

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL  
REPORT**

To: POLICY & RESOURCES (FINANCE & CUSTOMER SERVICES) SUB-COMMITTEE		Subject: TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT PERIOD 1 JANUARY TO 31 MARCH 2015
From: HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES		
Date: 16 APRIL 2015	Ref: PH/JQ/Q4	

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform on the quarterly activity (1 January 2015 to 31 March 2015) of the Council's loans and investment portfolios.

## 2. Background

2.1 The Council manages its treasury activities in line with the CIPFA Code 'Treasury Management in the Public Services'. The Code requires the Council to produce reports on its Treasury Management policies, practices and activities on a regular and on-going basis. The Council fulfils these obligations in part by the preparation of a Treasury Management Monitoring report produced on a quarterly basis contained herein.

2.2 The Treasury activity undertaken in the final quarter of 2014/2015 reflects the key requirements of the Council's 2014/2015 Treasury Management Strategy, with the Public Works Loan Board and Long-term Money Market being the prime source of long-term funds. In terms of investment activity, this is conducted in accordance within the approved 2014/2015 investment strategy.

## 3. Quarterly Activity

### 3.1 Summary Position

3.1.1 The net overall borrowing position to 31 March 2015 is £670.4m, this representing an increase of £10.9m from the position at the 31 December 2014 with a detailed breakdown of the net cash movement shown in column (6) within Appendix 1.

### 3.2 Debt Restructuring

3.2.1 During the quarter under review, in conjunction with our Treasury advisors, we monitored the economic climate in relation to our financial targets and Treasury Management strategy. The interest rates prevailing throughout the period resulted in no beneficial opportunities for debt restructuring/rescheduling of the PWLB debt portfolio arising.

3.2.2 Further reports regarding future activity will be presented to Committee as appropriate.

### 3.3 Borrowing

3.3.1 At the end of the quarter, long term borrowing amounted to £524.5m which represented a fall of £3.8m as a result of PWLB long term loans falling due for repayment.

3.3.2 At 31 March 2015, temporary borrowing (< 1yr) had increased by almost £55.0m with a total of almost £78.0m outstanding at the end of the period. These additional cash advances ensuring liquidity available, to meet current and future revenue account requirements including the pending cash settlement of the second wave equal pay cases. These monies also funding the aforementioned principal repayments of £3.8m and lease payments of £1.6m under finance lease and PPP obligations that fell due for repayment during the quarter under consideration.

- 3.3.3 There was also an increase of £1.3m in the municipal bank balances available to the Council on a temporary borrowing basis at the end of the quarter.
- 3.3.4 During 2014/15 the approach to borrowing was in line with the approved strategy , with internal cash balances primarily being used to meet the principal repayments, daily revenue account requirements and the capital financing requirement, in lieu of future borrowing for capital purposes whilst also taking advantage of temporary borrowing at attractive rates. The strategy adopted reflecting interest rate forecasts, the management of carrying costs and the retention of cash balances at appropriate levels managing the associated investment, interest and liquidity risk.
- 3.3.5 In October 2014, the Council was notified that it was successful in its application to the PWLB to access the certainty rate which allows a 20 basis point (bps) (0.2%) discount on loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) under the prudential borrowing regime for those principal local authorities providing improved information and transparency on their locally determined long-term borrowing and associated capital spending plans. This will continue to provide the Council with an opportunity to borrow if required from the PWLB at more beneficial rates until October 2015 and beyond subject to a further successful application.
- 3.3.6 In March 2015, Audit Scotland issued a report entitled 'Borrowing and treasury management in councils' which outlined the findings following an assessment as to how councils demonstrate best value in borrowing and treasury management decisions. This was presented to full Council for consideration on the 27 March 2015 and will also be subject to further consideration at the next Audit and Governance panel meeting.

