

Prudential Indicators

NOTE

Prudential Indicator figures for 2024/25 are based on figures which are still being audited.

Definitions

Service Investments

The Prudential Code requires Councils to provide prudential indicators in respect of service investments separate from treasury investments but does not provide a specific definition of what a service investment includes. There is a danger that these could be taken to include all of the activities of the Council. It is important therefore that service investments, for the purposes of the prudential indicators, are strictly defined. For these indicators, service investment the definition used is as follows:

A transaction which is directly involved in or results in the delivery of a service, results in a balance sheet asset and which arises from the use of a loan or provision of funding and that is repayable at some point in the future.

Commercial Investments

In the Prudential Code guidance, CIPFA considers that “an investment that is not a service investment and is of a long-term nature (e.g. equities, commercial properties, long-term bonds, or pooled funds of these investments) is likely to be a ‘commercial investment’ if made by an authority that is a net borrower, because an authority that has a cash need to borrow is unlikely to have surplus cash for long enough to justify such long-term investments.” Therefore, for the purposes of the treasury management strategy and the prudential indicators, the Council’s investments in Property and Multi-Asset Funds are considered to be “Commercial Investments”. It should be noted that holding these investments does not adversely affect the Council being able to borrow from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB).

Net revenue stream

According to the Prudential Code, estimates for net revenue stream for current and future years should be the local authority’s estimates of the amounts to be met from government grants and local taxpayers, using the equivalent figures from the local authority’s original/revised budget where available. Estimates and actuals should therefore exclude capital grants, contributions and donated assets. Since there are many general grants which are one-off in nature, for the purposes of these indicators only grants which are ongoing over the medium term will be included in these figures.

The exception to this is Revenue Support Grant which, although it should always be a general government grant, in the Finance Settlement 2026/27 it was stated that part of the grant would be ringfenced to homelessness. The Government has not announced what amount will be ringfenced.

A. Capital Expenditure Plans

1. The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. Estimates of capital expenditure for the period 2026/27 to 2029/30 based on the Council's draft Capital Programme are summarised below, along with the figures for the previous year and forecast for the current year, and this forms the first of the prudential indicators. The revenue consequences of associated borrowing and any on-going maintenance costs are accommodated within the Council's revenue budgets.
2. Capital expenditure can be paid for immediately, by applying capital resources such as capital receipts, capital grants, external funding or revenue contributions, but if these resources are insufficient any residual expenditure will be covered by Prudential Borrowing and will add to the Council's borrowing need, or Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).
3. The expenditure is split over three areas:
 - Commercial Investments
 - Service Investments
 - Other General Fund
 - HRA
4. A table showing the overall position and also separate tables for each of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account are included,
5. Estimates of resources such as capital receipts may be subject to uncertainty i.e. anticipated asset sales may be postponed or reduced due to changes in the property market or planning issues.
6. Elsewhere on the agenda the draft Capital Programme is recommended for approval. The table below summarises the proposed expenditure and how it will be financed. Any shortfall of financing results in a borrowing need.

Table 1:- Capital Expenditure and Financing – Overall

Overall	2024/25 Actual £000's	2025/26 Forecast £000's	2026/27 Estimate £000's	2027/28 Estimate £000's	2028/29 Estimate £000's	2029/30 Estimate £000's
Commercial investments	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Service Investments	6,002.2	11,201.3	16,000.0	9,500.0	13,554.0	6,800.0
Other General Fund	33,669.1	41,794.3	63,647.5	23,608.2	18,316.6	7,462.9
HRA	105,678.4	104,850.6	153,477.0	129,406.8	116,518.1	180,282.5
Total expenditure	145,349.7	157,846.2	233,124.5	162,515.0	148,388.7	194,545.4
Financed by:						
Developer Contributions	7,505.5	5,406.2	4,021.1	1,252.2	2,690.0	40.0
Capital Grants	17,102.4	18,034.0	22,227.0	11,026.0	4,604.0	1,200.0
Capital Receipts	24,484.0	28,317.9	21,881.3	27,241.6	12,359.3	13,989.1
Revenue	3,677.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Major Repairs Reserve	12,029.6	12,012.0	13,219.0	13,872.0	14,003.0	13,107.0
Sub Total	64,798.8	63,770.1	61,348.4	53,391.8	33,656.3	28,336.1
Prudential Borrowing	80,550.9	94,076.2	171,776.1	109,123.2	114,732.4	166,209.3
Total funding	145,349.7	157,846.3	233,124.5	162,515.0	148,388.7	194,545.4

