



**Peter McCall**

**POLICE, FIRE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**



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## **Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Report**

**Title:           Borrowing, Treasury Management, Investment and MRP  
Strategies 2024/25 (including Prudential Indicators)**

**Report of the PFCCs Chief Finance Officer**

**Originating Officers:   Lorraine Holme, Group Accountant;  
Sarah Walker, Financial Services Manager**

### **Purpose of the Report**

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services (the CIPFA TM Code) and the Prudential Code require Local Authorities (including PCCs) to determine the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) on an annual basis.

These codes were originally issued in 2002, revised in 2009, 2011, 2017, and again in 2021. The TMSS presented here complies with the 2021 codes and accompanying guidance notes. The TMSS also incorporates the Investment Strategy which is a requirement of the Department for Levelling Up,

Housing & Communities (DLUHC) (Previously Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's) Investment Guidance 2018.

This report proposes a strategy for the financial year 2024/25.

Treasury Management in Local Government continues to be a highly important activity. The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner ("The Commissioner") adopts the CIPFA definition of Treasury Management which is as follows:

#### **Treasury Management Definition**

*'the management of the organisation's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.'*

## **Recommendations**

The Commissioner is asked to:

1. Approve the Borrowing Strategy for 2024/25 as set out on pages 8-9.
2. Approve the Investment Strategy for 2024/25 as set out on pages 10-13.
3. Approve the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as set out on pages 15-17.
4. Approve the other Prudential Indicators set out on pages 17 to 21.
5. Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2024/25 as set out on page 22.
6. Note that the detailed Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) are currently being reviewed and updated as required by the Code of Practice and will be published alongside the TMSS on the Commissioner's website. The updated TMPs will be provided at the Joint Audit Committee in March.
7. Delegate to the PFCC Chief Finance Officer any non-material amendments arising from scrutiny of the strategy by the Joint Audit Committee.

The Joint Audit Committee are asked to review the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Treasury Management Practices to be satisfied that controls are satisfactory and provide advice as appropriate to the Commissioner.



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**Borrowing, Treasury Management, Investment, and MRP Strategies 2024/25  
(Including Prudential Indicators)**

# Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024/25

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## Key Messages

Approval of an annual Treasury Management Strategy is a statutory requirement of the Commissioner.

This Strategy aims to provide the Commissioner with a low risk, yet suitably flexible, approach to Treasury Management.

## General Principles

The Commissioner is required to approve an annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, which also incorporates an Investment Strategy as required by the Local Government Act 2003 and which is prepared in accordance with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities Investment Guidance 2018. Together, these cover the financing and investment strategy for the forthcoming financial year.

The Treasury Management Strategy has been prepared in line with the model guidance produced by Link Asset Services Ltd, who provide specialist treasury management advice to the Commissioner. However, it should be noted that all treasury management decisions and activity are the responsibility of the Commissioner and any such references to the use of these advisors should be viewed in this context.

Treasury management activities involving, as they do, the investment of large sums of money and the generation of potentially significant interest earnings have inherent risks. The Commissioner regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the organisation, and any financial instruments entered into to manage these risks. The main risks to the Commissioner's treasury activities are outlined below:

- Credit and Counterparty Risk (security of investments)
- Liquidity Risk (inadequate cash resources)
- Market or Interest Rate Risk (fluctuations in interest rate levels)
- Re-financing Risks (impact of debt maturing in future years)
- Legal and Regulatory Risk
- Fraud, Error and Corruption Risk

Details of the control measures the Commissioner has put in place to manage these risks are contained within the separate Treasury Management Practices (TMPs).

## Key Messages

The Commissioner's priority for investments will **always** be ranked in the order of:



## General Principles (Continued)

The Commissioner acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving value for money in treasury management and to employing suitable comprehensive performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management. However, the high profile near failure of major banks in 2008 highlighted that this objective must be sought within a context of effective management of counterparty risk. Accordingly, the Commissioner will continue to search for optimum returns on investments, but at all times the **security** of the sums invested will be paramount. This is a cornerstone of the CIPFA Code of Treasury Management Practice which emphasises “**Security, Liquidity, Yield** in order of importance at all times”. The security of the sums invested is managed by tight controls over the schedules of approved counterparties, which are continually reviewed to take account of changing circumstances, and by the setting of limits on individual and categories of investments as set out at **Appendix A**.

The strategy also takes into account the impact of treasury management activities on the Commissioner's and Constabulary's revenue budget. Forecasts of cash balances, interest receipts and financing costs are regularly re-modelled. The revenue budget for 2024/25 and forecasts for future years have been updated in light of the latest available information as part of the financial planning process.

The guidance under which this strategy is put forward comes from a variety of different places. Principally, however, the requirement to produce an annual Treasury Management Strategy is set out in the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management published in 2011, 2017 and 2021. There is, in addition, a further requirement arising from the Local Government Act 2003 (Section 15) and the 2018 Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) Guidance, to produce an investment strategy as part of the wider Treasury Strategy. This is set out below, starting at page 10. Finally, the Commissioner's treasury advisors, Link Asset Services Ltd, have provided some advice about possible future trends in interest rates and advice on best practice in relation to the format of the TMSS.

In accordance with The Code of Practice for Treasury Management, the Commissioner will approve the Annual TMSS, receive a quarterly summary of treasury activity, a mid-year update on the strategy and an annual report after the close of the financial year.

## Key Messages

Scrutiny of the Commissioner's treasury activities is the responsibility of the Joint Audit Committee, including:

- Quarterly Reports
- Year End Report
- Treasury Risk Management
- Review of Assurances

As a minimum a rolling 12-month cash flow forecast is maintained and is audited as part of the statutory accounts to support the principle that the Commissioner is operating as a 'going concern'.

