

To: City Executive Board

Date: 7th December 2011

Report of: Head of Finance

Title of Report: Treasury Management Mid Year Review Report

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To report performance of the treasury management function for the period April to September 2011 and changes to operational investment activities for the remainder of the financial year.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Councillor Ed Turner

Policy Framework: Sustaining Financial Stability

Recommendations:

- 1) To note the performance of the treasury management function for the first six months of 2011/12**
- 2) To note the proposed changes in operational investment activities for the remainder of 2011/12**

Appendices

1. Appendices to the report are listed below
 - Appendix 1 – Current list of investments
 - Appendix 2 – Prudential indicators
 - Appendix 3 – Risk register

Introduction

2. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Revised Code of Practice on Treasury Management was adopted by this Council on 3rd February 2010
3. This mid year report has been prepared in compliance with the Code of Practice, and covers the following:
 - An economic update for the first six months of 2011/12
 - A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy

- A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2011/12
- A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2011/12
- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2011/12

Economic Update

Global Economy

4. The Euro zone sovereign debt crisis continues with Spain and particularly Italy, being the focus of renewed concern that they may soon join with Greece, Ireland and Portugal in needing assistance. The approval of the £440bn bail out fund in September brought temporary relief to financial markets but this does not provide a credible remedy to the scale of the Greek debt problem or reflect the potential scale of support which may be needed by others.
5. This, coupled with political difficulties in the US over their plans to address the budget deficit, the size and control over the US sovereign debt, and the subsequent loss of the AAA credit rating from Standard and Poors, has led to a much more difficult and uncertain outlook for the world economy. Growth prospects in the US, UK and the Euro zone have been lower than expected, with future prospects similarly cut. Whilst not a central view, concerns of a double dip recession in some Western countries have increased. World stock markets fell in the second quarter of 2011/12 as a consequence.

UK Economy

6. Following zero growth in the final half of 2010/11 the UK economy grew by a weaker than expected 0.2% in the first quarter of 2011/12, providing a knock on effect to future growth prospects. Growth prospects will be governed by UK consumer sentiment, which is currently subdued due to falling disposable income. Higher VAT, overhanging debt, high inflation and concerns over employment are likely to continue to weigh heavily on consumers into the future.
7. Inflation remains high, although the expectation of future falls, the external nature of the price increases (energy, oil, food etc.) and the negative impact a rate rise would have on the UK economy, is likely to stop the Monetary Policy Committee from raising the Bank Base Rate for some considerable time to come. An indicator of the worsening position arose from the Monetary Policy Committee minutes recently signalling a greater willingness to expand the quantitative easing programme.
8. International investors continue to view UK government gilts as being a safe haven from the EU sovereign debt crisis. The consequent increase in demand for gilts has helped to add downward pressure on gilt yields and sent PWLB borrowing rates to low levels.

Outlook for the next six months of 2011/12

9. There remains huge uncertainty in economic forecasts due to the following:
 - the speed of economic recovery in the UK, US and EU;
 - the likely political gridlock in the US preventing significant government fiscal action to boost growth ahead of the Presidential elections in November 2012
 - the potential for a major EU sovereign debt crisis which could have a significant impact on financial markets and the global and UK economy

- the degree to which government austerity programmes will dampen economic growth;
- the potential for more quantitative easing, and the timing of this in both the UK and US
- the speed of recovery of banks' profitability and balance sheet imbalances

10. The overall balance of risks is weighted to the downside:

- We expect low growth in the UK to continue, with the Bank Base Rate remaining low for at least 12 months which coupled with a possible extension of quantitative easing will keep investment returns depressed.
- PWLB rates are expected to rise in the longer term, primarily due to the need for a high volume of gilt issuance in the UK and the high volume of debt issuance in other major western countries. However, the current safe haven status of the UK may continue for some time, postponing any increases until 2012.

