

Report

Report to:	Finance and Corporate Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 September 2022
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Treasury Management Activity – 2022/2023 First Quarter Review
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide a first quarter review of Treasury Management Activity for 2022/2023

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the contents of this report be noted.

3. Background

3.1 In order to provide members with information on the Council's Treasury Management activities, a quarterly report is presented to this Committee. This report covers the period 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022.

4. Market Performance

- 4.1. After the Bank of England left the base rate unchanged at 0.75% in January 2020, the onset of the coronavirus epidemic in March of that year resulted in 2 emergency cuts, first to 0.25% and then to 0.10%.
- 4.2. On 16 December 2021, the Bank of England increased the base rate to 0.25%. This was followed by further increases of 0.25% in February, March, May and June 2022 in order to control rising inflation.
- 4.3. As at 30 June 2022, the base rate was 1.25% and the Bank of England Asset Purchase Programme (commonly referred to as its policy of quantitative easing) was £866 billion.
- 4.4. On 4 August 2022, the Bank of England increased the base rate by a further 0.50% taking it to 1.75%.
- 4.5. At the time of writing this report, the Council's Treasury Management Advisers are predicting a further increase of 0.50% in September 2022 followed by another 2 increases of 0.25% during 2022/2023 bringing the base rate to 2.75% by March 2023.

5. Debt Management and Borrowing Strategy

5.1. The Council began the year with debt of £993.486 million with fixed rate loans from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLb) making up 99.14% of the debt.

- 5.2. Table 1 shows the movement in borrowing from 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022. Short term borrowing reflects borrowing which will mature in the coming year, or where the debt can be recalled in the coming year.

Table 1 – Movement in Borrowing to 30 June 2022

	Balance as at 01/04/2022 £m	New Borrowing £m	Debt Maturing £m	Debt Repaid £m	Balance as at 30/06/2022 £m	Increase/ Decrease in Borrowing £m
Short Term Borrowing	43.884	0.000	(19.366)	0.00	24.518	(19.366)
Long Term Borrowing	949.602	57.800	0.00	0.00	1,007.402	57.800
TOTAL BORROWING	993.486	57.800	(19.366)	0.00	1,031.920	38.434

- 5.2. In 2012/2013, HM Treasury introduced a “certainty rate” to enable eligible local authorities to access cheaper PWLB funding, with a 20 basis point (0.20%) reduction on the standard rate. South Lanarkshire Council has access to this reduced rate.
- 5.3. The Council has an expected borrowing requirement of £249.746 million during 2022/2023, of which £57.800 million has been taken to the end of June as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Details of Long Term Borrowing to 30 June 2022

Loan Ref.	Period	Start Date	Principal £m	Rate %	Year High	Year Low	Average
513025	2½ - 3Yrs	13/05/2022	£57.800	2.38	3.14	2.08	2.50

- 5.4. The Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources), under delegated powers, will take the most appropriate form of borrowing depending on the prevailing interest rates at the time, taking into consideration the differential between investment earnings and debt costs that remains high.

6. Investment Activity

- 6.1. On a daily basis, the Treasury Management section within Finance and Corporate Resources manages the Council's cash balances. These balances can result from day to day cash flow situations where income has been received before expenditure has taken place, and from the balances held in earmarked reserves for use at a later date. It is the responsibility of the section to manage these funds. The primary consideration when making deposits is the security of funds. Secondary to this, consideration is given to ensuring we have access to funds when necessary, and that these funds are working as well as they can for the Council.
- 6.2. The Prudential Indicators, Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy Report for 2022/2023 was approved by South Lanarkshire Council on 23 February 2022. This included details of permitted investments for the Council.
- 6.3. Prior to depositing funds with any bank or building society, checks are made with the Council's treasury adviser, Link Asset Services, that the institution is considered safe and that any deposit conforms to their recommended time duration as determined by their Rating Methodology. This methodology uses credit ratings, rating watches and

outlooks and credit default swap (CDS) prices to establish a suggested time duration for deposits.

