



**South
Derbyshire
District Council**

Treasury Management Report Q2 2023/24

Introduction

The Authority adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve treasury management semi-annual and annual outturn reports.

This quarterly report provides an additional update and includes the new requirement in the 2021 Code, mandatory from 1st April 2023, of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The non-treasury prudential indicators are incorporated in a separate report.

The Authority's treasury management strategy for 2023/24 was approved at a meeting on 22nd February 2023. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remains central to the Authority's treasury management strategy.

External Context

Economic background: UK inflation remained stubbornly high over much the period compared to the US and euro zone, keeping expectations elevated of how much further the Bank of England (BoE) would hike rates compared to the regions. However, inflation data published in the latter part of the period undershot expectations, causing financial markets to reassess the peak in BoE Bank Rate. This was followed very soon after by the BoE deciding to keep Bank Rate on hold at 5.25% in September, against expectation for another 0.25% rise.

Economic growth in the UK remained relatively weak over the period. In calendar Q2 2023, the economy expanded by 0.2%. However, monthly GDP data showed a 0.5% contraction in July, the largest fall to date in 2023 and worse than the 0.2% decline predicted which could be an indication the monetary tightening cycle is starting to cause recessionary or at the very least stagnating economic conditions.

July data showed the unemployment rate increased to 4.3% (3mth/year) while the employment rate rose to 75.5%. Pay growth was 8.5% for total pay (including bonuses) and 7.8% for regular pay, which for the latter was the highest recorded annual growth rate. Adjusting for inflation, pay growth in real terms were positive at 1.2% and 0.6% for total pay and regular pay respectively.

Inflation continued to fall from its peak as annual headline CPI declined to 6.7% in July 2023 from 6.8% in the previous month against expectations for a tick back up to 7.0%. The largest downward contribution came from food prices. The core rate also surprised on the downside, falling to 6.2% from 6.9% compared to predictions for it to only edge down to 6.8%.

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee continued tightening monetary policy over most of the period, taking Bank Rate to 5.25% in August. Against expectations of a further hike in September, the Committee voted 5-4 to maintain Bank Rate at 5.25%. Each of the four dissenters were in favour of another 0.25% increase.

Financial market Bank Rate expectations moderated over the period as falling inflation and weakening data gave some indication that higher interest rates were working. Expectations fell from predicting a peak of over 6% in June to 5.5% just ahead of the September MPC meeting, and to then expecting 5.25% to be the peak by the end of the period.

Following the September MPC meeting, Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, modestly revised its interest forecast to reflect the central view that 5.25% will now be the peak in Bank Rate. In the short term the risks are to the upside if inflation increases again, but over the remaining part of the time horizon the risks are to the downside from economic activity weakening more than expected.

The lagged effect of monetary policy together with the staggered fixed term mortgage maturities over the next 12-24 months means the full impact from Bank Rate rises are still yet to be felt by households. As such, while consumer confidence continued to improve over the period, the GfK measure hit -21 in September, it is likely this will reverse at some point. Higher rates will also impact business and according to S&P/CIPS survey data, the UK manufacturing and services sector contracted during the quarter with all measures scoring under 50, indicating contraction in the sectors.

The US Federal Reserve increased its key interest rate to 5.25-5.50% over the period, pausing in September following a 0.25% rise the month before, and indicating that it may have not quite completed its monetary tightening cycle.

Having fallen throughout 2023, annual US inflation started to pick up again in July 2023, rising from 3% in June, which represented the lowest level since March 2021, to 3.2% in July and then jumping again to 3.7% in August, beating expectations for a rise to 3.6%. Rising oil prices were the main cause of the increase. US GDP growth registered 2.1% annualised in the second calendar quarter of 2023, down from the initial estimate of 2.4% but above the 2% expansion seen in the first quarter.

The European Central Bank increased its key deposit, main refinancing, and marginal lending interest rates to 4.00%, 4.50% and 4.75% respectively in September, and hinted these levels may represent the peak in rates but also emphasising rates would stay high for as long as required to bring inflation down to target.

Although continuing to decline steadily, inflation has been sticky, Eurozone annual headline CPI fell to 5.2% in August while annual core inflation eased to 5.3% having stuck at 5.5% in the previous two months. GDP growth remains weak, with recent data showing the region expanded by only 0.1% in the three months to June 2023, the rate as the previous quarter.

Financial markets: Financial market sentiment and bond yields remained volatile, with the latter generally trending downwards as there were signs inflation, while still high, was moderating and interest rates were at a peak.

Gilt yields fell towards the end of the period. The 5-year UK benchmark gilt yield rose from 3.30% to peak at 4.91% in July before trending downwards to 4.29%, the 10-year gilt yield rose from 3.43% to 4.75% in August before declining to 4.45%, and the 20-year yield from 3.75% to 4.97% in August and then fell back to 4.84%. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.73% over the period.

Credit review: Having completed a review of its credit advice on unsecured deposits at UK and non-UK banks following concerns of a wider financial crisis after the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank purchase of Credit Suisse by UBS, as well as other well-publicised banking sector issues, in March Arlingclose reduced the advised maximum duration limit for all banks on its recommended counterparty list to 35 days. This stance continued to be maintained at the end of the period.

During the second quarter of the period, Moody’s revised the outlook on Svenska Handelsbanken to negative from stable, citing concerns around the Swedish real estate sector.

Having put the US sovereign rating on Rating Watch Negative earlier in the period, Fitch took further action in August, downgrading the long-term rating to AA+, partly around ongoing debt ceiling concerns but also an expected fiscal deterioration over the next couple of years.