Sector's Interest Rate Forecasts

11. The table below shows Sector's current interest rate forecasts:

	Now	Q3 2011	Q4 2011	Q1 2012	Q2 2012	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013
Bank Rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%
3 Month LIBID	0.82%	0.70%	0.70%	0.70%	0.70%	0.70%	0.70%	0.70%	0.90%
6 Month LIBID	1.10%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.20%	1.30%	1.50%
12 Month LIBID	1.59%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.60%	1.80%	2.00%
10 year PWLB rate	3.52%	3.30%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%	3.50%	3.60%	3.70%
25 year PWLB rate	4.56%	4.20%	4.20%	4.20%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.50%	4.60%
50 year PWLB rate	4.73%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.40%	4.50%	4.60%	4.70%

Review of current year performance

12. Investment returns have increased significantly over the first six months of 2011/12. The cumulative average rate of return on investments for the first half of the year was approximately 0.94%. This has generated approximately £175,000 of interest from average balances of £37.3 million. The cumulative return has increased by approximately 12 basis points from quarter one, which was 0.82%.

13. Budgeted investment income for 2011/12 is approximately £286,000 the forecast outturn is £340,000, an increase of £54,000.

14. The uplift in return has been achieved through restructuring the Council's short term investment portfolio. We have utilised high interest rate notice bank accounts and ensured that our short term deposit interest rates achieve a higher rate of return than our money market funds.

15. Returns have also out performed the Council's key benchmark investment interest rate, the average Sterling Interbank 7 day LIBID rate. This has remained relatively flat at around 0.47% throughout the period. However, we are slightly below our Performance Indicator of 0.50% above Base rate.

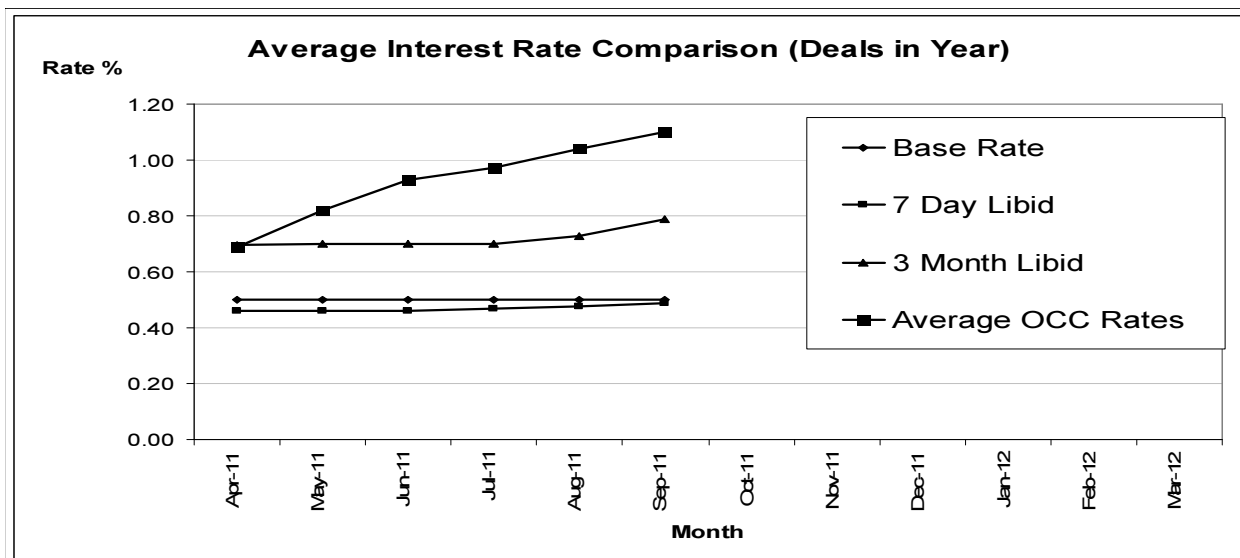
16. 2011/12 first half year investment balances and average returns are set out below:

