) and monetary and time period limits for all of the above categories are set out below. The rating criteria require at least one of the ratings provided by the three ratings agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors) to meet the Council's minimum credit ratings criteria. The Council will take into account other factors in determining whether an investment should be placed with a particular counterparty, but all investment decisions will be based initially on these credit ratings criteria. The Council will also apply a minimum sovereign rating of A- (or equivalent) to investment counterparties.

NON-SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS
Non-specified investments are any other type of investment (i.e., not defined as Specified above) and can be for any period over 1 year. The identification and rationale supporting

the selection of these other investments and the maximum limits to be applied are set out below.

	Non-Specified Investment Category	Limit (£ or %)
	Bank Deposits with a maturity of more than one year and up to a maximum of 3 years. These can be placed in accordance with the limits of the Council's counterparty list criteria (i.e. subject to satisfaction of Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors credit ratings criteria shown below).	£80m and 3 years limits.
	Building Society Deposits with a maturity of more than one year. These can be placed in accordance with the limits of the Council's counterparty list criteria (i.e. subject to satisfaction of Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors credit ratings criteria shown below).	None permitted at present.
	Deposits with other local authorities with a maturity of greater than 1 year and up to a maximum of 3 years. Maximum total investment of £15m with each local authority.	£15m limit with each local authority; maximum duration 3 years.
	Gilt edged securities with a maturity of greater than one year. These are Government bonds and so provide the highest security of interest and the repayment of principal on maturity. The use of UK Government gilts is restricted to fixed date, fixed rate stock with a maximum maturity of five years. The total investment in gilts is limited to £25m and will normally be held to maturity, but the value of the bond may rise or fall before maturity and losses may accrue if the bond is sold before maturity. The Director of Finance must personally approve gilt investments. The Council currently has no exposure to gilt investments.	£25m in total; maximum duration 5 years.
	Non-rated subsidiary of a credit-rated institution that satisfies the Council's counterparty list criteria. Investments with non-rated subsidiaries are permitted, but the credit-rated parent company and its subsidiaries will be set an overall group limit for the total of funds to be invested at any time.	Subject to group limit dependent on parent company's ratings.
	Corporate Bonds with a duration of greater than 1 year and up to a maximum of 5 years, subject to satisfaction of credit ratings criteria as set out below.	£25m in total; maximum duration 5 years.
	Sovereign Bonds with a duration of greater than 1 year and up to a maximum of 3 years, subject to a minimum credit rating of A-.	£25m in total; maximum duration 3 years. Sterling only.
	Collective (pooled) investment schemes with a duration of greater than 1 year. The total investment in collective (pooled) investment schemes is limited to £100m and can include property funds, diversified growth funds and other eligible funds.	£100m in total.
	Certificates of Deposit, Commercial Paper and Floating Rate Notes with a duration of greater than 1 year, subject to satisfaction of credit ratings criteria as set out below.	Subject to group banking limits dependent on bank / building society credit ratings.

	Housing Associations with a duration of between 1 and 2 years, subject to satisfaction of credit ratings criteria as set out below.	£80m in total; maximum duration 2 years.

CRITERIA FOR FUNDS MANAGED INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

- **Banks General** - good credit quality **–** the Council may only use banks which:
  a) are UK banks;
  b) are non-UK and domiciled in a country with a minimum long-term sovereign rating of A- or equivalent;
  c) have, as a minimum, at least one of the following Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poors credit ratings (where rated):

    - Short term – Fitch F3; Moody's P-3; S&P A-3
    - Long term – Fitch BBB+; Moody's Baa3; S&P BBB+

- **Banks 1A – UK and Overseas Banks (highest ratings)** - the Council may place investments up to a total of £30m for a maximum period of 1 year with UK banks (and up to a total of £15m for a maximum period of 1 year with Overseas banks) that have, as a minimum, at least at least one of the following Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors ratings (where rated).

	Short-Term	Long-Term
Fitch	F1+	AA-
Moody's	P-1	Aa3
S & P	A-1+	AA-

- **Banks 1B – UK and Overseas Banks (very high ratings)** - the Council may place investments up to a total of £20m for a maximum period of 1 year with UK banks (and up to a total of £10m for a maximum period of 6 months with Overseas banks) that have, as a minimum, at least one of the following Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors ratings (where rated).

	Short-Term	Long-Term
Fitch	F1	A
Moody's	P-1	A2
S & P	A-1	A

- **Banks 1C – UK and Overseas Banks (high ratings)** – the Council may place investments up to a total of £10m for a maximum period of 1 year with UK banks (and up to a total of £5m for a maximum period of 3 months with Overseas banks) that have, as a minimum, at least one of the following Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors ratings (where rated):

	Short-Term	Long-Term
Fitch	F3	BBB+
Moody's	P-3	Baa3
S & P	A-3	BBB+

- **Banks 2 - Part nationalised UK banks (Royal Bank of Scotland)** - the Council may place investments up to a total of £80m for up to 3 years with the part-nationalised UK Royal Bank of Scotland provided it remains part-nationalised.