## General Principles (Continued)

The Joint Audit Committee will be responsible for the scrutiny of treasury management policy and processes. The Joint Audit Committee terms of reference in relation to treasury management are:

- Review the Treasury Management policy and procedures to be satisfied that controls are satisfactory.
- Receive regular reports on activities, issues and trends to support the Committee's understanding of Treasury Management activities; the Committee is not responsible for the regular monitoring of activity.
- Review the treasury risk profile and adequacy of treasury risk management processes.
- Review assurances on Treasury Management (for example, an internal audit report, external or other reports).

The DLUHC Guidance on investments states that publication of strategies is now formally recommended, the full suite of strategy documents will be published on the Commissioner's website once approved.

The Commissioner complies with the provisions of section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to set a balanced budget. This report fulfils the legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and DLUHC Guidance.

## Treasury Management Cash Flow Forecast

Treasury Management activity is driven by the complex interaction of expenditure and income flows, but the core drivers within the Commissioner's balance sheet are the underlying need to borrow to finance its capital programme, as measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR), which is explored in detail on page 8 of this report, and the level of reserves and balances. In addition, day-to-day fluctuations in cash flows due to the timing of grant and council tax receipts and outgoing payments to employees and suppliers have an impact on treasury activities and accordingly are modelled in detail. The Commissioner's level of debt and investments is linked to the above elements, but market conditions, interest rate expectations and credit risk considerations all influence the Commissioner's strategy in determining exact borrowing and lending activity.

## Key Messages

Investment returns and borrowing rates have most likely peaked, it is anticipated they will start to fall by the end of 2024. Further rate cuts are expected through 2025. However, many factors can impact that forecast.

The availability of reserves is declining and a requirement to borrow to fund the capital programme is anticipated.

## Treasury Management Cash Flow Forecast (Continued)

The estimated treasury position at 31st March 2024 and for the following financial years are summarised below:

Estimated Treasury Position	Estimate 2024/25 £m	Estimate 2025/26 £m	Estimate 2026/27 £m	Estimate 2027/28 £m
External Borrowing	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest Payments	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Investments (average)	8.791	13.008	13.333	13.333
Interest Receipts	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.400

The figures in the table above are based on the approval of the proposed revenue budget and capital programme presented to the Commissioner elsewhere on this agenda and are based on the interest rate assumptions as outlined on page 7 below. The estimate for interest receipts in 2024/25 is £400k (latest forecast for 2023/24 is £950k). Interest receipts are higher this year due to slippage of the capital programme. The timing of future external borrowing is currently not known and decisions regarding the end of the PFI contract are still to be made.

The Commissioner's underlying need to borrow, as measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), is estimated to be £20.82m at the start of the 2024/25 financial year. This includes £3.70m which is the capital value of the PFI contract as required by changes to proper accounting practices introduced in The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting 2009. The capital programme paper elsewhere on this agenda (see item 08b) indicates that the Commissioner will need to borrow to deliver the agreed capital programme.

Under current market conditions, where short term interest rate forecasts are frequently changing, and there are continuing general uncertainties over the creditworthiness of financial institutions, it is assumed that the most prudent borrowing strategy for the present is to meet the capital funding requirement from within internal resources. This has the effect of reducing the cash balances available for investment. Advice will continue to be sought from our treasury advisors as to the most opportune time and interest rate to undertake external borrowing.



## Key Messages

CPI inflation is expected to have peaked. The Bank of England is forecasting inflation to fall to just above 2% by the end of 2024.

The Bank Rate is forecast to reduce in later in 2024, with further reductions expected during 2025.

## Treasury Management Interest Rate Forecast

- GDP in November rose by 0.3% month on month, probably meaning the economy escaped a recession in 2023 which is better than originally forecast. GDP growth is expected to pick up gradually during 2024.
- Twelve-month CPI inflation fell to 4.0% in December 2023 and current indications are that CPI has fallen again in January. This is broad-based, reflecting lower fuel, core goods and services price inflation. Although still elevated, wage growth has eased across a number of measures and is projected to decline further in coming quarters.
- The MPC are forecasting that inflation will fall to the 2% target in Q2 2024 (*compared to Q4 2023 previously*) and that the upside risks from domestic drivers have disappeared, however it expects inflation to rebound in Q3 2024 and to be slightly above the 2% target at the end of the year. CPI inflation is projected to be 2.3% in two years' time and 1.9% in three years.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has increased the Bank Rate 125bps over the past twelve months, taking rates to a 15 year high of 5.25%. At the February meeting a 6-3 majority saw it remain at 5.25% for the fourth meeting in a row, with two members preferring to increase the rate by 0.25%. The MPC stated they would keep under review for how long Bank Rate should be maintained at its current level, they remain prepared to adjust monetary policy as warranted by economic data to return inflation to the 2% target sustainably. The 2% inflation target is expected to be met in 2024 Qtr2 and the bank rate is expected to start falling later in the year.

Base Rate Estimates	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Quarter 1	5.25%	3.25%	3.00%	3.00%
Quarter 2	5.25%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Quarter 3	4.75%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Quarter 4	3.75%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%

## Key Messages

The Commissioner has an increasing Capital Financing Requirement due to the capital programme, but has modest investments (after deducting the pension grant receipt), and will therefore need to borrow in the near future.

