

**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority**

**Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022/23**

**Introduction**

Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Authority has invested 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 financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management.

Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act 2003* to have regard to the CIPFA Code.

Investments held for service purposes or for commercial profit are considered in a different report, the Investment Strategy.

**Economic background:** The ongoing impact on the UK from coronavirus, together with higher inflation, higher interest rates, and the country's trade position post-Brexit, will be major influences on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2022/23.

The Bank of England (BoE) increased Bank Rate to 0.25% in December 2021 while maintaining its Quantitative Easing programme at £895 billion. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 8-1 in favour of raising rates, and unanimously to maintain the asset purchase programme.

Within the announcement the MPC noted that the pace of the global recovery was broadly in line with its November Monetary Policy Report. Prior to the emergence of the Omicron coronavirus variant, the Bank also considered the UK economy to be evolving in line with expectations, however the increased uncertainty and risk to activity the new variant presents, the Bank revised down its estimates for Q4 GDP growth to 0.6% from 1.0%. Inflation was projected to be higher than previously forecast, with CPI likely to remain above 5% throughout the winter and peak at 6% in April 2022. The labour market was generally performing better than previously forecast and the BoE now expects the unemployment rate to fall to 4% compared to 4.5% forecast previously, but notes that Omicron could weaken the demand for labour.

UK CPI for November 2021 registered 5.1% year on year, up from 4.2% in the previous month. Core inflation, which excludes the more volatile components, rose to 4.0% y/y from 3.4%. The most recent labour market data for the three months to October 2021 showed the unemployment rate fell to 4.2% while the employment rate rose to 75.5%.

In October 2021, the headline 3-month average annual growth rate for wages were 4.9% for total pay and 4.3% for regular pay. In real terms, after adjusting for inflation, total pay growth was up 1.7% while regular pay was up 1.0%. The change in pay growth has been affected by a change in composition of employee jobs, where there has been a fall in the number and proportion of lower paid jobs.

Gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 1.3% in the third calendar quarter of 2021 according to the initial estimate, compared to a gain of 5.5% q/q in the previous quarter, with the annual rate slowing to 6.6% from 23.6%. The Q3 gain was modestly below the consensus forecast of a 1.5% q/q rise. During the quarter activity measures were boosted by sectors that reopened following pandemic restrictions, suggesting that wider spending was flat. Looking ahead, while monthly GDP readings suggest there had been some increase in momentum in the latter part of Q3, Q4 growth is expected to be soft.

GDP growth in the euro zone increased by 2.2% in calendar Q3 2021 following a gain of 2.1% in the second quarter and a decline of -0.3% in the first. Headline inflation has been strong, with CPI registering 4.9% year-on-year in November, the fifth successive month of inflation. Core CPI inflation was 2.6% y/y in November, the fourth month of successive increases from July's 0.7% y/y. At these levels, inflation is above the European Central Bank's target of 'below, but close to 2%', putting some pressure on its long-term stance of holding its main interest rate of 0%.

The US economy expanded at an annualised rate of 2.1% in Q3 2021, slowing sharply from gains of 6.7% and 6.3% in the previous two quarters. In its December 2021 interest rate announcement, the Federal Reserve continue to maintain the Fed Funds rate at between 0% and 0.25% but outlined its plan to reduce its asset purchase programme earlier than previously stated and signalled they are in favour of tightening interest rates at a faster pace in 2022, with three 0.25% movements now expected.

**Credit outlook:** Since the start of 2021, relatively benign credit conditions have led to credit default swap (CDS) prices for the larger UK banks to remain low and had steadily edged down throughout the year up until mid-November when the emergence of Omicron has caused them to rise modestly. However, the generally improved economic outlook during 2021 helped bank profitability and reduced the level of impairments many had made as provisions for bad loans. However, the relatively recent removal of coronavirus-related business support measures by the government means the full impact on bank balance sheets may not be known for some time.

The improved economic picture during 2021 led the credit rating agencies to reflect this in their assessment of the outlook for the UK sovereign as well as several financial

institutions, revising them from negative to stable and even making a handful of rating upgrades.

Looking ahead, while there is still the chance of bank losses from bad loans as government and central bank support is removed, the institutions on the Authority's counterparty list are well-capitalised and general credit conditions across the sector are expected to remain benign. Duration limits for counterparties on the Authority's lending list are under regular review and will continue to reflect economic conditions and the credit outlook.