Table 2:- Capital Expenditure and Financing – General Fund

General Fund	2024/25 Actual £000's	2025/26 Forecast £000's	2026/27 Estimate £000's	2027/28 Estimate £000's	2028/29 Estimate £000's	2029/30 Estimate £000's
Commercial investments	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Service Investments	6,002.2	11,201.3	16,000.0	9,500.0	13,554.0	6,800.0
Other General Fund	33,669.1	41,794.3	63,647.5	23,608.2	18,316.6	7,462.9
Total expenditure	39,671.3	52,995.6	79,647.5	33,108.2	31,870.6	14,262.9
Financed by:						
Developer Contributions	7,505.5	5,406.2	4,021.1	1,252.2	2,690.0	40.0
Capital Grants	11,149.0	11,893.0	7,494.0	1,200.0	1,500.0	1,200.0
Capital Receipts	15,465.9	18,254.2	12,980.3	7,169.6	4,513.3	3,164.1
Revenue	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sub Total	34,120.4	35,553.4	24,495.4	9,621.8	8,703.3	4,404.1
Prudential Borrowing	5,550.9	17,442.3	55,152.1	23,486.4	23,167.3	9,858.8
Total funding	39,671.3	52,995.7	79,647.5	33,108.2	31,870.6	14,262.9

Table 3:- Capital Expenditure and Financing – Housing Revenue Account

Housing Revenue Account	2024/25 Actual £000's	2025/26 Forecast £000's	2026/27 Estimate £000's	2027/28 Estimate £000's	2028/29 Estimate £000's	2029/30 Estimate £000's
HRA	105,678.4	104,850.6	153,477.0	129,406.8	116,518.1	180,282.5
Total expenditure	105,678.4	104,850.6	153,477.0	129,406.8	116,518.1	180,282.5
Financed by:						
Capital Grants	5,953.4	6,141.0	14,733.0	9,826.0	3,104.0	0.0
Capital Receipts	9,018.1	10,063.7	8,901.0	20,072.0	7,846.0	10,825.0
Revenue	3,677.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Major Repairs Reserve	12,029.6	12,012.0	13,219.0	13,872.0	14,003.0	13,107.0
Sub Total	30,678.4	28,216.7	36,853.0	43,770.0	24,953.0	23,932.0
Prudential Borrowing	75,000.0	76,633.9	116,624.0	85,636.8	91,565.1	156,350.5
Total funding	105,678.4	104,850.6	153,477.0	129,406.8	116,518.1	180,282.5

7. The following tables show how much of the overall capital funding need relates to “commercial investments” such as expenditure on purchasing investment properties and how much relates to “service investment” such as loans to companies to fulfil service needs.

Table 4:- Commercial and Service Investments funding need

Commercial investments	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Capital Expenditure (£000's)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Percentage of total financing need	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Service investments	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Capital Expenditure (£000's)	6,002.2	11,201.3	16,000.0	9,500.0	13,554.0	6,800.0
Percentage of total financing need	4.1%	7.1%	6.9%	5.8%	9.1%	3.5%

B. Affordability

8. This indicator represents the estimate of the ratio of interest income to the net revenue stream for the General Fund split by General Investments, Commercial Investments and Service Investments. The indicator is interpreted such that the larger the percentage figure becomes, the more reliant the General Fund is on the interest income.

Table 5:- General Fund ratio of interest income to the net revenue stream

General Fund	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
General Investments	Actual	Forecast	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
General Investments	-280.82	-1,067.70	-258.87	-280.64	-304.31	-338.01
Revenue stream	-30,593.00	-29,265.00	-32,185.98	-34,717.71	-36,280.41	-37,213.12
Ratio	0.9%	3.6%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%
General Fund	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Commercial investments	Actual	Forecast	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Commercial investments	-1,125.98	-600.00	-600.00	-600.00	-600.00	-600.00
Revenue stream	-30,593.00	-29,265.00	-32,185.98	-34,717.71	-36,280.41	-37,213.12
Ratio	3.7%	2.1%	1.9%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%
General Fund	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Service investments	Actual	Forecast	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Service investments	-2,799.49	-2,407.15	-2,916.77	-2,807.99	-2,810.69	-2,977.40
Revenue stream	-30,593.00	-29,265.00	-32,185.98	-34,717.71	-36,280.41	-37,213.12
Ratio	9.2%	8.2%	9.1%	8.1%	7.7%	8.0%

9. This indicator represents the estimate of the ratio of HRA net interest expenditure to the net revenue stream and this indicator is interpreted such that the larger the negative percentage figure becomes, the more HRA resources are used to finance the net debt costs. Note that this includes both investment income and borrowing costs.