## Borrowing Strategy

### Long Term Borrowing

The Commissioner's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by reference to the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), which is one of the Prudential Indicators and represents the cumulative capital expenditure of the Commissioner that has not been financed from other sources such as capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions or reserves. To ensure that this expenditure will ultimately be financed, authorities are required to make a provision from their revenue accounts each year for the repayment of debt. This sum known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is intended to cover the principal repayments of any loan over the expected life of a capital asset. The CFR together with Usable Reserves, are the core drivers of the Commissioner's Treasury Management activities.

Actual borrowing may be greater or less than the CFR, but in order to comply with the Prudential Code, the Commissioner must ensure that in the medium term, net debt will only be for capital purposes. Therefore, the Commissioner must ensure that except in the short term, net debt does not exceed the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for the current and next two financial years. In compliance with this requirement the Commissioner does not currently intend to borrow in advance of spending need.

The table below shows the Commissioner's projected capital financing requirement for 2024/25 and beyond.

Capital Financing	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Balance B/fwd	22.11	21.47	20.82	23.84	25.34
Plus Capital Expenditure financed from borrowing	0.01	0.03	3.73	2.95	5.04
Less MRP for Debt Redemption	-0.65	-0.68	-0.71	-1.46	-1.85
<b>Balance C/Fwd</b>	<b>21.47</b>	<b>20.82</b>	<b>23.84</b>	<b>25.34</b>	<b>28.53</b>

The above table shows only capital expenditure that is required to be financed from borrowing. The full capital programme and associated financing is reported in summary within the capital programme elsewhere on the agenda (see item 08b).

## Key Messages

Diversification of investments continues to provide a level of liquid cash that is suitable for the Commissioner's expenditure profile whilst total investment balances remain high. This will continue to be monitored as levels of investments fall and if necessary, a minimum level of liquid cash to be maintained will be set.

Short term borrowing from other Local Authorities may be needed in the future to manage short term cash flow shortfalls.

## Borrowing Strategy (Continued)

The Commissioner is not expected to have any external borrowing at the start of 2024/25. Given that the CFR is forecast to be £23.84m by the end of 2024/25, this effectively means that the Commissioner will be funding over £20.44m of capital spend from internal resources (CFR £23.84m less £3.40m in relation to the PFI).

Bank Rate rises over the recent period have pushed up the cost of long term finance to over 5%. Borrowing rates are expected to start falling during 2024 and to continue over the medium term. Consequently, undertaking long term borrowing at this time is likely to fix higher costs into the revenue account and commit the Commissioner to costs for many years in the future. It is critical that a long term view is taken regarding the timing of such transactions.

It should also be recognised that by funding internally, there is an exposure to interest rate risk at the point that actual borrowing is undertaken. Accordingly, the Commissioner, in conjunction with its treasury advisors, will continue to monitor market conditions and interest rate prospects on an ongoing basis, in the context of the Commissioner's capital expenditure plans, with a view to minimising borrowing costs over the medium to long term.

The Commissioner's predecessors had previously raised all of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB (Public Works Loans Board) but other sources of finance are now available and being investigated, such as local authority loans and bank loans, that may be available at more favourable rates.

### Short Term Borrowing

Short term loans will be used to manage day to day movements in cash balances, or over a short-term period to enable aggregation of existing deposits into longer and more sustainable investment sums. Short term borrowing would probably be from another Local Authority.

## Key Messages

The Investment Strategy for 2024/25 remains broadly the same as in previous years as there has been little change in the markets or counterparties.

The updated investment guidance emphasises “Security, Liquidity, Yield in order of importance at all times”.

The appropriate balance between risk and return is sought.

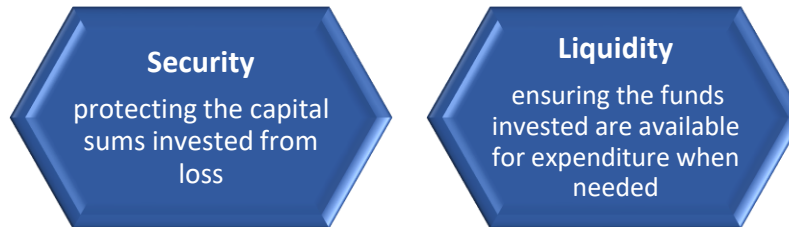
## Investment Strategy

Local Authorities (which include the Commissioner) invest their money for three broad purposes:

- because they have surplus cash as a result of their day-to-day activities, for example when income is received in advance of expenditure (known as treasury management investments),
- to support local public services by lending to or buying shares in other organisations (service investments), and
- to earn investment income (known as commercial investments where this is the main purpose).

The Local Government Act 2003, Section 15(1) (a) requires the Commissioner to approve an investment strategy which must also meet the requirement in the statutory investment guidance issued by DLUHC in January 2018. The Commissioner does not currently have, and does not intend to invest in, service investments or commercial investments so the detail below focuses on a Treasury Management Investment Strategy.

The CIPFA Code requires funds to be invested prudently, and to have regard for:



The generation of yield is distinct from these prudential objectives. Once proper levels of security and liquidity are determined, it is then reasonable to consider what yield can be obtained consistent with these priorities. The objective when investing surpluses 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 aim would be 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.

The treasury management investment strategy operates criteria based on credit ratings to determine the size and duration of investments it is willing to place with particular counterparties. The credit worthiness of counterparties is reviewed on an ongoing basis in conjunction with the Commissioner’s treasury advisors.

## Key Messages

In accordance with guidance from the DLUHC and CIPFA, and in order to minimise the risk to investments, the Commissioner applies minimum acceptable credit criteria in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which also enables diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk.

The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the Long Term ratings.