Month	Average Balances	Average Return	Interest
April 2011	£31.43 million	0.69%	£17,825.41
May 2011	£33.90 million	0.82%	£23,648.55
June 2011	£38.51 million	0.93%	£29,407.84
July 2011	£42.47 million	0.97%	£35,101.04
August 2011	£39.37 million	1.04%	£34,747.65
September 2011	£38.25 million	1.10%	£34,509.26
Period Averages	£37.34 million	0.94%	£175,239.73

* Table above excludes Icelandic Investments

Average Interest Rate Comparison graph

17. The graph below compares our in-house average rate of return to the Bank of England's Base Rate and our benchmark interest rates:



18. The graph shows that the Council's monthly average rates have steadily increased over the period and that they are substantially above both our benchmark rates and the Bank of England's Base Rate.

Internal Audit

19. In August, PWC carried out an internal audit of the Council's treasury management function. Their audit concluded that the function's controls and procedures had improved considerably over the last year and as a result they awarded their highest rating of low risk, which means that they are confident that the function is being effectively managed. They reported 3 low risk & 1 medium risk actions which we will be built into the work plan over the next quarter.

Icelandic Investments

20. In October 2008, the Icelandic banks Landsbanki, Kaupthing and Glitnir collapsed and the UK subsidiaries of the banks, Heritable and Kaupthing Singer and Friedlander went into administration. The authority had £4.5 million deposited across 2 of these institutions, with varying maturity dates and interest rates.

21. The original terms and the amounts currently outstanding are shown in the table below:

Counterparty	Original Principal	Interest Rate	Maturity Date	Principal Outstanding as at 30 th Sept 2011
Glitnir	£1,500,000	5.51%	28/01/2009	£1,500,000
Heritable	£1,000,000	6.04%	05/01/2009	£395,836
Heritable	£1,000,000	6.18%	30/04/2009	£395,836
Heritable	£1,000,000	5.83%	09/12/2008	£395,836

22. A ninth Heritable Bank dividend is due to be repaid in October. There have been no repayments received in relation to the Glitnir Bank deposit.

23. At the end of September, CIPFA issued the latest LAAP Bulletin 82 Update (No 5) on Icelandic Banks. The Bulletin did not reflect a significant change from the previous update, except in the case of Heritable Bank plc, where the estimated dividend has been revised up to 88%, to reflect the latest report issued by the Administrator and a "best case" return of between 86-90%. This results in an increase in the expected return of approximately 7.5% as at 31st March 2011. This equated to an approximate change to our impairment of £72k. However, due to the lateness of the Bulletin, we did not change our accounts to reflect this.

24. The priority status appeal, in relation to our deposit held with Glitnir, has recently been heard by the Icelandic Supreme Court, who have confirmed that Local authority Test Cases will be treated as priority cases and as such receive a large proportion of their original deposit back. The Winding up Board for Glitnir has now confirmed that non test cases will be treated the same therefore we expect to receive a large proportion of our original deposit back. However, at this stage the exact amount and timing are uncertain.

The Treasury Management Lending List

25. The Council's approved Treasury Management Lending List is based upon Sector's recommended counterparty lending list. This list is determined by current counterparty credit ratings provided by all three credit rating agencies and by changes to their credit default swap spreads. There have been no changes to the Council's approved Treasury Management Lending List during this period.

26. Below is the Lending List as at 30th September 2011, which is the same as that approved at Council in February 2011:

Counterparty Name	Group	Maximum Limit £M's	Maximum Period Days
SPECIFIED			
Barclays Bank plc		10.0	180
Cater Allen	Santander Group	10.0	90
Co-operative		0.5	Call
Clydesdale Bank		10.0	364
HSBC Bank plc	HSBC Group	10.0	90
Santander UK plc	Santander Group	10.0	180
Standard Chartered Bank		10.0	90
Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation Europe Ltd		10.0	90
Nationwide BS		10.0	180
Bank of Scotland Plc	Lloyds Banking Group plc	10.0	364
Lloyds TSB Bank Plc	Lloyds Banking Group plc	10.0	364
National Westminster Bank Plc	Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc	10.0	364
The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc	Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc	10.0	364
Ulster Bank Ltd	Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc	10.0	364
NON SPECIFIED			
Yorkshire Building Society		3.0	90
Coventry Building Society		3.0	90
Skipton Building Society		3.0	90
Leeds Building Society		3.0	90
OTHERS			
Debt Management Office		Unlimited	364
Local Authorities		10.0	364
Money Market Funds		15.0	

