DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
FINANCE	COUNCIL	10 FEBRUARY 2020	14

MID YEAR PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT 2019/20

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

This report is a mid-year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management monitoring report which has been prepared in line with the recommendations of CIPFA's (Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants) Code of Practice on Treasury Management. This report was considered and scrutinised by the Audit and Standards Committee at the meeting of the 28th October 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit and Standards Committee considered the Mid-Year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management monitoring report at its meeting on the 28th October 2019, and recommends to Council:

1. That the Prudential Indicators and the Investment Limits as detailed in Appendix B of the report be approved.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Council approved the 2018/19 to 2022/23 Capital Strategy, which incorporated the Prudential Indicators, at its meeting on 5th March 2019.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (**Value for Money**)	√
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (**Clean and Green**)	√
Working with all partners (**Vibrant Economy**)	√
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (**A Great Place to Live**)	√
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (**A Great Place to Visit**)	√

MID YEAR PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT 2019/20 – POSITION AS AT 30th SEPTEMBER 2019

Report

The Code of Practice on Treasury Management requires the Council to receive a Mid-Year Treasury Review report in addition to the forward-looking Annual Capital Strategy and the backward-looking Annual Treasury Report. The Code of Practice also requires Members to scrutinise the Treasury Management function.

Background

The Mid-Year Treasury Review report has been prepared in compliance with the Code of Practice. In order to assist with the terminology and explanations that are included within this report Appendix A sets out a Glossary of Treasury Terms and a number of Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators Frequently Asked Questions. Appendix B sets out the latest Treasury Management position compared to the forecast Prudential Indicators.

1. **Economic Update**

1.1 Economic Background

The year to date has been dominated by uncertainty regarding the planned exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union, which remains a source of considerable concern within the financial markets.

Economic growth slowed at the end of 2018 but was expected to recover at the start of 2019 though remain sluggish throughout the year, with a revised forecast of 1.2% growth for 2019 by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR). In reality the UK's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell by 0.2% in the second quarter of 2019 compared to the previous quarter, raising concern that the UK economy was heading for recession. However, in October 2019 the Office for National Statistics reported that GDP had risen by 0.3% in the three months to August 2019 which economists have interpreted as indicating that although economic growth remains weak Britain was on track to avoid sliding into the first recession since the financial crisis of 2008.

The Bank of England base rate was increased in August 2018 by 0.25% to 0.75% and has remained at this level during 2019/20.

The July unemployment rate of 3.8% is the lowest level of unemployment since 1975.

1.2 Economic Outlook

The continuing trade tensions between the US and China, combined with tighter monetary policy may be contributing to a slowdown in global economic activity.

For the UK the nature of its relationship with the European Union is regarded as being key to the short-term prospects for the UK economy. This will only become clear once that issue has been resolved. The OBR has forecast GDP growth of 1.4% for 2020 and 1.6% for each year thereafter.

1.3 Interest Rate Forecast

The latest forecast for interest rates from the Council's Treasury Advisors, Arlingclose, is shown in table 1 below. Arlingclose consider that the UK economy still faces a challenging outlook as the country looks to separate itself from the rest of the EU. The weaker external environment severely limits potential upside movement in Bank Rate, while the slowing UK economy will place pressure on the MPC to loosen monetary policy.

Table 1: Interest Rate Forecast from Arlingclose

Quarter Ending	Bank Rate %	Investment Rates %		Borrowing Rates %		
		3 month	1 year	5 year	20 year	50 year
Dec 2019	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.15	1.90	1.95
Mar 2020	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.20	2.00	2.00
Jun 2020	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.25	2.05	2.10
Sep 2020	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.30	2.10	2.10
Dec 2020	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.35	2.10	2.10
Mar 2021	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.35	2.10	2.10
Jun 2021	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.35	2.15	2.15
Sep 2021	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.35	2.20	2.15
Dec 2021	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.35	2.20	2.20
Mar 2022	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.40	.2.20	2.20
Jun 2022	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.40	2.20	2.20
Sep 2022	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.40	2.20	2.20
Dec 2022	0.75	0.75	0.85	1.40	2.20	2.20

2. Regulatory Updates

The 2017 Prudential Code includes a requirement for local authorities to produce a Capital Strategy, a summary document approved by full Council covering capital expenditure and financing, treasury management and non-treasury investments. The Authority's Capital Strategy complying with the CIPFA's requirement, was approved by full Council on the 5th March 2019.