## Investment Strategy (Continued)

The Commissioner holds significant balances of invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During 2023/24, the Commissioner's investment balance has ranged between £5.39m and £34.13m. The larger sum was due to the receipt in July 2023 of £16.08m pension top up grant from the Home Office, which is drawn down steadily over the remainder of the year. Balances in 2024/25 are forecast to slowly reduce as expenditure on large capital schemes continues. It is anticipated that, at the peak, when the pensions grant is received in July, balances for investment could approach £24m.

**Credit Rating** - Investment decisions are made by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from credit agencies such as, Fitch, Moody's or Standard & Poor's. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. In addition to credit ratings, the Commissioner and its advisors, select countries and financial institutions after analysis and ongoing monitoring of:

- Economic fundamentals (e.g., net debt as a % of GDP)
- Credit default swap prices (a CDS is a financial derivative or contract that allows an investor to "swap" or offset credit risk with that of another investor)
- Sovereign support mechanisms
- Share prices
- Corporate developments, news, articles, market sentiment and momentum
- Subjective overlay – or, put more simply, common sense.

The investment strategy for 2015/16 was opened up slightly to include some additional classes of investment to allow more flexibility and diversification. The strategy for 2024/25 remains the same. The decision to enter into an approved class of investment is delegated to the PFCC Chief Finance Officer. The strategy allows for investments in pooled funds such as money market funds or property funds. The use of property funds would further diversify the Commissioners' portfolio, provide a longer-term investment and increase yield whilst maintaining security. However, given current economic volatility arising from high inflation it is unlikely that they will be pursued.

A full explanation of each class of asset is provided in **Appendix A** together with a schedule of the limits that will be applied.

## Key Messages

The PFCC Chief Finance Officer (subject with consultation with the Commissioner) will be granted delegated authority to amend or extend the list of approved counterparties should market conditions allow.

No plans to use derivatives – this would require explicit approval.

## Investment Strategy (Continued)

The Treasury Management Strategy is designed to be a dynamic framework which is responsive to prevailing conditions with the aim of safeguarding the Commissioner's resources. Accordingly, the Commissioner and his advisors will continuously monitor corporate developments and market sentiment with regards to counterparties and will amend the approved counterparty list and lending criteria where necessary. Whilst credit ratings are central to the counterparty risk evaluation process, other factors such as the prevailing economic climate are taken into consideration when determining investment strategy. It is proposed to continue the policy, adopted in 2017/18 that the PFCC Chief Finance Officer, subject to consultation with the Commissioner, be granted delegated authority to amend or extend the list of approved counterparties should market conditions allow.

The Joint Audit Committee will be updated on any changes to policy. The performance of the Commissioner's treasury advisors and quality of advice provided is evaluated prior to the triennial renewal of the contract. Meetings with the advisors to discuss treasury management issues are held on a regular basis.

### The use of Financial Instruments for the Management of Risks

Currently, Local Authorities (including PCC's) legal power to use derivative instruments remains unclear. The General Power of Competence enshrined in the Localism Act is not sufficiently explicit.

In the absence of any explicit legal power to do so, the Commissioner has no plans to use derivatives during 2024/25. Should this position change, the Commissioner may seek to develop a detailed and robust risk management framework governing the use of derivatives, but this change in strategy will require explicit approval. A derivative is a financial security with a value that is reliant upon or derived from, an underlying asset or group of assets. The derivative itself is a contract between two or more parties, and the derivative derives its price from fluctuations in the underlying asset.

### Liquidity of investments

The investment strategy must lay down the principles which are to be used in determining the amount of funds which can prudently be committed for more than one year i.e., what DLUHC defines as a long-term investment.

## Key Messages

The cash flow forecast is maintained for a minimum rolling 12 months. This allows assessment of the ability to invest longer term and identifies areas where short term borrowing may be required.

## Investment Strategy (Continued)

The Financial Services team uses a cash flow forecasting spreadsheet 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 Commissioner being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet his financial commitments. For the Commissioner, the total of investments over one year in duration are limited to £2m with a maximum duration of three years. This policy balances the desire to maximise investment returns, with the need to maintain the liquidity of funds.

Under current market conditions there is still little opportunity to generate significant additional investment income by investing in longer time periods over one year. However, as always, investment plans should be flexible enough to respond to changing market conditions during the year. The estimate of investment income for 2024/25 amounts to £400k (£950k 2023/24) and actual investment performance will be reported regularly to the Commissioner and will be provided to members of the Joint Audit Committee as background information to provide guidance and support when undertaking scrutiny of Treasury Management procedures.

## Key Messages

The 'Treasury Management Practices' statement is updated for each year, scrutinised by the Joint Audit Committee and published on the Commissioner's website alongside this strategy.

## Treasury Risk and Treasury Management Practices

The Commissioner's approach to risk is to seek optimum returns on invested sums, taking into account at all times the paramount security of the investment. The CIPFA Code of Practice and Treasury Management Practices sets out in some detail defined treasury risks and how those risks are managed on a day to day basis. The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management recommends the adoption of detailed Treasury Management Practices (TMPs). As outlined above, the Treasury Management Code and Prudential Code were updated and additional guidance notes have now been received. The TMP's have been updated. The guidance from CIPFA recommends that TMPs should cover the following areas:

- Risk Management
- Performance Management
- Decision Making and Analysis
- Approved Instruments
- Organisation, Segregation of Duties and Dealing Arrangements
- Reporting and Management Information Requirements
- Budgeting, Accounting and Audit
- Cash and Cash Flow Management
- Money Laundering
- Training and Qualifications
- Use of External Service Providers
- Corporate Governance

Treasury Management is a specialised and potentially risky activity, which is currently managed on a day-to-day basis by the Financial Services Team under authorisation from the PFCC Chief Finance Officer as part of a shared service arrangement for the provision of financial services. The training needs of treasury management staff to ensure that they have appropriate skills and expertise to effectively undertake treasury management responsibilities is addressed on an ongoing basis. Specific guidance on the content of TMPs is contained within CIPFA's revised code of Practice for Treasury Management. Accordingly, the TMPs have been reviewed in detail and where necessary amendments have been made to bring the TMPs into line with The Code.