This is subject to change in line with credit rating changes, credit rating and outlook watches, and changes to CDS spreads

Investment Balances

27. A full list of investments held as at 30th September 2011 is shown in Appendix 1 of this report. These investments comply with the Council's lending list criteria and are held in highly credit rated Government backed banks, building societies, call accounts and money market funds. The list excludes the Icelandic bank investments (shown above).

Investment Strategy

28. In line with the recommendations made in the 2011/12 Strategy, the Council has initiated a rolling programme of lending up to 364 days with highly credit rated, Government backed financial institutions. Fluctuations in the Council's balances have been managed through the use of a mix of instant access and notice accounts, money market funds and short term deposits (up to 3 months).

29. It is anticipated that this approach will enable the Authority to achieve its target performance of the Bank of England Base Rate plus 50 basis points, which is currently 1.00 and unlikely to change based on Base rate forecasts.
30. Officers review the lending list on a monthly basis and in light of recent market turbulence have decided to temporarily suspend investments with unrated building societies such as Yorkshire, Coventry, Skipton and Leeds. Lending has also temporarily been restricted to a maximum of three months to all other institutions, with the exception of other local authorities or semi-nationalised banks. No changes are required to the overall Treasury Management Strategy as this change is at an operational level. The situation will continue to be reviewed.

Debt and Borrowing

31. The Council's capital financing requirement (CFR) as at 1st April 2011 was £22.613m. The CFR denotes the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. If the CFR is positive the Council may borrow from the PWLB or the market (external borrowing) or from internal balances on a temporary basis (internal borrowing). The balance of external and internal borrowing is largely driven by market conditions.
32. The Council's external debt as at 30th September 2011 was approximately £4m, all at fixed interest rates. All of this debt is in respect of previous Housing Revenue Account activity and as such all interest charges are recovered through the Housing Subsidy scheme. The Council also has a long term liability with South Oxfordshire District Council which as at 30th September 2011 stood at £1.4m. No further borrowing has been taken in the year to date.
33. Sector has recently advised that borrowing interest rates are now significantly below their revised trigger rates for taking external debt and as such, consideration should be given to borrowing fixed rate funds for periods in excess of five years. A recent assessment has concluded that it would not be cost effective to borrow from external sources in advance of need as the cost of borrowing would exceed the return received on such funds. However, the Council is still continuing to monitor rates and forecasts on a regular basis to ensure we are in a position to take on new external debt to fund the current Capital Programme commitments.

Review of prudential indicators

34. In accordance with the CIPFA code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code the Council's Treasury Management Strategy sets out how the Council's treasury service supports capital decisions taken, the day to day treasury function and the limitations on activity, i.e the prudential indicators. The key prudential indicator is the Authorised Limit, i.e. the maximum amount of debt the Council could afford in the short term, but which would not be sustainable in the longer term. The Affordable Borrowing limit required by s3 of the Local Government Act 2003 is the sustainable borrowing limit.
35. In the year to date the Council has complied with its Treasury Management Practices and operated within and in accordance with the prudential indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement. The Council's Prudential and Treasury Indicators are shown in Appendix 2.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Reform