**Interest rate forecast:** The Authority's treasury management adviser Arlingclose is forecasting that Bank Rate will continue to rise in calendar Q1 2022 to subdue inflationary pressures and the perceived desire by the BoE to move away from emergency levels of interest rates.

Investors continue to price in multiple rises in Bank Rate over the next forecast horizon, and Arlingclose believes that although interest rates will rise again, the increases will not be to the extent predicted by financial markets. In the near-term, the risks around Arlingclose's central case are to the upside while over the medium-term the risks become more balanced.

Yields are expected to remain broadly at current levels over the medium-term, with the 5, 10 and 20 year gilt yields expected to average around 0.65%, 0.90%, and 1.15% respectively. The risks around for short and medium-term yields are initially to the upside but shifts lower later, while for long-term yields the risk is to the upside. However, as ever there will almost certainly be short-term volatility due to economic and political uncertainty and events.

Table 1 Arlingclose Interest Rate Forecast – December 2021

	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
<b>Official Bank Rate</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Downside risk	0.00	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25
<b>3-month money market rate</b>													
Upside risk	0.05	0.05	0.25	0.35	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	0.25	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65
Downside risk	0.00	-0.25	-0.25	-0.30	-0.30	-0.30	-0.30	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35
<b>5yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.35	0.45	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.50	0.50	0.45	0.45
Arlingclose Central Case	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.65	0.70	0.75	0.75
Downside risk	-0.10	-0.20	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.30	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40
<b>10yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.10	0.25	0.35	0.40	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55
Arlingclose Central Case	0.80	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.90	0.90	0.95	0.95
Downside risk	-0.10	-0.25	-0.30	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40
<b>20yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.30	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	1.00	1.05	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.15	1.15	1.15	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
Downside risk	-0.15	-0.30	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45
<b>50yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.25	0.30	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	0.70	0.75	0.80	0.85	0.90	0.95	1.00	1.05	1.05	1.10	1.10	1.15	1.15
Downside risk	-0.15	-0.30	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45

PWLB Standard Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 1.00%  
PWLB Certainty Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.80%  
PWLB Infrastructure Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.60%

## Local Context

On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 the Authority held £nil borrowing and £345.6m of treasury investments.

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment.

The Authority is currently debt free and its capital expenditure plans do not currently imply any need to borrow over the forecast period. Investments are forecast to fall from current levels (end of Dec 2021) of £346m to £18m (end Mar 2026) as capital funding is used to finance capital expenditure as set out in the Capital programme and the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

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.

The Authority expects that its capital financing requirement will be nil on 31st March 2022 and in line with the MHCLG Guidance it expects to charge no MRP in 2022/23. The Combined Authority has no current requirement to borrow over the lifetime of the Medium

Term Financial Plan and so the forecast CFR until 2026 is £nil.

### **Borrowing Strategy**

The Authority is not currently in receipt of any loans. The balance sheet forecast shows that the Authority does not expect to need to borrow in 2022/23. However, the Authority may borrow to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £84.61 million.

**Objectives:** The Authority's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

**Strategy:** The Authority's borrowing strategy will address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of any future debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead.

The benefits of internal / short-term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly. Arlingclose will assist the Authority with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Authority borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2022/23 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.

The Authority expects to borrow any long-term loans from the PWLB or the UKIB, but will consider long-term loans from other sources including banks, pensions and local authorities, and will investigate the possibility of issuing bonds and similar instruments, in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield; the Authority intends to avoid this activity in order to retain its access to PWLB loans.

Alternatively, the Authority may arrange forward starting loans, where the interest rate is fixed in advance, but the cash is received in later years. This would enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period.

In addition, the Authority may borrow short-term loans to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.

**Sources of borrowing:** The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- HM Treasury's PWLB lending facility (formerly the Public Works Loan Board)

- The UK Infrastructure Bank
- any institution approved for investments (see below)
- any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
- any other UK public sector body
- UK public and private sector pension funds (except the Combined Authority's Pension Fund)
- capital market bond investors
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues

**Other sources of debt finance:** In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

- leasing
- hire purchase
- Private Finance Initiative
- sale and leaseback

**Municipal Bonds Agency:** UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. It issues bonds on the capital markets and lends the proceeds to local authorities. This is a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities will be required to provide bond investors with a guarantee to refund their investment in the event that the agency is unable to for any reason; and there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report to the Board.