- 6.4. Deposits made in the period 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022 totalled £498.262 million. This is the cumulative deposits placed over this period. This is broken down per sector and institution in Table 3. 88.38% of these deposits were made with the UK Government through the Debt Management Office (DMO) deposit facility and Treasury Bills.
- 6.5. In order to manage their cash flow over the short term, local authorities, as part of normal treasury management activity, will place money on deposit with other local authorities. Deposits placed with other local authorities account for 8.43% of deposits with the remaining 3.19% placed in call accounts with Bank of Scotland and The Royal Bank of Scotland.

Table 3 – Investment Activity 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022

Counterparty	Deposit Totals (£m)	% of Total Deposits	Average Interest Rate
Deposits in UK Government			
Debt Management Account Deposit Facility	425.365	85.37%	0.92%
Treasury Bills	14.982	3.01%	0.88%
Total Deposits in UK Government	440.347	88.38%	0.92%
Deposits in UK Local Authorities	42.000	8.43%	0.75%
Deposits in UK Banks and Building Societies:			
Bank of Scotland	6.370	1.28%	0.53%
Royal Bank of Scotland	9.545	1.91%	0.10%
Total Deposits in UK Banks and Building Societies	15.915	3.19%	0.27%
Total Deposits 01/04/2022 to 30/06/2022	498.262	100.00%	0.88%

- 6.6. The average interest rates achieved from the deposits are also shown in Table 3. Interest rates achievable for deposits have been increasing, however, there is still a differential between these and the rates at which the Council can borrow.
- 6.7. Actual deposits as at 30 June 2022 totalled £277.598 million.

7. Management of Risk

- 7.1. It is recognised that no Treasury Management activity is without risk and practices are put in place in order to limit risk. As noted in section 6.2, the Treasury Management Strategy was approved in February 2022 and set a framework for Treasury Management activities in 2022/2023. It also set limits on debt and investments in order to mitigate risks.
- 7.2. The Annual Investment Strategy for 2022/2023, also approved in February 2022, included details on how risk would be managed for all permitted investments. This included criteria for placing deposits with the Debt Management Office (DMO), UK Local Authorities, Banks and Building Societies and Money Market Funds.

- 7.3. Part of the criteria for counterparties is meeting minimum credit ratings with the three main rating agencies. A credit rating evaluates the credit worthiness of an organisation. It is an evaluation made by a credit rating agency of the organisation's ability to pay back the debt and the likelihood of default.
- 7.4. Tables 4 to 5 show a breakdown of deposits with details of the credit ratings of banks and building societies used from 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022. Deposits with the DMO are with the UK Government and so have a rating equivalent to the UK's sovereign rating. Deposits with local authorities are considered to be of very high credit quality.

Table 4 – Fitch Ratings

Long Term Rating	Short Term Rating	Deposits Totals	Percentage of Total Deposits
Deposits with DMO / UK Government (AA-)		440.347m	88.38%
Deposits with Local Authorities		42.000m	8.43%
A+	F1	15.915m	3.19%
Total		498.262m	100.00%

Table 5 – Moody's Ratings

Long Term Rating	Short Term Rating	Deposits Totals	Percentage of Total Deposits
Deposits with DMO / UK Government (Aa3)		440.347m	88.38%
Deposits with Local Authorities		42.000m	8.43%
A1	P-1	15.915m	3.19%
Total		498.262m	100.00%

Table 6 – Standard and Poor's Ratings

Long Term Rating	Short Term Rating	Deposits Totals	Percentage of Total Deposits
Deposits with DMO / UK Government (AA)		440.347m	88.38%
Deposits with Local Authorities		42.000m	8.43%
A+	A-1	6.370m	1.28%
A	A-1	9.545m	1.91%
Total		498.262m	100.00%

- 7.5. The tables above show that 96.81% of deposits were made with counterparties of very high credit quality (DMO / UK Government and other local authorities).
- 7.6. The remaining deposits were in instant access accounts with The Royal Bank of Scotland and Bank of Scotland.
- 7.7. The graph at Appendix 1 shows the duration of deposits made from 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022. The graph shows that, since 1 April 2022, all deposits have been made for 1 year or less. The maximum maturity period of 123 days was for a deposit of £20.000 million.