3. Debt Management

The Council currently has long-term debt of £1.0m at a rate of 3.91% which is due to be repaid in December 2019. No additional external borrowing has taken place during the current financial year.

The Council's underlying need to borrow is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP and capital receipts. The Council has a £5.9m Capital Financing Requirement (the CFR) based on prudential borrowing for capital expenditure that has been approved as part of the Capital Programme. The CFR of £5.9m (See Appendix B Table 2) includes this prudential borrowing. Currently this is being funded by the Council's cash flow, i.e. internal borrowing, and it is expected that internal borrowing will continue to be used for the rest of the financial year in line with advice from the Council's Treasury Advisors.

The use of internal resources in lieu of borrowing, i.e. internal borrowing, has continued to be the most cost effective means of funding capital expenditure. Internal borrowing of £5.9m is being used to fund the Capital Programme in 2019/20. Using internal borrowing lowers the overall treasury risk by reducing both external debt and temporary investments. However, this position may not be sustainable over the longer term. Consequently, external borrowing options and the timing of such borrowing will continue to be assessed in consultation with the Council's Treasury Advisors.

4. Investments

4.1 Treasury Investment Activity

The Council holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure, monies held on behalf of the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund (Lancashire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and Lancashire Combined Fire Authority) plus balances and reserves held.

The Council held £28.9m of investments as at 30th September 2019. The balance of cash is likely to reduce during the remainder of the financial year.

Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk or return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

Given the increasing risk and low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Authority has continued to invest in Local Authority loans with a maximum duration of 365 days.

The security of capital has remained the Council's main investment objective. This has been maintained by following the Council's counterparty policy as set out in the Investment Strategy for 2019/20 approved by Council on 5th March 2019.

The Council defines "high credit quality" organisations as:

- those having a credit rating of A- or higher and that are domiciled in the UK for deposits of up to one year,
- those domiciled in a foreign country those with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher for deposits of up to one year,

These criteria are specified within table 3 (Approved Investment Counterparties and limits) of the Treasury Management Strategy as approved by the Council on 5th March 2019.

Deposits have been made at an average rate of 0.81% which exceeds the benchmark return (based on the 7 day LIBID - The London Interbank Bid rate) of 0.59%. The Council's original estimate for investment income for 2019/20 was £91.5k. Income from investments has been higher than the forecast amount due to higher than anticipated cash balances and the increase in the Local Authority loan rates. Consequently this income budget has been reviewed and will be increased to £182.5k to reflect the current level of income, representing an increase in forecast interest earnings for the current year of £91k.

4.2 Readiness for Brexit

The scheduled leave date for the UK to leave the European Union is 31st October 2019 but there remains little certainty as to whether the deal agreed between the British Government and the EU will be approved by the British parliament and there is the possibility that the exit date is pushed back yet again. As the 31st October approaches the Authority will ensure there are enough accounts open at UK-domiciled banks and Money Market Funds to hold sufficient liquidity required in the near term and that its account with the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF) remains available for use in an emergency.

4.3 Non-Treasury Investments

The definition of investments in CIPFA's revised Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets (i.e. investment properties) which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. This is replicated in MHCLG's Investment Guidance, in which the definition of investments is further broadened to also include all such assets held partially for financial return.

The Authority held £3.194m of such investments in directly owned property as at 31st March 2019. These investments generated £0.227m of investment income for the Authority for 2018/19 after taking account of direct costs, representing a rate of return of 7.1%.