Table 6:- HRA Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

Housing Revenue Account	2024/25 Actual £000's	2025/26 Forecast £000's	2026/27 Estimate £000's	2027/28 Estimate £000's	2028/29 Estimate £000's	2029/30 Estimate £000's
Item 8 Borrowing interest	10,212.05	15,042.25	19,876.70	24,501.48	28,543.86	34,210.87
Item 8 Investment income	-495.24	-465.53	-429.11	-407.26	-392.70	-392.70
Net financing cost	9,716.81	14,576.72	19,447.59	24,094.22	28,151.16	33,818.17
Revenue stream	-58,316.00	-60,897.00	-68,207.00	-74,958.00	-78,766.00	-84,390.00
Ratio	-16.7%	-23.9%	-28.5%	-32.1%	-35.7%	-40.1%

10. It should be noted that the net cost of borrowing within the HRA increases over the MTFP period from 16.7% of the HRA revenue stream at the end of 2024/25 to an estimated 39.6% at the end of 2029/30. A 40 year HRA business plan is maintained for the HRA which shows that this level of borrowing is affordable. This is closely monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that the level of HRA debt does not become unaffordable.

11. In addition to the HRA long term business plan being used to ensure long term viability of the HRA, the Council has introduced an interest cover ratio into HRA planning. The business plan and the associated capital plans have been built in order that the target interest cover ratio of 1.25 can be met on an ongoing basis. A graph showing the projected interest cover ratio over time is shown below:

Interest Cover Projection



C. The Council's Borrowing Need (the Capital Financing Requirement)

12. This prudential indicator relates to the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's indebtedness and so its underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure above in Table 1, which has not immediately been paid for through a revenue or capital resource, will increase the CFR.
13. The CFR does not increase indefinitely because the minimum revenue provision (MRP), which is a statutory annual revenue charge, reduces the indebtedness broadly in line with each asset's life, and so charges the economic consumption of capital assets as they are used.
14. The table also shows the amount of the CFR which is needed to finance the "commercial investments" and "service investments".

Table 7:- Estimates of capital financing requirement (underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose)

	2024/25 Actual £000's	2025/26 Forecast £000's	2026/27 Estimate £000's	2027/28 Estimate £000's	2028/29 Estimate £000's	2029/30 Estimate £000's
Commercial investments	0	0	0	0	0	0
Service Investments	16,226	26,681	32,879	26,276	30,224	16,106
Other General Fund	56,044	57,512	93,839	104,486	109,551	107,339
General Fund	72,270	84,193	126,718	130,762	139,775	123,445
HRA	346,015	425,649	542,273	627,910	719,474	875,824
Total CFR	418,285	509,842	668,991	758,672	859,249	999,269
Movement in CFR	75,533	91,557	159,149	89,681	100,577	140,020
Movement in the CFR represented by:						
Net Financing need for the year	80,551	94,076	171,776	109,123	114,732	166,209
Finance Lease additions for IFRS	27,946	0	0	0	0	0
Repayment of debt	-32,785	-2,420	-12,474	-19,290	-13,245	-25,006
Less MRP	-179	-99	-153	-152	-910	-1,183
Movement in CFR	75,533	91,557	159,149	89,681	100,577	140,020

D. Core Funds and Expected Investment Balances

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

Table 8:- Core Funds and Expected Investment Balances

Estimated Year End Resources	2024/25 Actual £000's	2025/26 Forecast £000's	2026/27 Estimate £000's	2027/28 Estimate £000's	2028/29 Estimate £000's	2029/30 Estimate £000's
Fund Balances & Reserves	75,693	75,693	80,693	80,693	80,693	80,693
Capital Receipts & Grants	72,942	92,942	92,942	92,942	92,942	92,942
Provisions	5,529	5,529	5,529	5,529	5,529	5,529
Other	-10,942	-10,942	-10,942	-10,942	-10,942	-10,942
Total Core Funds	143,222	163,222	168,222	168,222	168,222	168,222
Working Capital *	-25,723	-25,723	-25,723	-25,723	-25,723	-25,723
(Under) / Over Borrowing **	-102,593	-114,150	-128,299	-127,980	-128,558	-128,578
Expected Investments ***	14,906	23,349	14,200	14,519	13,941	13,921