8. Next Quarter Investment Plans

- 8.1. The current investment framework will be continued in the next quarter. Deposits will continue to be placed with the institutions where their ratings are consistent with the Council's approved criteria. Deposits will also continue to be placed with the DMO and UK local authorities.
- 8.2. Treasury Bills will be used when they return a higher yield than deposits in the DMO for the same, very low risk.
- 8.3. Deposits may also be placed with selected Money Market Funds that meet the Council's approved criteria.
- 8.4. We will continue to work with our Treasury Management Advisers, Link, to ensure we gain all information available on counterparties before any deposits are made.

9. Treasury Management Indicators

- 9.1. The purpose of these 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. However, if these are set to restrictive limits, they will impair the opportunities to reduce costs/improve performance. The indicators are detailed in sections 9.2 to 9.5.
- 9.2. **Limits for External Debt:** The operational and authorised limits for external debt for 2022/2023 were set in the Prudential Indicators, Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy 2022/2023 approved by South Lanarkshire Council on 23 February 2022. These are shown in Table 7, along with a column showing the difference between the actual debt level and the limits (headroom).

Table 7 – Limits for External Debt

	Estimate as per 2021/22 Strategy	Minimum Headroom to Limits in period	Headroom as at 30/06/2022
	£m	£m	£m
Operational Limit for external debt	1,340.000	292.214	308.080
Authorised Limit for external debt	1,360.000	312.214	328.080

- 9.3. The indicator shows that we have not breached the operational and authorised limits to 30 June 2022. There has been a minimum level of headroom of £312.214 million between actual and authorised level for external debt in the period to 30 June 2022.
- 9.4. **Limits on Maturity Structure:** By setting limits on the maturity structure of borrowing, the exposure to large concentrations of debt needing to be replaced at the same time in the future at currently unknown rates can be limited. This effectively places a limit on exposure to longer term interest rate movement. This is shown in Table 8.

Table 8 – Limits on Maturity Structure

Maturity Structure of Borrowing				
	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Maximum for period to 30/06/22	Actuals as at 30/06/22
Under 12 months	30%	0%	4.42%	2.38%
12 months and 24 months	30%	0%	2.20%	2.11%
24 months and 5 years	50%	0%	21.71%	21.71%
5 years and 10 years	60%	0%	36.15%	34.68%
10 years and 20 years	60%	0%	6.35%	6.09%
20 years and 30 years	70%	0%	3.06%	2.94%
30 years and 40 years	80%	0%	31.36%	30.09%
40 years and 50 years	90%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
50 years and above	90%	0%	0.00%	0.00%

9.5. The indicator shows that the upper limits for all maturity profiles have not been breached to 30 June 2022.

10. Employee Implications

10.1. There are no employee implications.

11. Financial Implications

11.1. The current rate of interest receivable remains relatively low but has increased over recent months. Any deposit interest received offsets Loan Charges made to the Council's Revenue budget.

11.3. The costs of borrowing for capital expenditure have been built into the long-term Revenue Budget Strategy.

12. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

12.1. There are no implications for climate change or sustainability in terms of the information contained in this report.

12.2. There is also no requirement to carry out an environmental impact assessment in terms of the information contained within this report.

13. Other Implications (Including Environmental and Risk Issues)

13.1. Section 7 of this report provides details of how investment risk is managed.

14. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

14.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

14.2. There is no requirement to carry out any consultation in terms of the information provided in this report.

Paul Manning
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

31 July 2022

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent

Previous References

- ◆ Prudential Indicators, Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy 2022/2023, South Lanarkshire Council, 23 February 2022

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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Appendix 1