The PFCC currently has no external debt and does therefore not need to set limits on the maturity of debt in each period.

## Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

The key objectives of The Code are to ensure, within a clear framework, that Capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable (or to highlight, in exceptional cases, that there is a danger this will not be achieved so that the Commissioner can take remedial action). To demonstrate that Authorities have fulfilled these objectives, the Prudential Code sets out the Indicators that must be used. The indicators required by The Code are designed purely to support local decision making and are specifically not designed to represent comparative performance indicators.

The treasury management Indicators are not targets to be aimed at but are instead limits within which the treasury management policies of the Commissioner are deemed prudent. These cover three aspects:

### 1. Maturity Structure of Borrowing

It is recommended that upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of borrowings are calculated as follows:

Period of Maturity	Upper Limit %	Lower Limit %
Under 12 months	100.00	0
12 months and within 24 months	100.00	0
24 months and within 5 years	100.00	0
5 years and within 10 years	100.00	0
10 years and above	100.00	0

This indicator is primarily applicable to organisations, which have undertaken significant levels of borrowing to finance their capital programmes in which case it is prudent to spread the profile of repayments to safeguard against fluctuations of interest payments arising from having to refinance a large proportion of the debt portfolio at any point in time. During 2012/13 the Commissioner repaid all outstanding external borrowing and as a result there is currently no requirement to apply stringent limits to the maturity profile of existing debt.

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators (Continued)

2. Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year

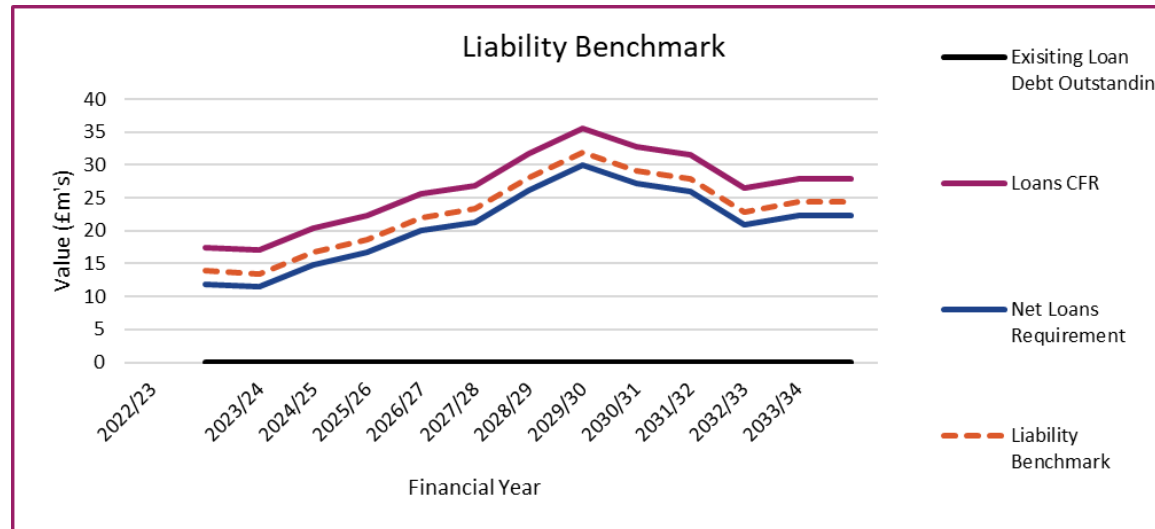
The purpose of this indicator is to contain the Commissioner’s exposure to the possibility of loss that might arise as a result of having to borrow short term at higher rates or losses by seeking early repayment of its investments.

Price Risk Indicator	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Limit on principal invested beyond one year	£2m	£2m	£2m	£2m	£2m

3. Liability Benchmark

The 2021 code requires Authorities to define their own ‘Liability Benchmark’ which looks at the net management of the PCC’s overall treasury position. The aim of the indicator is to support in the management of treasury risks, namely refinancing risk, interest rate and credit risk. It does this through profiling the borrowing portfolio close to the plotted liability benchmark position.

The graph below shows that the current position for the Police and Crime Commissioner is one of no external debt but a loan requirement just below the capital financing requirement. The gap to the external loans of zero represents the under borrowed position / internal borrowing undertaken.



Compliance with the indicators will be presented to the PFCC Public Accountability Conference and the Joint Audit Committee in the quarterly Treasury Activities report.

## Key Messages

\* In the current financial climate the decision has been taken to borrow internally rather than from the PWLB which will be reflected in the capital financing requirement indicator.

### Setting, Revising, Monitoring and Reporting

Prudential Indicators, other than those using actual expenditure taken from audited statements of accounts must be set prior to the commencement of the financial year to which they relate. Indicators may be revised at any time, and must, in any case, be revised for the year of account when preparing indicators for the following year. The PFCC Chief Finance Officer has a prescribed responsibility under The Code to ensure that relevant procedures exist for monitoring and reporting of performance against the indicators. The Prudential Indicators when initially set and whenever revised, must be approved by the body which approves the budget, i.e. The Commissioner at his Public Accountability Conference.