36. In order to fund the transition from the current Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Scheme to a self-financing scheme it is estimated that the Council will be required to borrow approximately £200m to buy out of the current scheme. This payment will be made to the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) on 28th March 2012. These funds will need to be borrowed from external sources and an appropriate maturity profile established in line with the thirty year Housing Business Plan.
37. The Council's property team is currently working with Savills to identify Oxford's thirty year housing repairs requirements. These requirements will then be incorporated into the thirty year business plan. The Council has employed Sector to provide advice on the formulation of a cohesive borrowing strategy that supports the business plan.
38. In September, the Government announced that, for borrowing in relation to Self Financing (SF) and the buy out of the HRA from the current subsidy system it will be reducing the margin on interest rates charged by the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) from 100 basis points (bps) above gilts to the margins used before the Spending Review (SR) October 2010. This reduction could potentially save the council approximately £1.7-£1.8 million in interest charges per year, in comparison to other forms of funding such as a bonds issue and is likely to rule out all of the other borrowing options (except possibly short term borrowing from other local authorities), as it is unlikely that other institutions will be able to compete with these interest rates. We will keep the position under review..
39. A revised 2011/12 Strategy will be presented to CEB in February 2012 for recommendation to Council later that month, to enable us to borrow the funds required to finance the transition to self-financing. It will be completed in tandem with the strategy for 2012/13.

Risk

40. The attached risk register at Appendix 3 considers the risks associated with this report.

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Background paper(s):

- Treasury Management Strategy 2011/12 CEB 9th February 2011

Counterparty Name	Group Name	Principal Amount	Interest Rate	Start Date	Maturity Date	Broker / Non Broker
		£	%			
Building Societies						
Skipton Building Society		2,000,000	0.87%	05-Sep-11	02-Dec-11	Tradition
Skipton Building Society		1,000,000	0.80%	06-Jul-11	04-Dec-11	Tradition
Coventry Building Society		2,500,000	0.88%	15-Sep-11	14-Dec-11	Sterling
Nationwide Building Society		2,000,000	1.08%	26-Aug-11	27-Feb-12	RP Martin
Nationwide Building Society		2,000,000	0.82%	15-Sep-11	13-Dec-11	Tradition
Banks						
Bank of Scotland Plc	Lloyds Banking Group Plc	3,500,000	2.10%	15-Jul-11	12-Jul-12	Non Broker
Bank of Scotland Plc	Lloyds Banking Group Plc	2,000,000	1.25%	15-Jul-11	19-Oct-11	Non Broker
Bank of Scotland Plc	Lloyds Banking Group Plc	1,300,000	1.80%	10-Aug-11	10-May-12	Non Broker
Santander UK 95 Day Notice Account		6,796,373	1.25%	21-Sep-11	95 Days Notice	Non Broker
Santander UK BR Account		266	0.60%		Instant Access	Non Broker
Natwest Liquidity Select Account	Royal bank of Scotland Group Plc	6,699,938	0.91%	30-Sep-11	Instant Access	Non Broker
Clydesdale 30 Day Notice Account		6,800,000	0.85%	05-Sep-11	30 Days Notice	Non Broker
Money Market Funds						
Goldmand Sachs MMF		0	0.60%		Instant Access	Non Broker
DB Advisors MMF		285,000	0.82%	22-Sep-11	Instant Access	Non Broker
Investments Total		36,881,578				

Investment Balances Classified by Financial Intermediary

Broker / Non Broker	Principal Outstanding	Percentage split	Number of Loans / Facilities
	£	%	
Non Broker	27,381,578	74.24%	9
Tradition	5,000,000	13.56%	3
Prebon	0	0.00%	0
RP Martin	2,000,000	5.42%	1
Sterling	2,500,000	6.78%	1
Investments Total	36,881,578	100.00%	14

Investment Maturity Profile

Period to Maturity	Fixed Deposits	Call Accounts	Money Market Funds	Total	Percentage split
	£	£	£	£	%
Overnight	0	6,700,204	285,000	6,985,204	18.94%
Overnight - 1 Month	0	6,800,000	0	6,800,000	18.44%
1 month - 2 months	2,000,000	0	0	2,000,000	5.42%
2 months - 3 months	7,500,000	0	0	7,500,000	20.34%
3 months - 4 months	0	6,796,373	0	6,796,373	18.43%
4 months - 6 months	2,000,000	0	0	2,000,000	5.42%
6 months - 9 months	4,800,000	0	0	4,800,000	13.01%
9 months - 364 days	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Total	16,300,000	20,296,578	285,000	36,881,578	100.00%