5. Compliance

The Chief Financial Officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the half year complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

Details of the Prudential Indicators can be found in Appendix B. As changes arise during the year some of the Prudential Indicators and Limits need to be revised.

6. Risk Assessment

Scrutiny of the revised Prudential Indicators and Limits and the subsequent recommendation of approval to the revisions by Audit and Standards Committee to Council helps to protect the Council from the risk of not having adequate liquidity or funding for the Council's capital plans.

Additionally, if this scrutiny process were absent the Council would not be compliant with the Council's approved Treasury Management Practices (as detailed in the Council Constitution) or CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

7. Conclusion

In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides members with a summary report of the treasury management activity during the first half of 2019/20. As indicated in this report, none of the Prudential Indicators have been breached and a prudent approach has been taking in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	Financial implications are contained within the body of the report.
Legal	This report secures the continued compliance with the Council's approved Treasury Management Practices (as detailed in the Council Constitution) and CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management.
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Paul O'Donoghue Chief Financial Officer	01253 658586	January 2020

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Medium Term Financial Strategy Update Including General Fund, Capital Programme & Treasury 2018/19 – 2022/23	Council meeting 5th March 2019	www.fylde.gov.uk

Attached documents

1. Appendix A – Glossary of Treasury Terms and Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators Frequently Asked Questions
2. Appendix B – Prudential Indicators
3. Appendix C – Existing Investment and Debt Portfolio Summary

Appendix A

Glossary of Treasury Terms

Term	Description
Counterparty	Another party to an agreement.
Credit rating	A measure of the credit worthiness of an institution, corporation, or a country. Credit ratings are calculated from financial history and current assets and liabilities. Typically, a credit rating tells a lender or investor the probability of the counterparty being able to pay back a loan.
Liquidity	As assessment of how readily available an investment is. It is safer to invest in liquid assets because it is easier for an investor to get their money out of the investment.
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	The minimum amount that the Council must charge to the accounts each year in order to meet the costs of repaying amounts borrowed.
Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)	PWLB is part of HM Treasury and lends money to local authorities.
Security	As assessment of the creditworthiness of a counterparty.
Treasury adviser	External consultancy firms that provide information to local authorities, including information regarding counterparty creditworthiness.
Bail-in	A bail-in takes place before bankruptcy and under current proposals, certain types of depositors would suffer a reduction in the amount of their deposit that would be returned to them whilst other classes of investor would not.
Prudential Borrowing	Borrowing that is not funded via the Revenue Support Grant or other grant aid system but rather from the Council's own resources, this is conditional that prudence is demonstrated.

<u>Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators Frequently Asked Questions</u>

1. What is the difference between capital expenditure and capital financing requirement?

Capital Expenditure is defined as expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of tangible fixed assets, subject to a de minimis level of £10,000. It includes expenditure on land, buildings and vehicles.

The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is the level of total funding that is required to fund the capital programme. The actual level of external borrowing may be lower than the CFR as a consequence of the use of internal borrowing. Internal Borrowing occurs when the Council temporarily uses its own cash resources to finance capital expenditure rather than arranging new external borrowing. This is a prudent approach when investment returns are low and counterparty risk is high.

2. What does the term 'financing' mean?

The term 'financing' does not refer to the payment of cash but the resources that will be applied to ensure that the capital payment amount is dealt with over the longer term. A number of financing options are available to Councils:-

- capital receipts (e.g. sale of land or buildings)
- contribution from revenue expenditure
- capital grant
- contribution from a third party
- borrowing
- contribution from earmarked reserves

3. Does the Council link long term loans to particular capital assets/projects?

The Council does not directly associate loans with particular capital assets/projects, as it is not best practice. The Council will, at any point in time, have a number of cash flows both positive and negative and will be managing its position in terms of its borrowings and investments in accordance with its treasury management strategy and practices. This is best practice in line with the CIPFA Prudential Code.

