CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL

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REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES

Date of Meeting: **19 December 2011**

Public

Key Decision: **Yes** **Recorded in Forward Plan:** **Yes**

Inside Policy Framework

Title:	**DRAFT TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STRATEGY 2012/13**
Report of:	**Assistant Director (Resources)**
Report reference:	**RD72/11**

Summary:

This report sets out the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2012/13, in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. The Investment Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy for 2012/13 are also incorporated as part of the Statement. So too are the Prudential Indicators as required within the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

Recommendations:

The Executive is asked to approve the Draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2012/13, which incorporates the Investment Strategy and the MRP Strategy, together with the Prudential Indicators for 2012/13 for draft budget consultation purposes as set out in Appendix A.

Contact Officer: Steven Tickner **Ext:** 7280

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (2011); various briefing notes from Sector Treasury Services; the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities; draft Investment Guidance from DCLG (2011).

CITY OF CARLISLE

To: The Executive RD72/11

19 December 2011

DRAFT TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STRATEGY 2012/13

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities was first issued in 1992 and updated in 1996 and 2001. The City Council formally adopted this Code in March 2002 and adopted the 2009 revision in February 2010. A revised 2011 Code has now been received and it is recommended that the City Council formally adopt this revised version. The updates made are minor, and centre around the changes in housing finance, Localism Act and the introduction of General Powers of Competence.

1.2 Under the requirements of the revised Code, the Council will receive each year the following reports:-

- Annual strategy and plan in advance of the year
- A mid year review
- Annual report after its close.

2. DRAFT TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

2.1 As required under the Code, the Draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2012/13, which also incorporates both the Investment Strategy for that year and the Minimum Revenue Strategy, is set out in **Appendix A**. The draft Strategy Statement is issued as part of the consultation period on the draft budget for 2012/13.The schedule of approved investment vehicles is contained in **Appendix B**. **Appendix C** includes a summary of current economic forecasts on interest rates that have been utilised in preparing the Strategy.

2.2 Also included within Appendix A are the **draft Prudential Indicators** that must be determined under the requirements of the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. These requirements came into operation on 1 April 2004 under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003. Part 1 of the Act allows a local authority to borrow money for any purpose that is within its control or for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs. The main purpose for borrowing money is to fund capital expenditure although some short-term borrowing is permitted to cover temporary cash flow needs.

2.3 Since 1 April 2004 there has been no statutory limit to the amount that can be borrowed. There is, however, a requirement for full compliance with CIPFA's Prudential Code; the key objectives of which are to demonstrate that the proposed capital investment plans have been assessed by the Council as affordable, prudent and sustainable. Section 3(1) of the Act puts a duty on the Council to determine before the start of the financial year and keep under review the maximum amount that it can afford to borrow. This amount is called the **Authorised Limit** and is discussed in Appendix A.

2.4 The Prudential Indicators will be monitored via the quarterly Treasury Management monitoring reports.

3. CONSULTATION

3.1 The Council has appointed Sector Treasury Services as its Treasury Advisers and they have been involved in the Strategy and proposals contained within this report.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to approve the Draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2012/13, which incorporates the Investment Strategy and the MRP Strategy, together with the Prudential Indicators for 2012/13 for draft budget consultation purposes as set out in Appendix A.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – Not applicable.
- Financial – Included within the report.
- Legal – Not applicable.
- Corporate – Not applicable.
- Risk Management – Management of risk is one of the guiding principles of both the Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Prudential Code. The Investment Strategy also embraces the principles of risk management.
- Equality Issues – Not applicable.
- Environmental – Not applicable.
- Crime and Disorder – Not applicable.
- Impact on Customers – Not applicable.

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Does the change have an impact on the following?

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Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age	**No**	**N/A**
Disability	**No**	**N/A**
Race	**No**	**N/A**
Gender/ Transgender	**No**	**N/A**
Sexual Orientation	**No**	**N/A**
Religion or belief	**No**	**N/A**
Human Rights	**No**	**N/A**
Health inequalities	**No**	**N/A**
Rurality	**No**	**N/A**

If you consider there is either no impact or no negative impact, please give reasons:

This report summarises draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2012/13 and Prudential indicators for 2012/13 – 2014/15

If an equality Impact is necessary, please contact the P&P team.