* Working capital balances shown are estimated year-end; these will normally be higher mid-year

** Under / Over Borrowing is the difference between the Council's CFR and external borrowing. The Council maximises use of internal balances where possible to reduce borrowing costs. A level of cash resource must be maintained to ensure that cashflow variations during the year can be accommodated.

***This is the level of expected investments at the end of the year; during the year these will often be much higher due to cashflows.

E. External Debt and Treasury Management

16. The Council's forward projections for borrowing are summarised below. This analysis shows the capital financing requirement rather than the underlying need to borrow which includes the credit side of the costs of assets leased by the Council. This credit may need to be included in future if the changes in accounting under IFRS 16 increases the leases figure significantly. The table shows the anticipated external debt against the underlying capital borrowing need, the CFR.

Table 9:- External Debt against Underlying Borrowing Requirement

	2024/25 Actual £000's	2025/26 Forecast £000's	2026/27 Estimate £000's	2027/28 Estimate £000's	2028/29 Estimate £000's	2029/30 Estimate £000's
Debt at 1st April	288,528	288,528	368,528	513,528	603,528	703,528
Finance Lease Liability	27,164	27,164	27,164	27,164	27,164	27,164
Expected Change in Debt	0	80,000	145,000	90,000	100,000	140,000
Expected Debt at 31 March	315,692	395,692	540,692	630,692	730,692	870,692
CFR	418,285	509,842	668,991	758,672	859,249	999,269
Under / (Over) Borrowing	102,593	114,150	128,299	127,980	128,557	128,577

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17. The Council must set an operational boundary which is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. This will be lower than the CFR where the Council uses internal resources to finance borrowing (i.e. is under borrowed). The authorised limit is a key prudential indicator and represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a legal limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by the full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not necessarily sustainable in the longer term. This is set here at the level of the CFR to allow for flexibility depending on what happens with borrowing rates and to allow for borrowing in advance where this is supported by the capital plans or the CFR. The authorised limit is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all councils' plans, or those of a specific council, although this power has not yet been exercised.

Table 10:- Limits to borrowing activity

	2024/25 Actual £000's	2025/26 Forecast £000's	2026/27 Estimate £000's	2027/28 Estimate £000's	2028/29 Estimate £000's	2029/30 Estimate £000's
Authorised limit	944,287	1,140,640	1,039,271	1,039,271	1,039,271	1,039,271
Operational boundary	574,304	642,763	688,991	778,672	879,249	1,019,269

18. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing, and are required for upper and lower limits. The purpose of this and the following two prudential indicators is to contain the activity of the treasury function within certain limits, thereby managing risk and reducing the impact of an adverse movement in interest rates. This is split between the General Fund and HRA for the maturity structure. The upper and lower ranges are purposefully high to allow borrowing to be taken out at the best rate available which currently is at the shorter end. This is especially so in the general fund because the General Fund currently does not carry any external debt so that any borrowing will be in the 100% band. When interest rates have stabilised a more smooth profile will be sought.

Table 11:- Maturity Structure of Borrowing – General Fund

General Fund	Estimate Upper %	Estimate Lower %
< 12 months	100%	0
12 months up to 2 years	100%	0
2 up to 5 years	100%	0
5 up to 10 years	100%	0
10 up to 20 years	100%	0
20 up to 30 years	100%	0
30 up to 40 years	100%	0
40 years +	100%	0