4. What does the term 'net borrowing should not exceed the total of the CFR' mean?

Net borrowing will remain below the CFR to ensure that the Council is only borrowing for a capital purpose. The Council is permitted to borrow in advance for a capital purpose over the medium term. The term 'total of the CFR' is the CFR of the current year plus increases in the CFR of the previous financial year and next two financial years. In other words, the total of the Council's existing assets, plus additions to assets resulting from forecast Capital Programme expenditure, e.g. vehicles. This gives the Council some headroom to borrow early for a capital purpose in order to secure low interest rates.

5. Is the cash that is being managed in-house revenue or capital?

The short term surplus cash that is managed during the year in house may be revenue or capital, e.g. the Council may receive a capital receipt in April but capital expenditure is incurred throughout the year which gives rise to increased cash balances in the early part of the financial year which is invested short term by the in house treasury team. The Council receives Council Tax which is classed as revenue income. Council Tax income is typically received in the months of April to January as the majority of Council Tax payers make 10 instalments. Therefore, the Council has less cash in the months of February and March and may need to borrow cash short-term in line with the cash flow forecast.

6. What does the Council invest in?

The Council is restricted in where it can invest its surplus funds. The restrictions are prescribed by statute (Local Government Act 2003 section 12(1) (b)). Councils are also required to have regard to supplementary investment guidance provided by the Communities and Local Government.

The Council's investments are typically short term, i.e. less than a year, and are made in sterling with institutions with high credit ratings. This is in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy approved on the 5th March 2019.

7. What is the role of internal and external auditors in respect of treasury management?

The focus of external auditors work is a Council's annual accounts and the financial management systems and processes that underpin them. The external audit will enquire as to whether the Treasury Management Code has been adopted and whether its principles and recommendations have been implemented and adhered to.

Through a process of review, the role of Internal Audit is to provide an opinion of the adequacy, application and reliability of the key internal controls put in place by management to ensure that the identified risks are sufficiently mitigated. This will assist Treasury Management in meeting its desired objectives and help to ensure that the risk of fraud and/or error is minimised. Internal Audit will also look to identify other areas of potential risk which could usefully be included as well as any inefficiencies in existing processes and procedures where improvements can be made. Treasury Management is one of the core financial systems and as such is audited on a cyclical basis.

8. What are the qualifications of Council staff involved in treasury management practices?

Staff are either working towards or have achieved professional accountancy qualifications from CIPFA (Charted Institute of Public Finance Accountants), ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) or CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants). Staff work closely with the Council's Treasury Management Advisors and attend regular treasury training and updates (provided by the Treasury Management Advisors).

Appendix B

Prudential Indicators

1.1 Capital Expenditure

Table 1 shows the revised forecast capital expenditure as reported in the latest Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2019/20 as compared to the capital expenditure originally approved by Council.

Table 1: Forecast Capital Expenditure

Forecast Capital Expenditure	2019/20 Original Indicator £M	2019/20 Latest Estimate £M
Total	12.03	17.5

The above table shows the forecast capital expenditure for 2019/20. The increase in the latest estimate is a consequence of slippage from 2018/19 into 2019/20, re-phasing of a number of schemes (including the Fairhaven Lake and Promenade Gardens Restoration Scheme and M55 Link Road) and new schemes approved since the Budget Council meeting of March 2019.

1.2 Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

Table 2 shows the CFR which is the total of all of the Council's capital assets (existing and planned) less all of the Council's capital reserves. This is the amount of capital expenditure that the Council has still to finance. The CFR is normally funded by external borrowing but currently is being funded by the Council's cash flow, i.e. internal borrowing, and it is expected that internal borrowing will continue to be used for the rest of the financial year in line with advice from the Council's Treasury Advisors. The Council has existing borrowing of £1.0m which is due to be repaid in December 2019 and therefore there is a requirement to finance £5.9m from internal cash resources.