### Other Prudential Indicators 2024/25

As per the 2021 CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance and the accompanying guidance notes the Commissioner is required to produce a number of indicators to assist understanding and to evaluate the prudence and affordability of the capital expenditure plans and the borrowing and investment activities undertaken in support of this.

### Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing

This indicator is set to ensure that the level of proposed capital expenditure remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, to consider the impact on council tax.

Capital Expenditure	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Capital Expenditure	4.09	5.89	6.55	3.48	6.52

Capital Financing	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Capital Receipts	0.43	1.68	0.68	0.00	0.00
Government Grants	3.15	1.73	0.00	0.00	0.00
Revenue Contributions	0.50	2.45	2.14	0.53	1.48
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>4.08</b>	<b>5.86</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>1.48</b>
Borrowing*	0.01	0.03	3.73	2.95	5.04
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>3.73</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>5.04</b>
<b>Total Financing and Funding</b>	<b>4.09</b>	<b>5.89</b>	<b>6.55</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>6.52</b>

## Key Messages

Capital Finance Requirement – ‘The mortgage you are yet to take’.

Minimum Revenue Provision – ‘Annual Mortgage repayments’.

The Authorised Limit is a statutory limit (Local Government Act 2003) above which the Commissioner has no authority to borrow.

## Other Prudential Indicators 2024/25 (Continued)

### Capital Financing Requirement

The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) shows the difference between the capital expenditure and the revenue or capital resources set aside to finance that spend. The CFR will increase where capital expenditure takes place and will reduce with the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) made each year from the revenue budgets.

Capital Financing	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Balance B/fwd	22.11	21.47	20.82	23.84	25.34
Plus Capital Expenditure financed from borrowing	0.01	0.03	3.73	2.95	5.04
Less MRP for Debt Redemption	-0.65	-0.68	-0.71	-1.46	-1.85
<b>Balance C/Fwd</b>	<b>21.47</b>	<b>20.82</b>	<b>23.84</b>	<b>25.34</b>	<b>28.53</b>

### Authorised Limit

The represents a control on the maximum level of external debt. Whilst not desired it could be afforded by the authority in the short term but is not sustainable in the longer term. The Authorised Limit gauges events that may occur over and above those transactions which have been included in the Operational Boundary. The Authorised Limit must not be breached.

Authorised Limit for External Debt	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
External Borrowing	24.00	23.62	26.94	28.77	32.12
Other Long Term Liabilities	3.96	3.70	3.40	3.06	2.91
<b>Total Authorised Limit</b>	<b>27.97</b>	<b>27.32</b>	<b>30.34</b>	<b>31.84</b>	<b>35.03</b>

## Key Messages

The Operational Boundary limit is not an absolute limit of external debt and may be exceeded temporarily.

Currently the Commissioner has no external borrowing.

## Other Prudential Indicators 2024/25 (Continued)

### Operational Boundary

The Operational Boundary is a limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. This limit is not an absolute limit but it reflects the expectations of the level at which external debt is not normally expected to exceed.

Occasionally, the Operational Boundary may be exceeded (but still not breach the Authorised Limit) following variations in cash flow. Such an occurrence would follow controlled treasury management action and may not have a significant impact on the prudential indicators when viewed all together. Consistent with the Authorised Limit, the PFCC Chief Financial Officer has delegated authority, within the total Operational Boundary, to effect movement between the separately identified and agreed figures for External Borrowing and Other Long-term Liabilities. Any such changes will be reported to the Commissioner and the Joint Audit Committee meeting following the change.

Operational Boundary for External Debt	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
External Borrowing	22.50	22.12	25.44	27.27	30.62
Other Long Term Liabilities	3.96	3.70	3.40	3.06	2.91
Total Operational Boundary	26.47	25.82	28.84	30.34	33.53

### Actual External Debt

The Commissioner's actual external debt as at 31 March 2024 will be £3.70m, comprising only of other long-term liabilities of £3.70m in relation to the PFI. It is unlikely that the Commissioner will actually exercise external borrowing until there is a change in the present structure of investments rates compared to the costs of borrowing. It should be noted that all previous external borrowing with the PWLB (Public Works Loans Board) was repaid during 2012/13.

