



NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES – MR HYWEL JENKINS

28th July 2021

MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2020/21

Purpose of Report

1. This Council is required through regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury report reviewing treasury management activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2020/21 (this report).
2. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code). Some information incorporated within this report has been provided by the Council's Treasury Advisors Link Asset Services.
3. Recent changes in the regulatory environment place a much greater onus on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by members.

4. This report also confirms that Council has complied with the requirement under the Code to give prior scrutiny to the annual strategy report, which was submitted to Cabinet in March 2020 before being reported and approved by full Council.

Executive Summary

5. During 2020/21, the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements. The key actual prudential and treasury indicators detailing the impact of capital expenditure activities during the year, with comparators, are as follows:

Prudential and Treasury Indicators	2019/20 Actual £000	2020/21 Mid-Year Estimate £000	2020/21 Actual £000
Capital Expenditure	39,131	77,684	58,769
Capital Financing Requirement	342,874	344,093	343,055
External debt(gross)	307,872	299,148	301,612
Less Investments	(56,500)	(51,800)	(52,500)
Net Borrowing	251,372	247,348	249,112

6. The full list of prudential and treasury indicators are to be found in Appendix 1. During the financial year the Council operated within its treasury limits and Prudential Indicators.
7. The financial year 2020/21 was once again a challenging environment as in previous years with low investment returns and continuing counterparty risk.

Introduction and Background

8. This report summarises:
- Capital activity during the year;
 - Impact of this activity on the Council's underlying indebtedness (the Capital Financing Requirement);
 - Reporting of the required prudential and treasury indicators;

- Overall treasury position identifying how the Council has borrowed in relation to this indebtedness, and the impact on investment balances;
- Summary of interest rate movements in the year;
- Detailed debt activity; and
- Detailed investment activity

The Council's Capital Expenditure and Financing 2020/21

9. The Council undertakes capital expenditure on long-term assets. These activities may either be:

- Financed immediately through the application of capital or revenue resources (capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions etc), which has no resultant impact on the Council's borrowing need; or
- If insufficient financing is available, or a decision is taken not to apply resources, the capital expenditure will give rise to a borrowing need.
- Actual capital expenditure forms one of the required prudential indicators. The table below shows the actual capital expenditure and how this was financed.

	2019/20 Actual £'000	2020/21 Mid-Year Estimate £'000	2020/21 Actual £'000
Total capital expenditure	39,131	77,684	58,769
Resourced by:			
• Capital receipts	0	925	936
• Capital grants & contributions	24,684	62,565	46,304
• Capital Reserves and DRF	182	2,828	1,245
Unfinanced capital expenditure (to be funded from Borrowing)	14,265	11,366	10,284

The Council's Overall Borrowing Need

10. The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This figure is a gauge of the Council's debt position. The CFR results from the capital activity of the Council and what resources have been used to pay for the capital spend. It represents the 2020/21 unfinanced capital expenditure (see Table 2) and prior years' net of unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.
11. Part of the Council's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the treasury service organises the Council's cash position to ensure sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. This may be sourced through borrowing from external bodies (such as the Government, through the Public Works Loan Board [PWLB] or the money markets), or utilising temporary cash resources within the Council.
12. Reducing the CFR – Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Council is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision – MRP, to reduce the CFR. This is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need. This differs from the treasury management arrangements which ensure that cash is available to meet capital commitments. External debt can also be borrowed or repaid at any time, but this does not change the CFR.
13. The total CFR can also be reduced by:
 - The application of additional capital financing resources (such as unapplied capital receipts); or
 - Charging more than the statutory revenue charge (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).
14. The Council's CFR for the year is shown below, and represents a key prudential indicator.

CFR	2019/20 Actual £'000	2020/21 Mid-Year Estimate £'000	2020/21 Actual £'000
Opening balance	338,618	342,874	342,874
Add unfinanced capital expenditure (as above)	14,265	11,366	10,284
Less MRP	(10,009)	(10,147)	(10,103)
Closing balance	342,874	344,093	343,055

15. The borrowing activity is constrained by prudential indicators for net borrowing and the CFR, and by the authorised limit.
16. Net borrowing and the CFR – in order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term the Council's external borrowing, net of investments, must only be used for a capital purpose. This essentially means that the Council is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure. Net borrowing should not therefore, except in the short term, have exceeded the CFR for 2020/21 plus the expected changes to the CFR over 2021/22 and 2022/23. The table below highlights the Council's net borrowing position against the CFR which shows that we have self-funded the net position of £93.943m. The Council has complied with this prudential indicator.