PETER MASON
Assistant Director (Resources)

Contact Officer: Steven Tickner **Ext:** 7280

APPENDIX A

Draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Statement

Carlisle City Council

2012/13

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Local Government Act 2003 and supporting regulations requires the Council to ‘have regard to’ the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to set Prudential and Treasury Indicators for the next 3 years to ensure that the Council’s capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

1.2 The Act therefore requires the Council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy (as required by Investment Guidance subsequent to the Act and included as paragraph 9 of this report); this sets out the Council’s policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

1.3 The Department of Communities and Local Government has issued revised investment guidance which came into effect from 1 April 2010. There were no major changes required over and above the changes already required by the revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice 2009 and 2011.

1.4 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised November 2009) was adopted by this Council on 2 February 2010. A revised 2011 Code has now been received and it is recommended that the City Council formally adopt this revised version. The updates made are minor, and centre around the changes in housing finance, Localism Act and the introduction of General Powers of Competence.

1.5 The suggested strategy for 2012/13 in respect of the following aspects of the treasury management function is based upon officers’ views on interest rates, supplemented with leading market forecasts provided by the Council’s treasury consultants. The strategy covers the following issues:

- Treasury limits in force that will limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- Prudential and Treasury Indicators;
- Current treasury position;
- Borrowing requirement;
- Prospects for interest rates;
- Borrowing strategy considerations;
- Debt rescheduling opportunities.

- Investment Strategy
- Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy

1.6 It is a statutory requirement under Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for the Council to produce a balanced budget. In particular, Section 32 requires a local authority to calculate its budget requirement for each financial year to include the revenue costs that flow from capital financing decisions. This, therefore, means that increases in capital expenditure must be limited to a level whereby increases in charges to revenue from: -

  - increases in interest charges caused by increased borrowing to finance additional capital expenditure, and
  - any increases in running costs from new capital projects are limited to a level which is affordable within the projected income of the Council for the foreseeable future

2. TREASURY LIMITS 2012/13 TO 2014/15

2.1 It is a statutory duty, under S.3 of the Local Government Act 2003 and supporting regulations, for the Council to determine and keep under review how much it can afford to borrow. The amount determined is termed the ‘Affordable Borrowing Limit’.

2.2 The Council must have regard to the Prudential Code when setting its Affordable Borrowing Limit. This essentially requires it to ensure that total capital investment remains within sustainable limits and in particular, that the impact upon its future council tax levels is ‘acceptable’. It is important to understand, however, that the Indicators themselves, which are set out in paragraph 3, do not have an inherently right or wrong answer. They are not intended as comparator information between different authorities but are designed to support and record local decision making.

3. USE OF TREASURY CONSULTANTS

3.1 The authority has, like most other authorities, employed treasury advisers for specialist advice and assistance for many years. In the case of this authority, this role has long been fulfilled by Sector Treasury Services.

3.2 Sector provide specialist advice on both borrowing and investment matters. They also supply other relevant information and hold regular client seminars which help provide up to date training in what is an important and continually changing field. That said, it is important to recognise that responsibility for all treasury matters lies solely with the City Council and this responsibility is not delegated to Sector or any other third party. The Council has regard to the advice and information supplied by Sector along with advice and information from a variety of other sources. Such advice is valued and the authority is in frequent contact with Sector but this does lessen the ultimate responsibility of the City Council in dealing with treasury matters and taking relevant decisions.

4. CURRENT PORTFOLIO POSITION

The Council's treasury portfolio position at 30 November 2011 comprised:

Table 1		Principal £m	£m	Ave Rate %
Fixed Rate Funding	PWLB Market	0 15.0	15.0	8.76
Variable Rate Funding	PWLB Market	0 0	0	0.00
Other Long Term Liabilities			0	0.00
Gross Debt			**15.0**	**8.76**
Total Investments			**22.1**	**1.47**

5. PRUDENTIAL AND TREASURY INDICATORS 2012/13 -2014/15

5.1 The Prudential and Treasury Indicators have been based on current projections for capital spending and resources in 2012/13 to 2014/15. The Council has ensured that future years' capital programmes have been set in accordance with the principles contained within the City Council's Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan.

PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR AFFORDABILITY INDICATORS	2010/11 actual £000's	2011/12 revised estimate £000's	2012/13 estimate £000's	2013/14 estimate £000's	2014/15 estimate £000's
Capital Expenditure	8,644	6,628	11,190	15,410	2,914
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	6.33%	9.68%	8.53%	6.81%	8.19%
Net borrowing requirement in year	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Capital Financing Requirement as at 31 March	6,954	8,744	611	11,599	8,904
Annual change in Cap. Financing Requirement	N/A	1,790	(8,133)	10,988	(2,695)
Incremental impact of capital investment decisions Increase in council tax (band D) per annum (£)	N/A	N/A	10.06	0.68	13.26

5.2 The estimates of financing costs include both current capital commitments and the draft capital programme as presented elsewhere on the agenda. The level of financing costs assumes a total of borrowing no greater than the amount forecast to be supported by revenue support grant. In the case of this authority, it is assumed that any support from central government towards the costs of capital expenditure programmes in the next three years will be by means of a capital grant.

PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS	2010/11 actual £000's	2011/12 revised estimate £000's	2012/13 estimate £000's	2013/14 estimate £000's	2014/15 estimate £000's
Authorised Limit for External Debt:					
- Borrowing	37,500	37,500	37,500	37,500	37,500
- Other Long Term Liabilities	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL	**37,600**	**37,600**	**37,600**	**37,600**	**37,600**
Operational Boundary for external debt:					
- Borrowing	32,500	32,500	32,500	32,500	32,500
- Other Long Term Liabilities	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL	**32,600**	**32,600**	**32,600**	**32,600**	**32,600**
Upper Limit for fixed interest rate exposure:					
- Net principal re. Fixed rate borrowing/investments	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
Upper Limit for variable rate exposure					
- Net principal re. Variable rate borrowing/investments	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
Upper Limit for total principal sums invested for over 1 year	**50%**	**50%**	**50%**	**50%**	**50%**

Maturity structure of any fixed rate borrowing during 2011/12	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	100%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	100%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	100%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

5.3 In respect of its external debt, it is recommended that the Council approves the above authorised limit for its total external debt, gross of investments, for the next three financial years. The limit separately identifies borrowing from other long term liabilities such as finance leases. The Council will be asked to approve these limits and to delegate authority to the Assistant Director (Resources), within the total limit for any individual year, to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long term liabilities in accordance with option appraisal and best value for money. Any such change would be reported to the next available Council meeting.

5.4 The authorised limit is consistent with the authority's current commitments, plans and proposals for capital expenditure and it's financing. **However the overall authorised limit is not to be exceeded without prior Council approval.**

5.5 The operational boundary is based upon the same estimates as the authorised limit but without the headroom included within the authorised limit to allow for unusual cash movements. As with the authorised limit, the Council is asked to delegate authority to the Assistant Director (Resources) to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long-term liabilities. The operational boundary can be exceeded in exceptional circumstances without prior Council approval providing that it remains within the authorised limit.

5.6 The City Council's current limits for maximum levels of fixed and variable rate funding are both 100% and this is as recommended by the treasury advisers.

5.7 Prudence and Sustainability
The City Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services and adopted the 2009 version of the Code in February 2010.

The current minimum level of specified investments is set at 50%. It is recommended that this level be continued into 2012/13.

5.8 Monitoring of the Prudential Indicators will be incorporated into the quarterly Treasury Transaction reports presented to the Executive.

6. PROSPECTS FOR INTEREST RATES

6.1 The Council has appointed Sector Treasury Services as a treasury adviser to the Council and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. The following table gives the Sector central view although it should be noted that there are some very differing views among the various economic forecasters regarding the future pattern of these rates:

Year	%
2011/12	0.50%
2012/13	0.50%
2013/14	1.00%
2014/15	2.50%

6.2 Growth in the UK economy is expected to be weak in the next two years and there is a risk of a technical recession (i.e. two quarters of negative growth). Bank Rate, currently 0.5%, underpins investment returns and is not expected to start increasing until quarter 3 of 2013 despite inflation currently being well above the Monetary Policy Committee inflation target. Hopes for an export led recovery appear likely to be disappointed due to the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis depressing growth in the UK's biggest export market. The Comprehensive Spending Review, which seeks to reduce the UK's annual fiscal deficit, will also depress growth during the next few years.

6.3 Fixed interest borrowing rates are based on UK gilt yields. The outlook for borrowing rates is currently much more difficult to predict. The UK total national debt is forecast to continue rising until 2015/16; the consequent increase in gilt issuance is therefore expected to be reflected in an increase in gilt yields over this period. However, gilt yields are currently at historically low levels due to investor concerns over Eurozone sovereign debt and have been subject to exceptionally high levels of volatility as events in the Eurozone debt crisis have evolved.