#### **3.4 Short Term Investments**

- 3.4.1 In the final quarter of 2014/2015, cash management enabled short-term investments of £216.0m to be undertaken with approximately £170.0m of short-term investments maturing, the net effect of these transactions being an increase of £46.6m in investment balances as shown within column 6 of the attached appendix 1.
- 3.4.2 This increase in funds available for investment reflecting the prudent decision to manage liquidity by sourcing additional monies to meet current commitments and future cash demands based on the latest cashflow projections, with cash balances held being invested securely in line with Councils investment strategy.
- 3.4.3 At the end of the quarter the bank overdraft including cash in transit totaled £7.8m, an increase of £7.5m compared to the total held at the end of the previous quarter. The bank overdraft at the 31 March 2015 comprises £8.0m of net BACS receipts/payments outstanding due for clearance within 3 days of the quarter end date and cheques unrepresented of £1.4m, partly offset by balance of £1.6m of cash in transit.
- 3.4.4 In September 2014 the Council agreed that the 2014/2015 Annual Investment Strategy be amended to include investments in subordinated debt of projects delivered via the 'Hubco' model as a permitted investment, subject to time and money limits. In January 2014, following a full risk assessment, the Council invested £0.815m with Hub South West in connection with the Greenfaulds High School DBFM facility which initially is in the form of a bridging loan facility during the construction phase converting to a loan note instrument which will provide a yield of 10.50% when the school is fully operational.
- 3.4.5 The Council in line with the approved strategy to manage liquidity maintained a minimum balance of £3.0m available on an overnight basis (instant access) ensuring that the Council maintained the necessary prudent level of funds to meet all service objectives.
- 3.4.6 With the availability of the Funding for Lending scheme by the Government average short term rates continue to offer minimal returns with this scheme also skewing the relationship between the 7 day and 1 month LIBID (London Inter-bank Bid Rate) rate and generally available investment rates offered by financial institutions and money market funds. The Council continues to demonstrate good performance levels in investment activity, and continues to regularly outperform the 7 day and 1 month LIBID (London Inter-bank Bid Rate) rate.

3.4.7 The Treasury Management team continues to take a prudent approach to investing surplus funds in line with the approved 2014/2015 Investment Strategy the primary principle governing Council investment criteria being the security of the investment followed by ensuring sufficient liquidity in its investments.

### **3.5 Interest Rate Movements**

3.5.1 At each of its meetings in January, February and March 2015 the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided to retain the Bank of England base rate at 0.50%. The minutes of the meetings re-iterating that when the bank rate begins to rise it is expected to do so gradually and remain below average historical levels for some time to come. Latest Economic and Interest rate forecasts currently imply that the timing of a bank rate rise is now likely to be early 2016.

3.5.2 Following a similar pattern to the previous quarter, there continued to be very little movement in the short term 7 day LIBID rate, around the 0.48% mark with the rate expected to remain on hold over the next few months as the aforementioned Funding for Lending scheme continues to skew the market as credit is readily available.

3.5.3 Whilst the UK economic recovery appears more sustainable, a loss of momentum in the global economy continues and as a result there has been a significant flight of investment funds to safe haven UK gilts.

3.5.4 The sporadic movements in supply and demand for UK gilts heavily influences the gilt prices and yields, with corresponding movements up or down in the PWLB interest rates reflecting the perception of improved stability or increased uncertainty in other non UK financial markets respectively e.g. eurozone.

3.5.5 The volatility of the current economic environment demonstrated for example by the PWLB 10 year borrowing rate, which was 2.80% in the first week of January, falling to a low of 2.38% by the start of February, rising to 3.0% by start of March before settling at the end of quarter at 2.65%, which was close to the average level of 2.69% throughout the period.

3.5.6 The Treasury Management Section will continue to monitor financial and economic policy and their impact upon the Council's investment and borrowing activity.

## **4. The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities**

4.1 The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 requires the Council to undertake its Treasury activities with regard to the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

4.2 Committee, at its meeting on 26 February 2014, approved a report titled, "Treasury Management Strategy 2014/2015 and Treasury and Prudential Indicators 2014/2015 to 2016/2017". This report detailed a variety of mandatory and local indicators aimed at assisting members to determine that proposed capital investment levels and treasury management decisions satisfied the key requirements of affordability, prudence and sustainability. Performance against key prudential indicators for 2014/2015 is detailed within Appendix 2.