**Short-term and variable rate loans:** These loans leave the Authority exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the interest rate exposure limits in the treasury management indicators below. Financial derivatives may be used to manage this interest rate risk (see section below).

**Debt rescheduling:** The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Authority may take advantage of this in the future and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk.

### **Treasury Investment Strategy**

The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Authority's treasury investment balance has ranged between £167m and £346m, and levels are

expected to be subject to the drawdown of funds to support the delivery of the Combined Authority's priorities and objectives as set out in the Business Plan and the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

**Objectives:** The CIPFA Code requires the Authority to invest its treasury funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Authority will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested.

**Negative interest rates:** The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the risk that the Bank of England will set its Bank Rate at or below zero, which is likely to feed through to negative interest rates on all low risk, short-term investment options. Since investments cannot pay negative income, negative rates will be applied by reducing the value of investments. In this event, security will be measured as receiving the contractually agreed amount at maturity, even though this may be less than the amount originally invested.

**Strategy:** Given the increasing risk and very low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Authority will continue to diversify into more secure and/or higher yielding asset classes during 2022/23. Due to current liquidity requirements, an increasing proportion of the Authority's surplus cash is currently invested in short-term unsecured bank deposits, and money market funds.

**Approved counterparties:** The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in table 2 below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown.

Table 2: Treasury investment counterparties and limits

Sector	Time limit	Counterparty limit	Sector limit
The UK Government	50 years	Unlimited	n/a
Local authorities & other government entities	25 years	£25m	Unlimited
Secured investments *	25 years	£25m	Unlimited
Banks (unsecured) *	13 months	£15m	Unlimited
Building societies (unsecured) *	13 months	£15m	£25m
Registered providers (unsecured) *	5 years	£15m	£50m
Money market funds *	n/a	£25m	Unlimited
Strategic pooled funds	n/a	£25m	£100m
Real estate investment trusts	n/a	£25m	£50m
Other investments *	5 years	£15m	£25m

This table must be read in conjunction with the notes below

**Minimum Credit rating:** Treasury investments in the sectors marked with an asterisk will only be made with entities whose lowest published long-term credit rating is no lower than A-. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

For entities without published credit ratings, investments may be made where external advice indicates the entity to be of similar credit quality.

**Government:** Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Central Government are deemed to be zero credit risk due to its ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

**Secured investments:** Investments secured on the borrower's assets, which limits the potential losses in the event of insolvency. The amount and quality of the security will be a key factor in the investment decision. Covered bonds and reverse repurchase agreements with banks and building societies are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used. The combined secured and unsecured investments with any one counterparty will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

**Banks and building societies (unsecured):** Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.

**Registered providers (unsecured):** Loans to, and bonds issued or guaranteed by registered providers of social housing and registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (in England), the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Welsh Government and the Department for Communities (in Northern Ireland). As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

**Money market funds:** Pooled funds that offer same-day or short notice liquidity and very low or no price volatility by investing in short-term money markets. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee. Although no sector limit applies to money market funds, the Authority will take care to diversify its liquid investments over a variety of providers to ensure access to cash at all times.

**Strategic pooled funds:** Bond, equity and property funds that offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Authority to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Authority's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.

**Real estate investment trusts:** Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties.

**Other investments:** This category covers treasury investments not listed above, for example unsecured corporate bonds and company loans. Non-bank companies cannot be bailed-in but can become insolvent placing the Authority's investment at risk.

**Operational bank accounts:** The Authority may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments, but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in, and balances will therefore be kept below £25m per bank. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Authority maintaining operational continuity.

**Risk assessment and credit ratings:** Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Authority's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. The credit rating agencies in current use are listed in the Treasury Management Practices document. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:

- no new investments will be made,
- any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
- full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.

Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "negative watch") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

**Other information on the security of investments:** The Authority understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support, reports in the quality financial press and analysis and advice from the Authority's treasury management adviser. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may otherwise meet the above criteria.

When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2020, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Authority will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent

of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Authority’s cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government via the Debt Management Office or invested in government treasury bills for example, or with other local authorities. This will cause investment returns to fall but will protect the principal sum invested.

**Investment limits:** In order to minimise the risk of a single default against available reserves, the maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £25m. A group of entities under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes.