6.4 This challenging and uncertain economic outlook has a several key treasury mangement implications:

- The Eurozone sovereign debt difficulties, most evident in Greece, provide a clear indication of much higher counterparty risk. This continues to suggest the use of higher quality counterparties for shorter time periods;
- Investment returns are likely to remain relatively low during 2012/13;
- Borrowing interest rates are currently attractive, but may remain low for some time. The timing of any borrowing will need to be monitored carefully;
- There will remain a cost of capital – any borrowing undertaken that results in an increase in investments will incur a revenue loss between borrowing costs and investment returns.

7. BORROWING STRATEGY

7.1 The Sector forecast for the PWLB new borrowing rate is as follows:

	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Dec-12	Mar-13	Mar-14	Mar-15
Bank Rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	1.25%	2.50%
5yr PWLB Rate	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%	2.90%	3.70%
10yr PWLB Rate	3.30%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%	3.50%	4.00%	4.80%
25yr PWLB Rate	2.20%	4.20%	4.20%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.80%	5.20%
50yr PWLB Rate	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.40%	4.50%	4.90%	5.30%

7.2 The Council is, as stated above, not currently expecting to have any recourse to borrowing in 2012/13. It is anticipated that a combination of capital grants and internal resources will be used to meet most, if not all, capital commitments in the new financial year. Nevertheless, the use of external borrowing cannot be ruled out at this stage. This is particularly the case in respect of any future major capital projects which may require an element of external borrowing as a part of the total funding package. The Assistant Director (Resources) will therefore continue to monitor the interest rate market as regards borrowing opportunities as well as in respect of investment policy.

7.3 External v. Internal Borrowing

7.3.1 This Council currently has a difference between gross debt and net debt (after deducting cash balances).

7.3.2 The general aim of this treasury management strategy is to reduce the difference between the two debt levels over the next three years in order to reduce the credit risk incurred by holding investments. However, measures taken in the last year have already reduced substantially the level of credit risk (see paragraph 9) so another factor which will be carefully considered is the difference between borrowing rates and investment rates to ensure the Council obtains value for money once an appropriate level of risk management has been attained to ensure the security of its investments.

7.3.3 The next financial year will continue to be one of historically abnormally low Bank Rate. This provides a continuation of the current window of opportunity for local authorities to fundamentally review their strategy of undertaking new external borrowing.

7.3.4 Over the next three years, investment rates are therefore expected to be below long term borrowing rates and so value for money considerations would indicate that value could best be obtained by avoiding new external borrowing and by using internal cash balances to finance new capital expenditure or to replace maturing external debt (this is referred to as internal borrowing). This would maximise short term savings.

7.3.5 However, short term savings by avoiding new long term external borrowing in 2012/13 will also be weighed against the potential for incurring additional long term extra costs by delaying unavoidable new external borrowing until later years when PWLB long term rates are forecast to be significantly higher.

7.3.6 Against this background caution will be adopted with the 2012/13 treasury operations. The Assistant Director (Resources) will monitor the interest rate market and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances, reporting any decisions to the appropriate decision making body at the next available opportunity.

8. DEBT RESCHEDULING

8.1 There is unlikely to be much scope for debt rescheduling in either the current financial year or in 2011/12. Only one substantial sum of long term debt remains on the authority's books. This is the £15m stock issue which dates from 1995 and is not due to mature until 2020. The current view is that a premature repayment is not recommended because of the size of the premium payment that would be incurred. The position remains under review, however, if circumstances should change.

9. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

9.1 Principles

9.1.1 The City Council will have regard to CLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments and the 2011 revised CIPFA's Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("CIPFA TM Code").

9.1.2 The Council's investment priorities are:

- The security of capital
- The liquidity of its investments

9.1.3 The Council will also endeavour to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. Security of principal will always be the primary consideration. The risk appetite of this Council is low in order to give priority to security of its investments.

9.1.4 The borrowing of monies purely to invest or to on lend and make a return is unlawful and the Council will not engage in any such activity. Any borrowing in advance of need will only be undertaken after a full financial assessment of the costs and benefits of drawing down any such funding.

9.1.5 Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed below under the 'Specified' and 'Non Specified' Investment categories. Individual counterparty limits will be set through the Council's Treasury Management Practices – Schedules which will be authorised by the Assistant Director (Resources).