- **Bank subsidiary and treasury operation** - The Council may use these where the parent bank has provided an appropriate guarantee and has the necessary ratings in Banks 1 above. The total investment limit and period will be determined by the parent company credit ratings.

- **Building societies** - The Council may use all societies that meet the ratings in Banks 1 above.

- **Money Market Funds** – The Council may invest in AAA rated Money Market Funds, including Constant Net Asset Value (CNAV) Funds, Low Volatility Net Asset Value (LVNAV) funds and Variable Net Asset value (VNAV) funds. The total invested in each of the CNAV and LVNAV Funds must not exceed £15m at any time and £10m for VNAV funds. This includes the Payden Sterling Reserve Fund for which a limit of £15m is also applied. No more than £25m in total may be invested in VNAV funds at any time."

- **UK Government (including gilts and the DMADF)** – The Council may invest in the government's DMO facility for a maximum of 1 year, but with no limit on total investment. The use of UK Government gilts is restricted to a total of £25m and to fixed date, fixed rate stock with a maximum maturity of 5 years. The Director of Finance must personally approve gilt investments.

- **Local Authorities, Parish Councils etc** – The Council may invest with any number of local authorities, subject to a maximum exposure of £15m for up to 3 years with each local authority.

- **Business Reserve Accounts** - Business reserve accounts may be used from time to time, but value and time limits will apply to counterparties as detailed above.

- **Corporate Bonds** – Investment in corporate bonds with a minimum credit rating of A- is permitted, subject to a maximum duration of 5 years and a maximum total exposure of £25m.

- **Sovereign Bonds** – Investment in sovereign bonds (sterling denominated only) with a minimum credit rating of A- is permitted, subject to a maximum duration of 3 years and a maximum total exposure of £25m.

- **Collective (pooled) investment schemes** – these may comprise property funds, diversified growth funds and other eligible funds and are permitted up to a maximum (total) of £100m.

- **Certificates of Deposit, Commercial Paper and Floating Rate Notes** – These are permitted, subject to satisfaction of minimum credit ratings in Banks General above.

- **Housing Associations** – The Council may invest with Housing Associations with a minimum credit rating of AA-, for a maximum duration of 2 years, and with a maximum deposit of £10m with any one Housing Association and £80m in total.

- **Sovereign Ratings** – The Council may only use counterparties in countries with sovereign ratings (all 3 agencies) of A- or higher.

ANNEX 3: Prudential Indicators – Summary for Approval by Council

Prudential and Treasury Indicators are relevant for the purposes of setting an integrated treasury management strategy and require the approval of the Council. They are included separately in Appendix 1 together with relevant narrative and are summarised here for submission to the Council meeting for approval.

The Council is also required to indicate if it has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. The revised Code (published in 2009 and updated in 2011, 2017 and 2021) was initially adopted by full Council on 15th February 2010 and has subsequently been re-adopted each year in February.

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	**2020/21**	**2021/22**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**
	actual	**estimate**	**estimate**	**estimate**	**estimate**
GF Capital Expenditure	£19.7m	£34.5m	£44m	£24.3m	£21.8m
HRA Capital Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-
Total Capital Expenditure	£19.7m	£34.5m	£44m	£24.3m	£21.8m
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Net borrowing requirement (net investments for Bromley)					
brought forward 1 April	£326.5m	£354.4m	£415.1m	£365.9m	£316.7m
carried forward 31 March	£354.4m	£415.1m	£365.9m	£316.7m	£267.5m
in year borrowing requirement (movement in net investments for Bromley)	+£27.9m	-£60.7m	-£49.2m	-£49.2m	-£49.2m
Capital Financing Requirement as at 31 March	£25.7m	£24.9m	£24.1m	£23.3m	£22.5m
Annual change in Cap. Financing Requirement	£16.1	-£0.8	-£0.8	-£0.8	-£0.8

TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS	**2020/21**	**2021/22**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**
	Actual	**estimate**	**estimate**	**estimate**	**estimate**
Authorised Limit for external debt -					
Borrowing	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m
other long-term liabilities	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m
TOTAL	£60.0m	£60.0m	£60.0m	£60.0m	£60.0m
Operational Boundary for external debt -					
Borrowing	£10.0m	£10.0m	£10.0m	£10.0m	£10.0m
other long-term liabilities	£20.0m	£20.0m	£20.0m	£20.0m	£20.0m
TOTAL	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m
Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit for variable rate exposure	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for more than 365 days beyond year-end dates	£170.0m	£170.0m	£170.0m	£170.0m	£170.0m