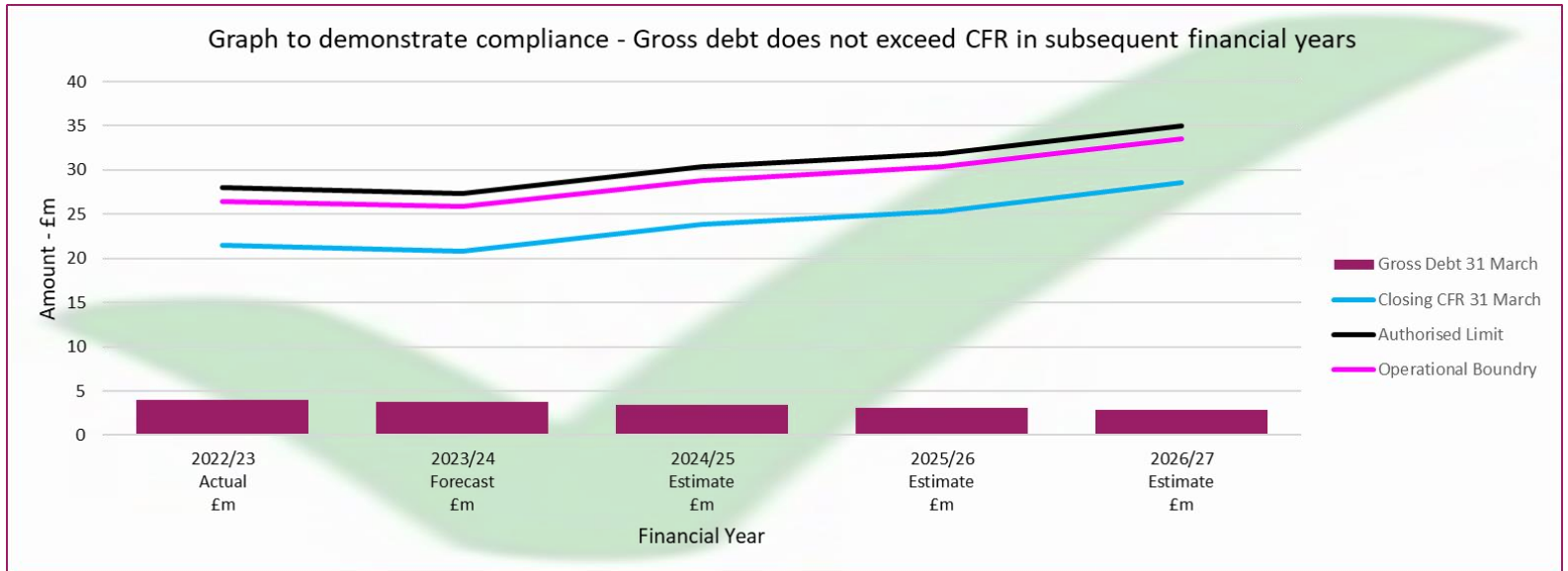
## Other Prudential Indicators 2024/25 (Continued)

### Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement

The Commissioner should only borrow to support a capital purpose, and borrowing should not be undertaken for revenue or speculative purposes. Gross debt, except in the short term, should not exceed CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates for CFR for the three subsequent years.

Gross Debt and Capital Financing Requirement	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Closing CFR 31 March	21.47	20.82	23.84	25.34	28.53
Gross Debt 31 March	3.96	3.70	3.40	3.06	2.91

Using the figures from the above stated indicators the graph below demonstrates compliance as gross debt remains below CFR, authorised and operational limits for all years presented:



## Other Prudential Indicators 2024/25 (Continued)

### Ratio of financing costs

This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs. The definition of financing costs is set out in the Prudential Code.

Financing Costs include the amount of interest payable in respect of borrowing or other long-term liabilities and the amount the Commissioner is required to set aside to repay debt, less interest and investments income. The Commissioner's financing costs can be both positive and negative dependent on the relative level of interest receipts and payments.

The actual Net Revenue Stream is the 'amount to be met from government grants and local taxation' taken from the annual Statement of Accounts, budget, budget proposal and medium-term financial forecast. These figures are purely indicative and are in no way meant to indicate planned increases in funding from Council Tax.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Investment income	0.44	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
MRP	0.65	0.68	0.71	1.46	1.85
<b>Financing Costs</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>0.31</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>1.45</b>
Net Revenue Stream	129.62	136.75	145.38	145.38	145.49
Ratio	0.17%	0.21%	0.22%	0.73%	1.00%

## Key Messages

The broad aim of the Minimum Revenue Provision is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period that is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits.

In relation to the Commissioner this would be over 50 years as borrowing is only used to finance Land and Building schemes.

Calculation will be based on Option 1 for pre 2008/09 debt and option 3 thereafter.

The Commissioner is also permitted to make additional voluntary payments if required (voluntary revenue provision VRP) although there are no plans to make any in the medium-term forecasts.

## Annual MRP Statement for 2024/25

The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 (SI 2008/414) place a duty on authorities to make a prudent provision for debt redemption, this is known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to “have regard” to The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s (Now DLUHC) Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision most recently issued in 2018. This sum known as the MRP is intended to cover the principal repayments of any loan over the expected life of a capital asset.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities recommends that before the start of the financial year, The Commissioner approves a statement of MRP policy for the forthcoming financial year. This is now by agreement encompassed within the TMSS. The broad aim of the policy is to ensure that MRP is charged over a period that is reasonably commensurate with the period over which the capital expenditure, which gave rise to the debt, provides benefits.

The four options available for calculating MRP are set out below:

- Option 1 – Regulatory Method based on 4% of the CFR after technical adjustments.
- Option 2 – CFR Method, based on 4% of the CFR with no technical adjustments.
- Option 3 – Asset Life Method, spread over the life of the asset being financed.
- Option 4 – Depreciation Method, based on the period over which the asset being financed is depreciated.

It is proposed that The Commissioner’s MRP policy for 2024/25 is unchanged from that of 2023/24 and that the Commissioner utilises option 1 for all borrowing incurred prior to the 1st April 2008 and option 3 for all borrowing undertaken from 2008/09 onwards, irrespective of whether this is against supported or unsupported expenditure. This policy establishes a link between the period over which the MRP is charged and the life of the asset for which borrowing has been undertaken. It is proposed that a fixed instalment method is used to align to the Commissioner’s straight-line depreciation policy. MRP in respect of PFI and leases brought on to the balance sheet under the 2009 accounting requirements will match the annual principal repayment for the associated deferred liability. This will not result in an additional charge to the Commissioner’s revenue budget as this is part of the capital repayment element of the PFI unitary charge. There have been some additional voluntary contributions of MRP made in previous years that are available to reduce the revenue charges in later years. No such overpayments or withdrawals are planned for 2024/25.



## Counterparty Selection Criteria and Approved Counterparties

The lending criteria set out below are designed to ensure that, in accordance with The Code of Practice, the security of the funds invested is more important than maximising the return on investments. Following consultation with the Commissioner's treasury advisors there are no amendments to the criteria used in determining approved investment counterparties for 2024/25 compared to those in operation for 2023/24.