9.1.6 Total investments with any one counterparty or group currently will not exceed £4m to ensure a reasonable spread of investments in terms of counterparties. However, Lloyds group and RBS Group will not exceed £8m as these establishments are currently funded by a majority shareholding by the UK Government. These limits will be subject to review during 2012 to take account of anticipated fluctuations in cash balances due to the impact of the asset review with additional capital receipts being received.

9.1.7 This Annual Investment Strategy states which instruments the Council may use for the prudent management of its treasury balances during the financial year under the heads of **Specified Investments** and **Non Specified Investments**. These are listed in **Appendix B**. Essentially, specified investments are those with a maturity of up to one year which have a suitable credit rating or are otherwise guaranteed e.g. by HM Government. All other investments are non specified.

9.1.8 Credit ratings will be used as one means of assessing the credit quality of rated counterparties although it is recognised that reliance should not be placed on credit rating alone. The minimum short term rating for a bank will be either F1 (Fitch) or P1 (Moodys). For a rated UK building society, a similar rating would be anticipated although the proposed criteria do give authority to the Assistant Director (Resources) to approve, if considered appropriate, the addition of other building societies with both a F2 (Fitch) and a P2 rating (Moodys). This is still a high quality credit rating but recognises the very strong record of the UK building society movement over many years in protecting the capital of all depositors. The Strategy already allows discretion to the Assistant Director to include as counterparties non credit rated building societies whose assets total at least £1bn. There are some six societies in this category. Any such investment would be subject to an assessment of such a society as a suitable counterparty. There are, for example, good reasons why many building societies do not have a credit rating but there are other means of making an appropriate financial judgment.

9.1.9 Any investments with institutions that do not have a credit rating e.g. many smaller building societies or investments for periods over one year would be classed as non specified investments**. However it is important to stress that both the specified and non specified investments in Appendix B are perfectly legal instruments in which the City Council may invest.** This includes for example many building societies as only the larger societies have an individual credit rating although there are other criteria by which a judgement can be made as to their credit quality.

9.1.10 The minimum percentage of its overall investments that the Council will hold in specified investments is 50%.

9.2 Investment Strategy

9.2.1 With bank base rate at 0.5% and not generally expected to increase from this level until at least the end of 2011, investment conditions will continue to be difficult. The view of Sector is that bank rate will be at the following levels at each year end:

Year	%
2011/12	0.50%
2012/13	0.50%
2013/14	1.00%
2014/15	2.50%

9.2.2 Clearly, these projections can only be best estimates at this stage and the risk is to the downside i.e. if the economic recovery is slower than expected, then interest rates are like to rise more slowly. At this stage, the budget has assumed an average yield of 1.60% on its investments in the next financial year. This allows for the fact that there are some higher value investments placed in this financial year that will roll forward into 2012/13. This forecast will, however, be reviewed further during the budget cycle in case there are changes in market conditions that indicate that the forecast needs to be revised.

9.2.3 In this situation, the authority will continue to try and seek value in its investments by placing them out for longer periods where possible e.g. six months to one year, to meet future cash flow needs, subject to retaining some sums for shorter periods to meet liquidity requirements and also to take advantage of any particular investment opportunities. Much of the basic framework of the authority's cash flows is already known for the next financial year and use will be made of this information in determining investment periods. The money market is monitored daily and use will be made of a plurality of sources of financial information in determining investment opportunities. All investments will be placed only with institutions that conform to the criteria set out in the Investment Strategy.

9.2.4 The investment income budget will, as ever, be carefully monitored in the coming financial year and reported to members via the regular Treasury Transactions reports.

9.3 End of Year Investment Report

In line with current practice, the Council will receive a report on its investment activity as part of the Annual Treasury Report at the end of the financial year. It should also be noted that best practice now requires a mid year report on the treasury function. This has long been the practice within the City Council where quarterly reports are presented to the Executive. In addition, the Audit Committee has taken on the role of the ‘specialist committee’ that oversees treasury matters.

10. THE MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STRATEGY

10.1 The Council implemented the new Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) guidance in 2008/09, and will assess their MRP for 2012/13 in accordance with the main recommendations contained within the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 21(1A) of the Local Government Act 2003.

10.2 No requirement is currently anticipated to undertake any long term borrowing in either 2011/12 or 2012/13 although the authority will need at this stage to keep its options open. This is particularly so if any major capital project requires an element of long term borrowing as part of the overall funding package.