Credit risk exposures arising from non-treasury investments, financial derivatives and balances greater than £25m in operational bank accounts would be taken account of against the relevant investment limits when making treasury management investments, but the limits in this strategy do not apply to service investments.

Limits will also be placed on fund managers, investments in brokers’ nominee accounts, foreign countries as below. Investments in pooled funds and multilateral development banks do not count against the limit for any single foreign country, since the risk is diversified over many countries.

*Table 4: Investment limits*

	<b>Cash limit</b>
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£50m per manager
Negotiable instruments held in a broker’s nominee account	£50m per broker
Foreign countries	£25m per country

**Liquidity management:** The Authority uses cash flow forecasting to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a prudent basis to minimise the risk of the Authority being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Authority’s medium-term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

The Authority will spread its liquid cash over at least three providers (e.g. bank accounts and money market funds) to ensure that access to cash is maintained in the event of operational difficulties at any one provider.

**Treasury Management Indicators**

The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

**Security:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit score of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit risk indicator	Target
Portfolio average credit rating	6 (A)

**Liquidity:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet payments within a rolling three month period, without additional borrowing.

Liquidity risk indicator	Target
Total cash available within 3 months	£25m

**Interest rate exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk:

Interest rate risk indicator	Limit
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	£1.5m
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	£1.5m

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at current rates.

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

**Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year (excluding loans):** The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

Price risk indicator	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£50m	£30m	£20m

## **Related Matters**

The CIPFA Code requires the Authority to include the following in its treasury management strategy.

**Financial Derivatives:** Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (e.g. interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk (e.g. LOBO loans and callable deposits). The general power of competence in Section 113A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 removes much of the uncertainty over combined authorities' use of standalone financial derivatives (i.e. those that are not embedded into a loan or investment).

The Authority will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Authority is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be taken into account when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds and forward starting transactions, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria, assessed using the appropriate credit rating for derivative exposures. An allowance for credit risk calculated using the methodology in the Treasury Management Practices document will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.

In line with the CIPFA Code, the Authority will seek external advice and will consider that advice before entering into financial derivatives to ensure that it fully understands the implications.

**Markets in Financial Instruments Directive:** The Authority has opted up to professional client status with its providers of financial services, allowing it access to a greater range of services but without the greater regulatory protections afforded to individuals and small companies. Given the size and range of the Authority's treasury management activities, the Chief Financial Officer believes this to be the most appropriate status.

## **Financial Implications**

The budget for investment income in 2022/23 is £0.07 million, based on the expected investment portfolio. There is budget of £0.50 million for debt interest paid in 2022/23.

Where investment income exceeds budget, e.g. from higher risk investments including pooled funds, or debt interest paid falls below budget, e.g. from cheap short-term

borrowing, then consideration will be given to transferring a portion of the revenue savings will be transferred to a treasury management reserve to cover the risk of capital losses or higher interest rates payable in future years.

### **Other Options Considered**

The CIPFA Code does not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Chief Finance Officer believes that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Some alternative strategies, with their financial and risk management implications, are listed below.

<b>Alternative</b>	<b>Impact on income and expenditure</b>	<b>Impact on risk management</b>
Invest in a narrower range of counterparties and/or for shorter times	Interest income will be lower	Lower chance of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be greater
Invest in a wider range of counterparties and/or for longer times	Interest income will be higher	Increased risk of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be smaller
Borrow additional sums at long-term fixed interest rates	Debt interest costs will rise; this is unlikely to be offset by higher investment income	Higher investment balance leading to a higher impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be more certain
Borrow short-term or variable loans instead of long-term fixed rates	Debt interest costs will initially be lower	Increases in debt interest costs will be broadly offset by rising investment income in the medium term, but long-term costs may be less certain
Reduce level of borrowing	Saving on debt interest is likely to exceed lost investment income	Reduced investment balance leading to a lower impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be less certain

## Appendix A – Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

	31 De 2021 Actual Portfolio £m	Average Rate %
<b>External borrowing:</b>		
Public Works Loan Board	0	
Local authorities	0	
LOBO loans from banks	0	
Other loans	0	
<b>Total external borrowing</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total gross external debt</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Treasury investments:</b>		
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	0.1	0.01
Government (incl. local authorities)	290.5	0.14
Money Market Funds	55.0	0.05
<b>Total treasury investments</b>	<b>345.6</b>	<b>0.12</b>
<b>Net debt</b>	<b>(345.6)</b>	