	2019/20 Actual £'000	2020/21 Mid-Year Estimate £'000	2020/21 Actual £'000
Net borrowing position	251,372	247,348	249,112
CFR	342,874	344,093	343,055
Self-funded	91,502	96,745	93,943

17. The authorised limit – the authorised limit is the “affordable borrowing limit” required by s3 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Council does not have the power to borrow above this level.
18. The operational boundary – the operational boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year.

19. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the boundary is acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.

	Actual 2020/21 £000
Operational boundary	373,055
Authorised limit	393,055
Total Maximum Borrowing compared to Operational Boundary at any point during the year	307,875

The Council has maintained gross borrowing below the Authorised limit.

Treasury Position as at 31st March 2021

20. The Council's debt and investment position is managed by Finance Treasury Staff in order to ensure adequate liquidity for revenue and capital activities, security for investments and to manage risks within all treasury management activities. Procedures and controls to achieve these objectives are well established both through Member reporting detailed in the executive summary, and through officer activity detailed in the Council's Treasury Management Practices. At the beginning and the end of 2020/21 the Council's treasury position was as follows:

	31 March 2020 Principal	Rate / Return	31 March 2021 Principal	Rate / Return

Fixed rate funding:	£m	%	£m	%
-PWLB	241.804	3.40%	232.598	3.03%
-Market (LOBO)	62.500	3.93%	62.500	3.93%
Other:				
WG Crown Loan	1.500	0.00%	3.000	0.00%
Salix	0.500	0.00%	1.943	0.00%
Temp Loans	1.568	0.71%	1.571	0.18%
Total debt	307.872		301.612	
Investments:				
- in house	56.500	0.74%	52.500	0.16%
Total investments	56.500		52.500	
Net Borrowing	251.372		249.112	

PWLB = Public Works Loans Board which is a body the Government has established to lend money to Local Government.

Market LOBO's = Lender Option Borrower Option – this is borrowing from the market when the lender has offered a long term loan but with options to continue or foreclose on the loan at various specific intervals.

Other:

WG Crown Loan = interest free loan from Welsh Government used to fund the purchase of the former Crown Building in Briton Ferry

Salix = interest free loan from Welsh Government via Salix Finance Ltd to be used towards funding new Street Lighting

Temp Loans = these include several loans the council has such as from Education Trust Funds and Welsh Church Act Funds.

The Strategy for 2020/21

21. The strategy for 2020/21 was approved by Council in March 2020 and included the following:

New Borrowing:

22. The cheapest borrowing will be internal borrowing by running down cash balances and foregoing interest earned at historically low rates. However this strategy can only be used as a short term measure therefore consideration will be given to entering into external borrowing.
23. The following types of loan arrangement will be considered (in no particular order):
 - Temporary borrowing from the money markets or other local authorities.
 - Short dated borrowing from the market or PWLB.
 - Long term fixed rate market or PWLB loans

Investments

24. The Council continued with its main investment priorities:

- (a) security of capital
- (b) liquidity of capital

with the aim of achieving the optimum return commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. With investments being dominated by low counterparty risk considerations, relatively low returns were expected when compared to borrowing rates.

25. For balances generated through normal cashflow the strategy looked to utilise the business reserve (call account) and short dated deposits.

Debt Rescheduling

26. The strategy allowed for the use of investment balances to repay debt prematurely providing it was economically worthwhile and it enhanced the maturity profile of the debt portfolio.
27. No debt rescheduling was anticipated (or took place) in 2020/21 particularly as the PWLB rate structures have made it more expensive in recent years to do so.

Borrowing Outturn for 2020/21

28. The table below shows the new long term loans entered into during 2020/21.

Counterparty	£	Description
Welsh Government - Crown	£1.5m	interest free loan from Welsh Government used to fund works at the former Crown Building in Briton Ferry
Salix	£1.443m	interest free loan from Welsh Government via Salix Finance Ltd to be used towards funding new Street Lighting

29. Treasury Borrowing – There were no short-term temporary loans taken out during 2020/21

Investment Outturn for 2020/21

30. Investment Policy – the Council’s investment policy is governed by Welsh Government guidance, which has been implemented in the annual investment strategy approved by Council in March 2020. This policy sets out the approach for choosing investment counterparties, and is based on credit ratings provided by the three main credit rating agencies supplemented by additional market data (such as rating outlooks, credit default swaps, bank share prices etc).
31. As part of our planning for dealing with COVID19 pandemic, we decided to increase the amount of money invested in our Santander call account. This was done to ensure the Authority had enough liquid cash to deal with any unknown issues that would arise from the pandemic. The strategy says we can invest up to £15m with our own bankers, but this can be temporarily exceeded where necessary. The most we had invested with them during the financial year was £117m on 9th June 2020, and the balance on 31st March 2021 was £22.5m. This strategy will also continue into 2021/22 for the same reason.
32. All other investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy.