10.3 Notwithstanding this possibility, the City Council is still obliged to make proper provision for the repayment of its outstanding debt. Capital expenditure is generally expenditure on assets which have a life expectancy of more than one year e.g. land, buildings, vehicles etc. It would usually be impractical to charge the entirety of such expenditure, which is often funded by borrowing, to the revenue account in the year it was incurred. Instead, this is spread over a longer period to try and match the years over which these assets will benefit the community. The manner of spreading these costs is through the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). Until recently, the MRP was calculated according to detailed and complex regulations. It is now determined under Guidance.

10.4 The only statutory duty that a local authority has under the new MRP regime is *‘to determine for the current financial year an amount of minimum revenue provision that it considers to be prudent’*. The Guidance, which authorities must ‘have regard to’ provides four options for calculating the MRP as set out below. It is important to realise, however, that there is no obligation to follow any of these options and that it is up to each authority to decide upon the most appropriate method of making a prudent provision, having had regard to the Guidance.

10.4.1 Regulatory Method (Option 1)

This method is based upon the Regulations that were first promulgated in 2003 for the calculation of the MRP. It is based upon 4% of the authority’s capital financing requirement (CFR). The CFR is a measure of the authority’s level of outstanding debt. From this sum, the authority may subtract (if it is a negative figure) a technical adjustment known as ‘Adjustment A’

10.4.2 Capital Financing Requirement Method (Option 2)

This is very similar to the regulatory method but it does not take account of Adjustment A.

Option 2 is the method currently approved by the City Council for use in 2011/12. The City Council’s Adjustment A was a positive figure and it is allowed in such circumstances to disregard Adjustment A. To use Option 1 would have incurred an increased MRP liability for the City Council.

Options 1 and 2 can be used for borrowing incurred before 1 April 2008, whether supported or unsupported, and for supported borrowing after that date. Supported borrowing is borrowing that is notionally funded within the revenue support grant allocation. The Council may therefore use either option 1 or option 2 but because of the ‘Adjustment A’ factor, option 2 has previously been recommended.

10.4.3 Asset Life Method (Option 3) and Depreciation Method (Option 4)

One of these methods may be used for new schemes that require the Council to undertake any unsupported borrowing after 1 April 2008. They are fairly similar except that option 3 is based upon the estimated life of an asset whilst option 4 assumes that an asset will still be worth something after its useful life has expired. They can, however, also be used for supported borrowing incurred either before or after that date. To date, this authority has not undertaken any unsupported borrowing.

10.5 The authority has no firm plans at present to undertake any borrowing which is either supported or unsupported. Options 3 and 4, moreover, are particularly appropriate where assets can be identified that match past borrowing decisions. This situation does not apply to the City Council.

10.6 The City Council implemented the new MRP guidance in 2008/09. In that year its MRP charge was Nil because its opening CFR was also Nil. In 2011/12, the opening CFR was £6.9m which will result in an MRP of £276,000 (4% of the CFR) in this financial year. In future years, the CFR will increase to the extent that capital expenditure is not met by capital grant or revenue contributions. This expenditure will, however, be met under current plans by the set aside capital receipts as the Council still possesses the cash represented by these receipts. It is less likely to be funded from borrowing. It is therefore recommended that the Council continues to use Option 2 for its MRP calculations in 2012/13 i.e. that its MRP should remain at 4% of its CFR as at 31 March 2012.

APPENDIX B

APPROVED INVESTMENT INSTRUMENTS

Specified Investments

All such investments will be sterling denominated, with **maturities up to maximum of 1 year**, meeting the minimum 'high' rating criteria where applicable. **A maximum of £4m of the investment portfolio** will be placed with any one counterparty or banking group, or a maximum of **£8m of the investment portfolio for Lloyds Group banks and RBS Group Banks** whether by way of specified or non-specified investments except for building societies without a credit rating where **the limit will be £1m.**