4.3 Committee will wish to note the following salient points:-

(i) Indicator 1(a) illustrates that investment on capital expenditure was higher than anticipated due to a number of projects within the 2013/2014 capital programme being carried forward into 2014/2015. This is monitored in detail as part of the Council's capital programme reporting mechanisms. The increased expenditure being met from additional capital grants and capital contributions from revenue sources with a decrease in the level of borrowing required.

(ii) The Prudential Code requires the Council's capital investment to be affordable and prudent. To demonstrate this, a Prudential Margin (the need to borrow versus actual borrowing) is calculated. Indicator 1(b) demonstrates a healthy prudential margin at the 31 March 2015. The timing and profile of external borrowing to replenish cash reserves and balances will be managed giving full consideration to liquidity, interest rate and refinancing risk whilst minimising potential carrying costs.

- (iii) Indicator 2 illustrates that both the overall authorised and operational borrowing limits for borrowing and long term liabilities have not been exceeded, with the maximum borrowing undertaken within the period being well below the approved boundaries.
  - (iv) Indicator 3(a) sets upper limits on the Council's exposure to the effects of interest rate changes by setting limits for each category of debt held (fixed or variable rate) which subsequently limits the Council's interest payable that is fixed or variable. During the final quarter and throughout 2014/2015, the actual levels remained below the limits for the fixed and variable interest rate exposure limits.
  - (v) Indicator 3(b) highlights a one off reduction of £2.05m in total external interest payments compared to the prudential estimates for 2014/2015 with yields from investing surplus balances in 2014/2015 being £0.16m higher due to the average level of cash balances held to date and anticipated in the coming months.
  - (vi) This one off saving totaling £2.21m in net loan external interest charges reflects the cashflow management techniques adopted, directing the timing of new borrowing, managing investment security, liquidity and interest rate risk and the identification of short term borrowing opportunities.
  - (vii) Indicator 3(c) relates to the level of fixed debt due to mature within time periods. The level of debt maturing remains within the upper limits set for each category at the beginning of the financial year.
- 4.4 As the year final accounting processes are completed, the net overall borrowing position and the prudential indicators reported above may be subject to minor change. Any subsequent amendments will be incorporated within the Annual Treasury Management Activity Report for 2014/2015 submitted to Committee later in the year.
- 4.5 The prudential indicators have remained in accordance with those approved by Committee on 26 February 2014. The projected final outturn illustrates a healthy prudential margin and borrowing levels that are below sustainable limits, ensuring that the projected capital investment levels remain affordable and sustainable.

## **5. Recommendation**

5.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) Notes the treasury management activity for the quarter ended 31 March 2015, including the positive performance against the key prudential indicators.



**Head of Financial Services**

*Members seeking further information on the contents of this report are asked to contact Joseph Quinn, Finance Manager (Systems and Treasury Management) on telephone number 01698 302061.*