33. Resources – the Council’s longer term cash balances comprise, primarily, revenue and capital resources, although these will be influenced by cash flow considerations. The Council’s cash resources comprised the following:

Balance Sheet Resources	31 March 2020 £'000	31 March 2021 £'000
Balances and Earmarked Reserves	59,093	79,052
Provisions	4,836	5,629
Usable capital receipts	8,076	8,883
Total	72,005	93,564

34. Investments held by the Council – The Council received the following return on its investments:

Average Investment £'000	External Interest Earned £'000	Rate of Return %	Benchmark Return %
86,247	251	0.29%	0.09%

35. The benchmark for funds managed in house is the 3 month LIBID uncompounded. The rate reflects a more realistic neutral position for core investments with a medium term horizon and a rate which is more stable with fewer fluctuations caused by market liquidity.
36. For information, the following table details the changes in the bank base rate:

Effective Date	Bank Rate
8th January 2009	1.50%
5th February 2009	1.00%
5th March 2009	0.50%
4th August 2016	0.25%
2nd November 2017	0.50%
2 nd August 2018	0.75%
11 th March 2020	0.25%
19 th March 2020	0.10%

Treasury Management Reserve

37. The below table shows the Treasury Management Equalisation reserve, broken down between General and Earmarked balances:

	£000s
General balances:	
Opening Balance as at 1 st April 2020 (excluding earmarked funding)	3,172
In year deficit	(200)
Capital Receipts under £10k	96
Total General Closing Balance	3,068
Earmarked balances:	
City Deal	5,334
Neath Town Centre	500
Total Earmarked Closing Balance	5,834
Grand Total Treasury Management Reserve	8,902

Performance Measurement

38. One of the key requirements in the Code is the formal introduction of performance measurement relating to investments, debt and capital financing activities. Whilst investment performance criteria have been well developed and universally accepted, debt performance indicators continue to be a more problematic area with the traditional average portfolio rate of interest acting as the main guide (as incorporated in the table in section 20). The Council's original performance indicators for 2020/21 were set out in the Annual Treasury Strategy approved by Council in March 2020.

Financial Impact

39. All financial impacts are detailed within the body of the report.

Integrated Impact Assessment

40. There is no requirement for an integrated impact assessment for this report.

Valleys Communities Impacts

41. No implications

Workforce impacts

42. There are no workforce impacts resulting from this report.

Legal impacts

43. The report deals with the Council's legal requirements as set out in Local Government Act 2003.

Risk management

44. Compliance with the strategies outlined in this report should be sufficient in terms of managing risks in this area.

Consultation

45. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

46. It is recommended that Members note the 2020/21 treasury management function performance as set out in this report including the actual 2020/21 prudential and treasury indicators.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Prudential Indicators

List of Background Papers

Statement of Accounts 2020/21

Officer Contact

For further information on this report item, please contact: -

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PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Mid-Year Estimate	2020/21 Actual
Capital Expenditure	£'000 39,131	£'000 77,684	£'000 58,769
Capital Financing Requirement as at 31 st March	342,874	344,093	343,055
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	% 7.04	% 6.81	% 6.63
Authorised Limit for External Debt: Borrowing and other long term liabilities	392,873	394,093	393,055
Operational Boundary for External Debt: Borrowing and other long term liabilities	372,873	374,093	373,055
External Debt (Gross)	307,872	299,148	301,612
Less Investments	(56,500)	(51,800)	(52,500)
Net Borrowing Position	251,372	247,348	249,112

Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing During 2020/21	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Original Estimate		2020/21 Actual
		Upper Limit	Lower Limit	
	%	%	%	%
Under 12 months	3	15	0	1
12 months to 2 years	0	15	0	9
2 to 5 years	12	40	0	4
5 to 10 years	1	60	0	1
10 years and above	84	100	15	85