Table 2: Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

	2019/20 Original Indicator £M	2019/20 Latest Estimate £M
Total CFR	5.9	5.9

The latest estimate of the CFR is in line with the original approved indicator.

1.3 Gross Debt and Capital Finance Requirement

The Council needs to ensure that its total capital borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR. Table 3 below shows that the Council will be able to comply with this requirement.

There are no difficulties anticipated in keeping the long term capital borrowing below the CFR.

Table 3: Gross Debt and Capital Finance Requirement

As at 31/03/2020	2019/20 Original Indicator £M	2019/20 Latest Estimate £M
Estimated Long Term Borrowing	0	0
Capital Financing Requirement	5.9	5.9

The Council is forecast to be able to fund the capital borrowing requirement with internal borrowing and does not expect to require new external borrowing during 2019/20, in line with advice from Treasury Advisors.

1.4 Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

Affordable Borrowing Limit: The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed 'Authorised Limit' for external debt) each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower 'Operational Boundary' is also required to be set as a warning level should debt approach the limit. This is detailed in table 4.

The Operational Boundary is based on the maximum external debt during the course of the year. It is not a limit and therefore may be exceeded on occasion.

The Authorised Limit for external debt represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and is set and revised by Council. It reflects the level of borrowing which, in extreme circumstances, could be afforded in the short term. This is a statutory limit which should not be breached.

There were no breaches to the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary to 30th September 2019.

Table 4: Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

	2019/20 Original Indicator £M	2019/20 Latest Estimate £M
Authorised Limit – total external debt	9.0	7.0
Operational boundary	3.0	1.0

Note

1. The Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary have reduced as a consequence of there being no requirement to borrow in the short-term for day to day cash flow. The Council is able to fund the capital borrowing requirement with internal borrowing and does not expect to require new external borrowing during 2019/20.

2. The Authorised Limit includes £6.0m for 'contingency' which is an amount that has been estimated to provide scope to undertake short-term borrowing in the event of a service delivery failure or emergency, e.g. a failure to collect council tax income.

1.5 Forecast Treasury Position

Table 5 shows the expected balances for investments and debt at 31st March 2020.

Table 5: Forecast Treasury Position

	2019/20 Estimate £M	2019/20 Revised £M
Debt (Long-Term External Borrowing)	0	0
Investments	11.0	19.2

The Council has not undertaken any new external long-term borrowing as it is funding capital expenditure with internal borrowing (see Section 3 of the report).

The forecast investments position has been updated to reflect the latest changes to the movements in reserves, provisions and capital expenditure. The increase in the level of investments at the 31st March from £11.0m to £19.2m is a consequence of the forecast timing of daily cash flows.

1.6 Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

This indicator identifies the trend in the financing cost (interest payable less interest receivable) as a percentage of the net revenue stream as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

	2019/20 Estimate £M	2019/20 Revised £M
Financing costs (£m)	0.788	0.674
Proportion of net revenue stream	7.0%	6.0%

Financing costs are based on the amount of interest payable and receivable as a percentage of the total net revenue stream of the Council. The latest estimate is lower than the original estimate due to an improved return on investment income and reduction in minimum revenue provision (MRP).

1.7 Investments over 365 days

This limit is set to ensure adequate liquidity and is the maximum amount of funds the Council will invest longer term.

Table 7: Investments over 365 days

	2019/20 Estimate £M	2019/20 Revised £M
Limit for investments over 365 days	5.0	0

Appendix C

Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position at 30.09.19

	30.09.19 Actual Portfolio £m	**30.09.19 Average Rate %**
External Borrowing:		
Public Works Loan Board	1.0	3.91
Total External Borrowing	**1.0**	
Treasury investments:		
<u>Short Term</u>		
Banks - unsecured	(3.9)	0.53
Local Authorities	(19.0)	0.88
Money Market Funds	(6.0)	0.70
Total Treasury Investments	**(28.9)**	
Net Borrowing / (Lending)	**(27.9)**	