Fixed Term Deposits with fixed rates and maturities:-	**Minimum 'High' Credit Criteria**	**Use**
Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility	Government backed	In-house
Term deposits – local authorities	--High level of security	In-house
Term deposits – U K banks**	Short-term F1 (Fitch) or P1(Moodys)	In-house
Term Deposits – UK building societies**	Short Term F1 (Fitch) or P1 (Moodys) or as determined by the Assistant Director (Resources)	In-house
Fixed term deposits with variable rate and variable maturities: -	**Minimum 'High' Credit Criteria**	**Use**
Callable deposits	Short-term F1 (Fitch) or P1 (Moodys)	In-house
Certificates of deposits issued by UK banks and building societies	Short-term F1 (Fitch) or PI (Moodys)	In-house buy and hold
UK Government Gilts	Government backed	In-house buy and hold
Bonds issued by multilateral development banks	AAA	In-house on a 'buy-and-hold' basis.
Bonds issued by a financial institution which is guaranteed by the UK government	AAA	In-house on a 'buy-and-hold' basis.
Collective Investment Schemes structured as Open Ended Investment Companies (OEICs): -	**Minimum 'High' Credit Criteria**	**Use**
1. Money Market Funds	Short-term AAA	In-house
2. Enhanced Cash Funds	Short-term AAA	In-house
3. Government Liquidity Funds	Short-term AAA	In-house

** If forward deposits are to be made, the forward period plus the deal period should not exceed one year in aggregate.

<u>Non-Specified Investments</u>:

A maximum of 50% will be held in aggregate in non-specified investments

1. Maturities of ANY period.

	Minimum Credit Criteria	Use	Max % of total investments	Max. maturity period
Term deposits with non credit rated UK Building Societies	As approved by the Assistant Director (Resources). Minimum asset base of £1bn	In-house	50	364 days

2. Maturities in excess of 1 year

	Minimum Credit Criteria	Use	Max % of total investments	Max. maturity period
Term deposits – local authorities	Any authority	In-house	50	3 Years
Term deposits – UK banks and building societies	Long-term A (Fitch) or A2 (Moodys)	In-house	50	3 Years
Fixed term deposits with variable rate and variable maturities	**Minimum Credit Criteria**	**Use**	**Max % of total investments**	**Max. maturity period**
Certificates of deposits issued by UK banks and building societies	Long-term A (Fitch) or A2 (Moodys)	In house on a 'buy and hold basis'	50	3 Years
UK Government Gilts	Government backed	In house on a 'buy and hold basis'	50	3 Years
Bonds issued by multilateral development banks	AAA	In-house on a 'buy-and-hold' basis.	50	3 Years
Bonds issued by a financial institution which is guaranteed by the UK government	AAA	In-house on a 'buy-and-hold' basis.	50	3 Years
Collective Investment Schemes structured as Open Ended Investment Companies (OEICs)	**Minimum Credit Criteria**	**Use**	**Max % of total investments**	**Max. maturity period**
1. Bond Funds	Long-term AAA	In-house	50	3 Years
2. Gilt Funds	Long-term AAA	In-house	50	3 Years

The Council uses Fitch (primarily) or Moodys ratings to derive its counterparty criteria. All credit ratings will be monitored monthly. The Council is alerted to changes in credit ratings through its use of the Sector creditworthiness service. If a downgrade results in the counterparty/investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.

APPENDIX C

INTEREST RATE FORECASTS

The data below shows a variety of forecasts published by a number of institutions. The first three are individual forecasts including those of UBS and Capital Economics (an independent forecasting consultancy). The final one represents summarised figures drawn from major City banks and academic institutions. The forecast within this strategy statement has been drawn from these diverse sources and officers' own views. Revised forecasts will be provided when they become available.

1. INDIVIDUAL FORECASTS

Sector Interest Rate Forecast 22 November 2011

	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Dec-12	Mar-13	Mar-14	Mar-15
Bank Rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	1.25%	2.50%
5yr PWLB Rate	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%	2.90%	3.70%
10yr PWLB Rate	3.30%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%	3.50%	4.00%	4.80%
25yr PWLB Rate	2.20%	4.20%	4.20%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.80%	5.20%
50yr PWLB Rate	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.40%	4.40%	4.50%	4.90%	5.30%

Capital Economics interest rate forecast – 22 November 2011

	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Dec-12	Mar-13
Bank Rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
5yr PWLB Rate	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
10yr PWLB Rate	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
25yr PWLB Rate	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%	4.30%
50yr PWLB Rate	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%

UBS interest rate forecast (for quarter ends) – 22 November 2011

	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Dec-12
Bank Rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
5yr PWLB Rate	2.40%	-	-	-	-
10yr PWLB Rate	3.45%	3.45%	3.50%	3.60%	3.65%
25yr PWLB Rate	4.80%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.90%
50yr PWLB Rate	4.80%	4.95%	4.95%	5.00%	5.00%