Prudential Indicators – 2011/12

Table 1	Principal	Ave. rate
	£m	%
Fixed rate funding	PWLB 4,376	10.46%
Variable rate funding	PWLB 0	0.00%
Other long term liabilities	1,413	0.61%
Gross debt	5,789	
Total investments	37,340	0.94%
Net debt	-31,551	

TABLE 2: Prudential indicators	2010/11	2011/12	2011/12
Extract from budget and rent setting reports	actual	Original estimate	probable out-turn
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Expenditure			
General Fund	9,952.61	20,277.50	23,778.63
HRA	14,930.14	8,500.00	11,200.88
TOTAL	24,882.75	28,777.50	34,979.51
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream			
General Fund	1.9%	0.7%	0.7%
HRA	4.5%	5.0%	5.0%
Net borrowing requirement			
brought forward 1 April	14,219.00	22,613.00	22,613.00
carried forward 31 March	22,613.00	32,881.00	26,835.00
in year borrowing requirement	8,394.0	10,268.0	4,222.0
In year Capital Financing Requirement			
General Fund	3,794.00	10,268.00	4,222.00
HRA	4,600.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	8,394.00	10,268.00	4,222.00
Incremental impact of capital investment decisions			
Increase in Council Tax (band D) per annum *	£ p 0.00	£ p 0.00	£ p 0.00
Increase in average housing rent per week	£ p 0.00	£ p 0.00	£ p 0.00

TABLE 3: Treasury management indicators	2010/11	2011/12	2011/12
	actual	Original estimate	probable out-turn
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Authorised Limit for external debt -			
borrowing	25,000.00	36,000.00	36,000.00
other long term liabilities	1,700.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
TOTAL	26,700.00	37,500.00	37,500.00
Operational Boundary for external debt -			
borrowing	23,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00
other long term liabilities	1,700.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
TOTAL	24,700.00	36,500.00	36,500.00
Actual external debt			4,376.00
Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure			
Net principal re fixed rate borrowing and investments	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit for variable rate exposure			
Net principal re variable rate borrowing and investments	25%	25%	25%
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 364 days (per maturity date)	20%	0%	0%

TABLE 4: Maturity structure of new fixed rate borrowing during 2010/11	upper limit	lower limit
under 12 months	30%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	30%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	80%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	50%	0%
10 years and above	50%	0%

TABLE 5: Comparison of gross and net debt positions at year end	2010/11	2011/12
	actual	probable out-turn
	£'000	£'000
Actual external debt (gross)	4,376	3,638
Cash balances	24,000	37,500
Net debt	-19,624	-33,862

Appendix 3

Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk		Residual Risk		Current Risk		Owner	Date Risk Reviewed	Proximity of Risk (Projects/ Contracts Only)
Category-000-Service Area Code	Risk Title	Opportunity/Threat	Risk Description	Risk Cause	Consequence	Date raised	1 to 6	I	P	I	P	I	P			
TMS-001	Loss of capital investment	T	Loss of capital investment – if counterparty invested in collapses and is unable to repay the original investment	Collapse of counterparty, counterparty unable to repay investments	The Council will lose money which could potentially have an adverse effect on operational funding	1-Nov-11	6	3	3	2	3	2	3	Anna Winship	01-Nov-11	
TMS-002	Interest Rates	O/T	Interest Rates – Although interest rates are currently at an all time low, the period of time that they remain at this level is to be considered. A prolonged period will affect the long term returns for the organisation.	No change to base rate and associated market investment rates, or rates that only move upwards slowly over a prolonged period of time	The Council will not be able to realise the returns on investment as previously projected in the budget	1-Nov-11	6	3	3	2	2	2	2	Anna Winship	14-Jan-11	
Insert new row above																