**LOANS , LONG TERM LIABILITIES & INVESTMENTS AS AT 31 MARCH, 2015**

APPENDIX 1

	BALANCE 01-Jan 15 (1)	DEBT RESTRUCTURING		NEW BORROWING/ (INVESTMENTS) (4)	(PRINCIPAL REPAYMENTS)/ INVESTMENTS MATURING (5)	NET CASH MOVEMENTS (6)	BALANCE 31-March-15 (7)
		EARLY REDEMPTION (2)	REFINANCING (3)				
<b><u>LONG-TERM LOANS</u></b>							
PWLB	411,769,105	0	0	0	(3,795,060)	(3,795,060)	407,974,045
MONEY MARKET LOANS	99,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	99,000,000
MUNICIPAL BANK	17,500,000	0	0	0	0	0	17,500,000
	528,269,105	0	0	0	(3,795,060)	(3,795,060)	524,474,045
<b><u>SHORT-TERM LOANS</u></b>							
TEMPORARY	23,000,000	0	0	54,970,000	0	54,970,000	77,970,000
MUNICIPAL BANK	25,926,938	0	0	0	0	1,305,630	27,232,568
INTERNAL LOANS	6,280	0	0	0	0	0	6,280
	48,933,218	0	0	54,970,000	0	56,275,630	105,208,848
<b><u>LONG -TERM LIABILITIES</u></b>							
FINANCE LEASE OBLIGATIONS	5,204,159	0	0	0	(407,897)	(407,897)	4,796,262
PPP LONG TERM LIABILITY	132,714,500	0	0	0	(1,160,500)	(1,160,500)	131,554,000
	137,918,659	0	0	0	(1,568,397)	(1,568,397)	136,350,262
<b><u>TOTAL EXTERNAL DEBT</u></b>	<b>715,120,982</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>54,970,000</b>	<b>(5,363,456)</b>	<b>50,912,174</b>	<b>766,033,155</b>
<b><u>INVESTMENTS</u></b>							
SOUTHWEST HUBCO	0	0	0	0	0	814,528	814,528
BANKS & OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	55,933,975	0	0	0	0	46,632,020	102,565,995
BANK OVERDRAFT INCL CASH IN TRANSIT	(329,252)	0	0	0	0	(7,451,802)	(7,781,054)
<b><u>CASH &amp; CASH EQUIVALENTS</u></b>	<b>55,604,723</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>39,180,218</b>	<b>95,599,469</b>
<b><u>NET BORROWING</u></b>	<b>659,516,259</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>54,970,000</b>	<b>(5,363,456)</b>	<b>11,731,956</b>	<b>670,433,686</b>

## Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities

### 1. Capital Expenditure, Capital Financing Requirement and Prudential Margin

(a) Capital Expenditure	<u>Initial Estimate</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(£m)</u>	<u>Projected Outturn</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(£m)</u>
Total Spend	110.8	114.5
<b>Financed By:</b>		
Borrowing	43.3	37.5
Capital Receipts	6.7	6.7
Cash Grants	37.7	41.9
Capital from Current Revenue	23.1	28.3

(b) Prudential Margin Calculation	<u>Initial Estimate</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(£m)</u>	<u>Projected Outturn</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(£m)</u>
Capital Financing Requirement	891.6	877.8
Gross Borrowing	772.9	766.0
<b>Prudential Margin</b>	<b>118.7</b>	<b>111.8</b>

2) Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary	<u>Initial Authorised Limit</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(£m)</u>	<u>Initial Operational Boundary</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(£m)</u>	<u>Maximum Borrowing Level Q4</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(£m)</u>
Borrowing	770.0	700.0	629.7
Other Long-term Liabilities	150.0	150.0	137.9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>920.0</b>	<b>850.0</b>	<b>767.6</b>

### 3. Treasury Management Indicators

a) Interest Rate Exposures	<u>Upper Limits</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(%)</u>	<u>Position as at 31/03/15</u> <u>(£000s)</u>
Fixed Interest Rates	110.00%	78.72%
Variable Interest Rates	30.00%	21.28%

b) Interest Payments & Income due on Loans Outstanding/Funds Invested	<u>Initial Estimate</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(£000s)</u>	<u>Projected Outturn</u> <u>2014/2015</u> <u>(£000s)</u>	<u>Variance</u> <u>(£000s)</u>	<u>%age</u>
Interest Payable on Fixed Rate Debt	24.10	22.23	-1.87	-7.74%
Interest Payable on Variable Rate Debt	6.50	6.31	-0.19	-2.85%
<b>Total External Interest Payments</b>	<b>30.60</b>	<b>28.55</b>	<b>-2.05</b>	<b>-6.70%</b>
External Interest Receivable	0.15	0.31	0.16	103.33%
<b>Net Loan External Interest Charges</b>	<b>30.45</b>	<b>28.24</b>	<b>-2.21</b>	<b>-9.24%</b>

c) Maturity Structure of Borrowing	<12months	12 months to 2 years	2 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	20 to 40 years	>40 years
Upper Limit maturing :Fixed Rate Debt	15.00%	15.00%	20.00%	30.00%	30.00%	40.00%	40.00%
Lower Limit maturing :Fixed Rate Debt	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%	5.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Maturity structure at the start of Q4	4.59%	2.09%	10.61%	22.80%	11.05%	31.30%	17.56%
Maturity structure at the end of Q4	2.94%	4.04%	9.87%	22.16%	14.07%	34.82%	12.10%