### Counterparty Selection Criteria

The agreed changes to the selection criteria for investment counterparties for 2015/16 included changes to the investment categories, a reduction in the maximum amount and duration lengths for investments. This was to encourage diversification and to increase the security of those funds invested. These principles apply to the 2024/25 strategy. The investment limits and duration are linked to the credit rating and type of counterparty at the time the investment is made.

The credit worthiness of counterparties is monitored on an ongoing basis in conjunction with the Commissioner's treasury management advisors, Link Asset Services Ltd, who provide timely updates and advice on the standing of counterparties. Whilst credit ratings are central to the counterparty risk evaluation process, other factors such as the prevailing economic climate are taken into consideration when determining investment strategy and at the time when individual investment decisions are made. If this ongoing monitoring results in a significant change to counterparty selection during the year, the Commissioner and the Joint Audit Committee will be advised through the quarterly activities report.

The approved investment counterparties for the 2024/25 investment strategy are summarised as follows:

Category	Description	Comments
Category 1	Banks Unsecured	Includes building societies
Category 2	Banks Secured	Includes building societies
Category 3	Government	Includes other Local Authorities
Category 4	Registered Providers	Includes providers of social housing e.g. Housing Associations
Category 5	Pooled Funds	Includes Money Market Funds and property funds

A more detailed explanation of each of these counter party groupings is provided in Schedule B (page 26).

## Key Messages

Whilst these limits also apply to the Commissioner's own bankers in the ordinary course of business, if that bank's lowest rating falls below 'A-' balances will be maintained for operational purposes only and minimised on a daily basis. A non-investment limit of £1m will apply in such circumstances.

Changes to accounting rules mean that certain financial instruments need to be valued at year end and paper gains / losses at the balance sheet date charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account. Such instruments are not currently key to this strategy.

### Counterparty Groupings / Limits

The criteria for approving investment counterparties have been devised, grouped, graded and investment limits attached as detailed in Schedule A (page 25). The limits are based on a percentage of the potential maximum sums available for investment during the year of up to £40m. The counterparty limits for 2024/25 are the same as the limits for 2023/24. Pooled funds are in essence the same as AAA money market funds but they require 3 days' notice for the return of our funds. This slight reduction in cash flow is rewarded by a slightly increased interest rate. Link Asset Services Ltd suggest that these funds are used for longer term investments and the ordinary money market funds to manage cash flow.

### Description of Credit Ratings

As outlined above the credit worthiness of counterparties is monitored on an ongoing basis in conjunction with the Commissioner's treasury management advisors, Link Asset Services Ltd.

The UK Government is considered the safest place to invest as it has never defaulted and therefore minimum credit ratings do not apply.

The Commissioner has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from the UK and from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA.

All investments are Sterling. Therefore, the Commissioner is not exposed to any foreign exchange / currency risk.

Schedule A – Counterparty Groupings and Associated Limits

Investment Limits						
Credit Rating	Maximum	1	2	3	4	5
		Banks Unsecured	Banks Secured	Government	Registered Providers	Pooled Funds
<u>Category Limit 2020/21</u>	Amount Duration	£20m	£20m	Unlimited	£10m	£20m
<u>Individual Institution/Group Limits</u>						
UK Government	Amount Duration	N/A	N/A	£ unlimited 50 Years	N/A	N/A
AAA	Amount Duration	£2m 5 years	£4m 20 years	£4m 50 years	£2m 20 years	£4m per fund (Pooled funds are generally not rated but the diversification of funds equate to AAA credit rating)
AA+	Amount Duration	£2m 5 years	£4m 10 years	£4m 25 years	£2m 10 years	
AA	Amount Duration	£2m 4 years	£4m 5 years	£4m 15 years	£2m 10 years	
AA-	Amount Duration	£2m 3 years	£4m 4 years	£4m 10 years	£2m 10 years	
A+	Amount Duration	£2m 2 years	£4m 3 years	£2m 5 years	£2m 5 years	
A	Amount Duration	£2m 13 months	£4m 2 years	£2m 5 Years	£2m 5 years	
A-	Amount Duration	£2m 6 months	£4m 13 months	£2m 5 years	£2m 5 years	
None	Amount Duration	N/A	N/A	£2m 25 years	£2m 5 years	

Note, individual, group and category limits for 2024/25 are based on the potential maximum available for investment during the year of up to £40m. It should also be noted that as outlined on page 23 above, counterparty credit rating is not the only factor taken into consideration at the time of placing investments. The maximum of all investments with outstanding maturities greater than one year will be £2m.

Schedule B – Explanation of Counterparty Groupings

The Commissioners priority for investments will **always** be ranked in the order of



**Class of Investment**

**Category 1 - Banks 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.

**Category 2 - Banks Secured:** Covered bonds, reverse repurchase agreements and other collateralised arrangements with banks and building societies. These investments are secured on the bank’s assets, which limits the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency, and means that they 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 to determine cash and time limits. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

**Category 3 - 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 may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

**Category 4 - Registered Providers:** Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of registered providers of social housing and registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are tightly 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.

**Category 5 - Pooled Funds:** Shares or units in diversified investment vehicles consisting of the any of the above investment types, plus equity shares and property. These funds have the advantage of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a fee. Short-term Money Market Funds that offer same-day liquidity and very low or no volatility will be used as an alternative to instant access bank accounts, while pooled funds whose value changes with market prices and/or have a notice period will be used for longer investment periods.

Bond, equity and property funds 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.