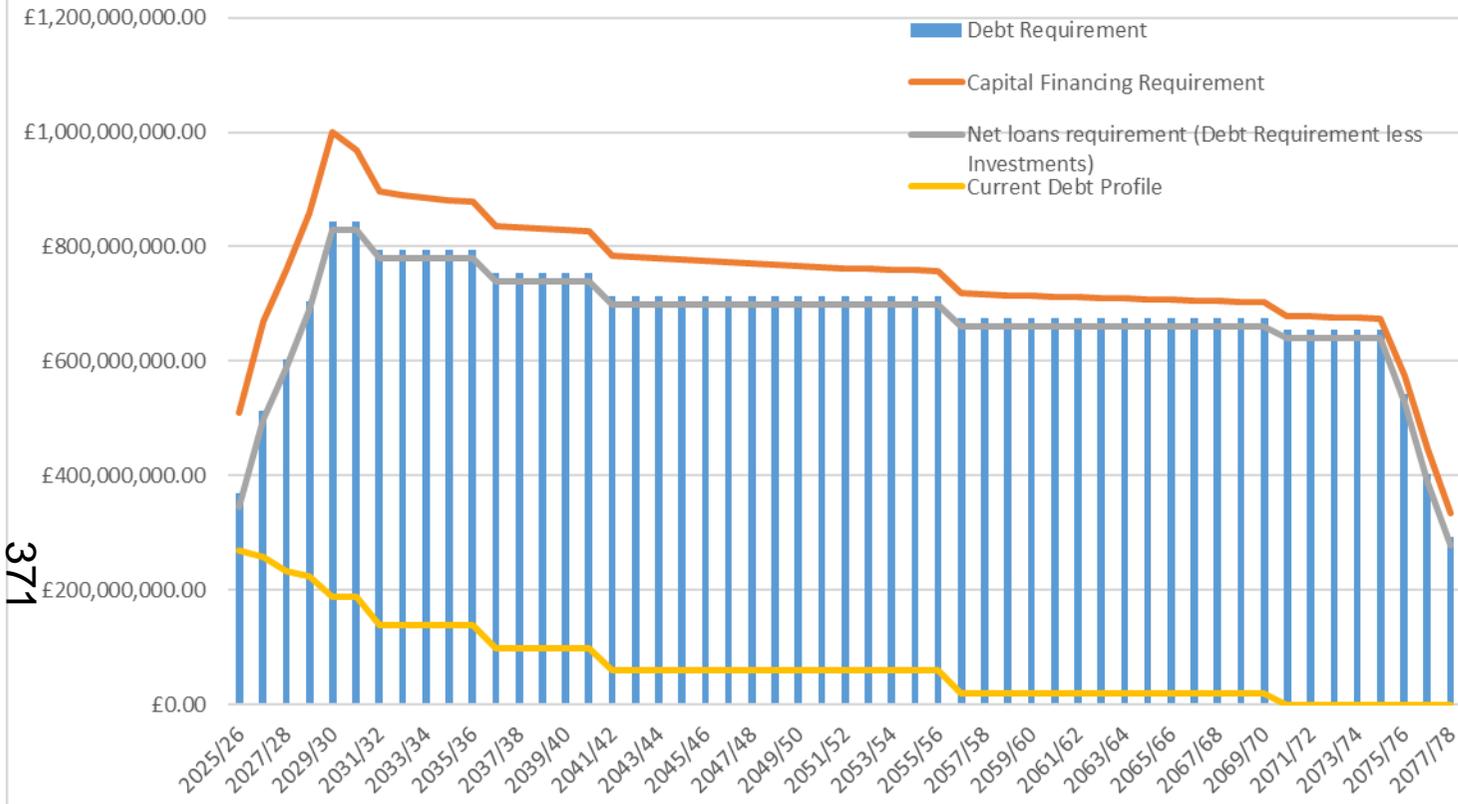
Table 12:- Maturity Structure of Borrowing – HRA

HRA	Estimate Upper %	Estimate Lower %
< 12 months	30%	0
12 months up to 2 years	40%	0
2 up to 5 years	40%	0
5 up to 10 years	40%	0
10 up to 20 years	90%	0
20 up to 30 years	90%	0
30 up to 40 years	90%	0
40 years +	90%	0

Liability Benchmark

20. The Council is required to provide a comparison of the existing loan portfolio against the committed borrowing needs. This is to provide evidence that it has a strong grasp of both its existing debt maturity profile and how the Minimum Revenue Provision, long term projections of the Capital Financing Requirement and other cash flows affect the future debt requirement. The analysis also includes an assessment of the potential maturity profile of borrowing being planned in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
21. These graphs assume that the HRA will make a Voluntary Revenue Provision to lower the CFR in line with the redemption of debt.
22. The presentation of the Liability Benchmark is in the form of a chart covering the following four areas:
 - Existing loan debt – current borrowing portfolio (split by loan type as a stacked bar chart if appropriate; the Council has borrowed and is intending to borrow from the Public Works Loans Board and so this aspect is unnecessary at this stage);
 - Loans CFR – this excludes any part of the CFR relating to other long-term liabilities;
 - Net loans requirement – loan debt less treasury management investments at the financial year end and projected into the future based on approved prudential borrowing, planned MRP and any other major cash flow forecast;
 - Liability Benchmark – net loans requirement plus short-term liquidity allowance.

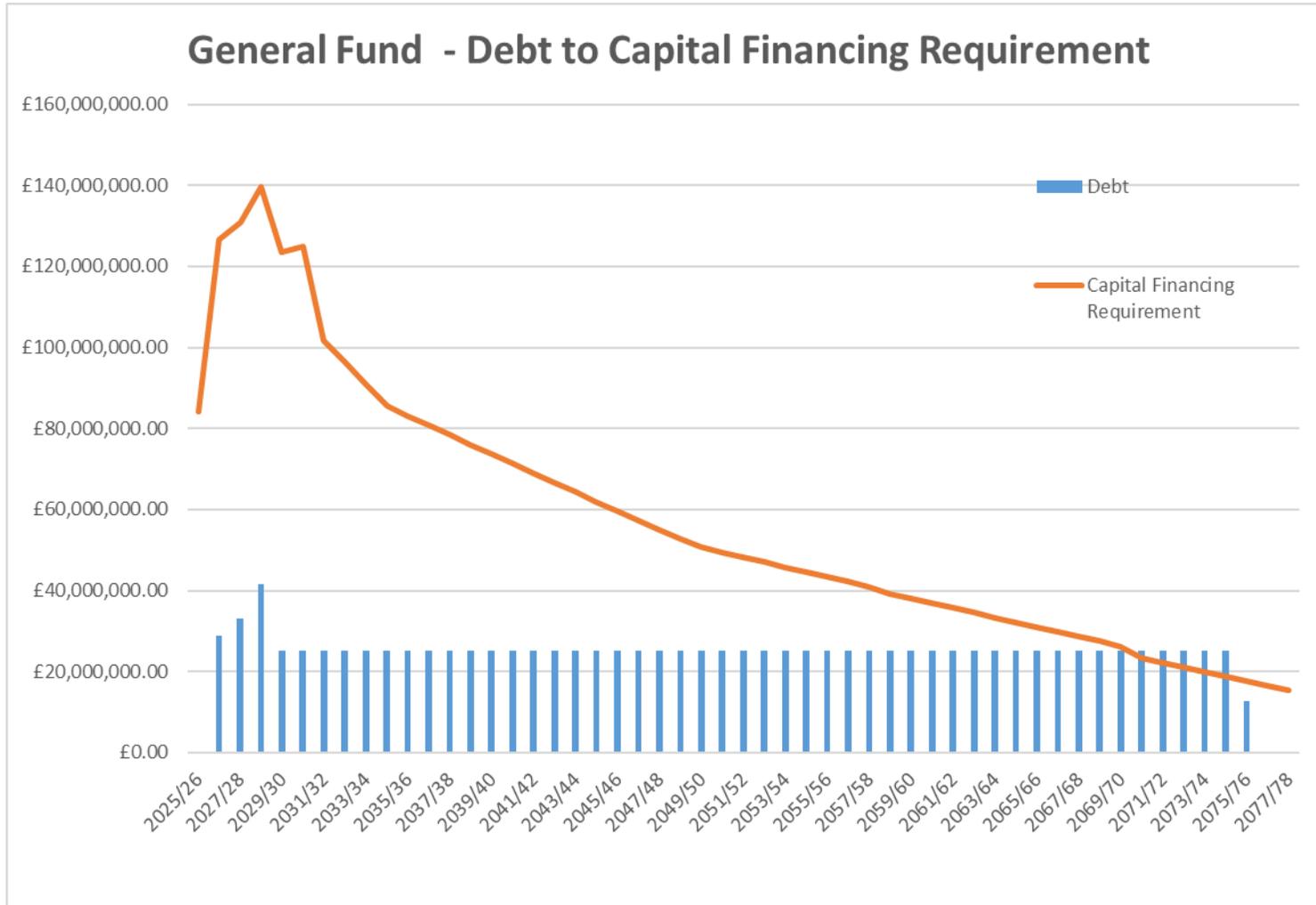
Liability Benchmark



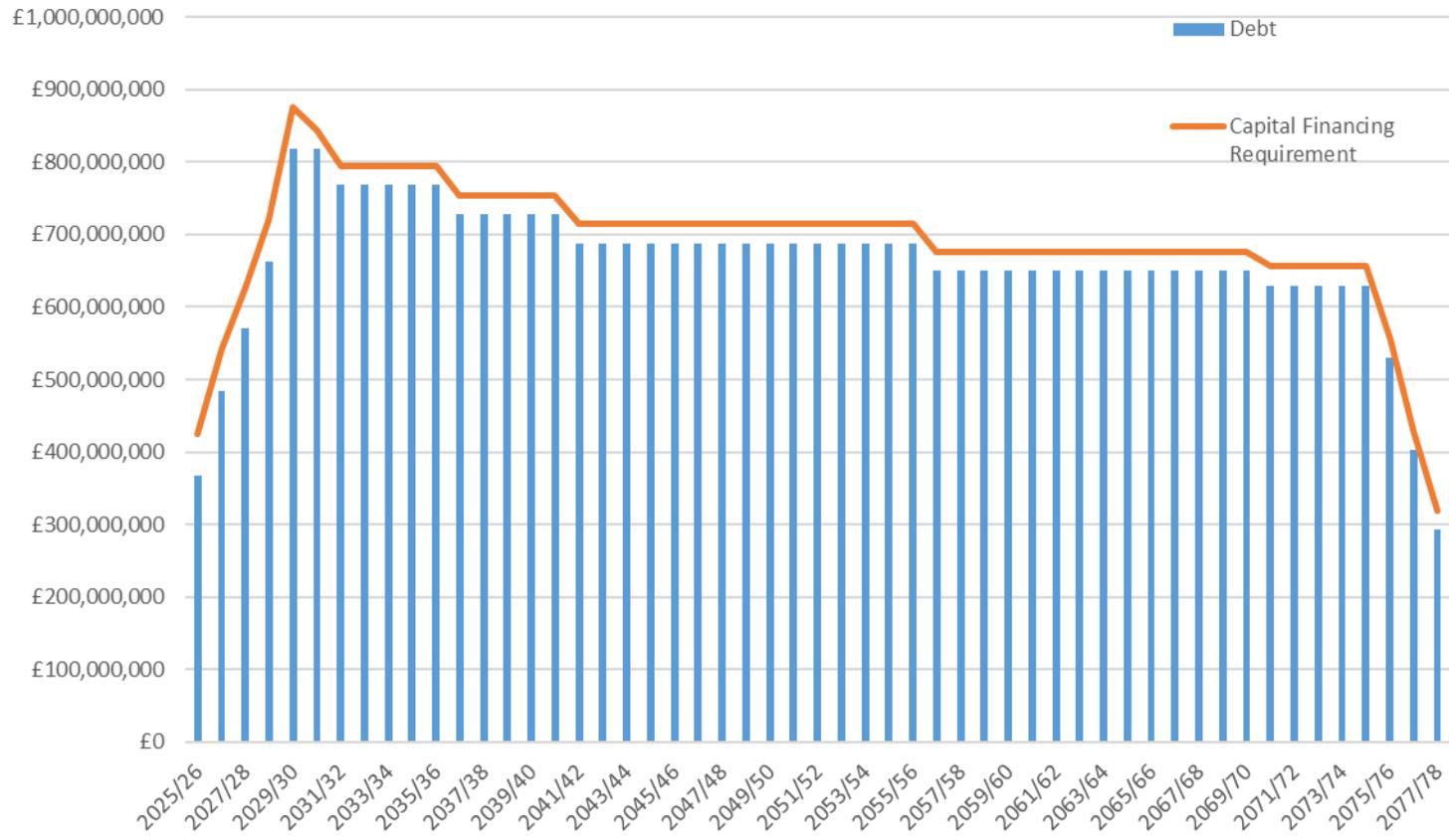
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23. The following graphs show the levels of debt compared to the Capital Financing Requirement split between the General Fund and the HRA.

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HRA - Debt to Capital Financing Requirement



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