Following the issue of a Section 114 notice, in September Arlingclose advised against undertaking new lending to Birmingham City Council, and later in the month cut its recommended duration on Warrington Borough Council to a maximum of 100 days.

Arlingclose continued to monitor and assess credit default swap levels for signs of ongoing credit stress and although no changes were made to recommended durations over the period, Northern Trust Corporation was added to the counterparty list.

Heightened market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and, as ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority’s counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remains under constant review.

Local Context

On 31st March 2023, the Authority had net investments of £18.422m arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in the table below.

The forecast position at Quarter 2 has not changed since Q1, with estimated net investments at £58,791,000.

The Council had commissioned Arlingclose to complete a review of its current CFR. The results of this review will be reported in Q3.

Balance Sheet Summary

	31.3.23 Actual £'000	31.3.24 Forecast £'000
General Fund CFR	4,214	4,026
HRA CFR	51,584	41,584
Total CFR	55,798	45,610

External borrowing	47,423	37,423
Internal borrowing	8,375	8,187
Less: Balance sheet resources	(76,350)	(67,158)
Net investments	67,975	58,971

The Authority's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing, to reduce risk and keep interest costs low.

The treasury management position at 30th September 2023 and the change over the six months is shown in the table below.

Overall, the current balance net investments at Q2 compared to Q1 have increased.

Treasury Management Summary

	31.03.23 Balance £'000	Movement £m	30.09.23 Balance £'000	Average Rate %
Long-term borrowing:				
Fixed	47,423	0	47,423	3.19%
Variable	0	0	0	0.00%
Short-term borrowing	89	0	89	4.25%
Total borrowing	47,512	0	47,512	
Long-term investments	4,000	0	4,000	5.34%
Short-term investments	58,000	6,000	64,000	4.99%
Cash and cash equivalents	3,934	902	4,836	1.27%
Total investments	65,934	6,902	72,836	
Net investments	18,422	6,902	25,324	

Borrowing

CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the capital financing requirement and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield unless these loans are for refinancing purposes.

The Authority has not invested in assets primarily for financial return or that are not primarily related to the functions of the Authority. It has no plans to do so in future.

Borrowing Strategy and Activity

As outlined in the treasury strategy, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio.

There was a substantial rise in the cost of both short- and long-term borrowing over the last 18 months. Bank Rate rose by 1% from 4.25% at the beginning of April to 5.25% at the end of September. Bank Rate was 2% higher than at the end of September 2022.

UK gilt yields were volatile, mainly facing upward pressure since early April following signs that UK growth had been more resilient, inflation stickier than expected, and that the Bank of England saw persistently higher rates through 2023/24 as key to dampening domestic demand. Gilt yields, and consequently PWLB borrowing rates, rose and broadly remained at elevated levels. On 30th September, the PWLB certainty rates for maturity loans were 5.26% for 10-year loans, 5.64% for 20-year loans and 5.43% for 50-year loans. Their equivalents on 31st March 2023 were 4.33%, 4.70% and 4.41% respectively.

A new PWLB HRA rate which is 0.4% below the certainty rate was made available from 15th June 2023. Initially available for a period of one year, this discounted rate is to support local authorities borrowing for the Housing Revenue Account and for refinancing existing HRA loans, providing a window of opportunity for HRA-related borrowing and to replace the Authority's £10m loans relating to the HRA maturing during this time frame.

At 30th September 2023 the Authority held £47.4m of loans. These loans were taken out by the Authority in 2011/12 for the purpose of HRA self-financing. The principal element of these loans is repayable in full on maturity, with interest being paid each March and September.

The short-term borrowing of £89k relates to deposits received from two Parish Councils within the District. These loans can be recalled on immediate notice. Interest is calculated at the Bank of England Base Rate, less 1%. Interest will be payable half yearly after the 30th September and the second after 31st March.

The following table shows the maturity dates of the loans and rate of interest payable.

The borrowing position has not changed since Q1.

Borrowing Position

Loan Profile	Type	Value £'000	Rate %	Maturity
Public Works Loan Board	Fixed	10,000	2.70	2023/24
Public Works Loan Board	Fixed	10,000	3.01	2026/27
Public Works Loan Board	Fixed	10,000	3.30	2031/32
Public Works Loan Board	Fixed	10,000	3.44	2036/72
Public Works Loan Board	Fixed	7,423	3.50	2041/42
Total Long-term borrowing		47,423		
Short-term Parish Council Loans		89	4.25	

Total borrowing		47,512		
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The Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective.

Treasury Investment Activity

The CIPFA Treasury Management Code now defines treasury management investments as those investments which arise from the Authority's cash flows or treasury risk management activity that ultimately represents balances that need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business.

The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the year, the Authority's investment balances ranged between £45m and £68m million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in the table below.

The overall treasury position for Q2 has improved since Q1.

Treasury Investment Position

	31.03.23 Balance £'000	Q2 2024 Movement £'000	30.09.23 Balance £'000	30.09.23 Rate of Return %
Banks (unsecured)	3,934	902	4,836	1.27%
Local Authorities	42,000	6,000	48,000	4.91%
Money Market Funds	16,000	0	16,000	5.12%
CCLA Property Fund	4,000	0	4,000	5.34%
Total investments	65,934	6,902	72,836	

Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money 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.

As demonstrated by the liability benchmark in this report, the Authority expects to be a long-term investor and treasury investments therefore include both short-term low risk instruments to manage day-to-day cash flows and longer-term instruments where limited additional risk is

accepted in return for higher investment income to support local public services.

Bank Rate increased by 1%, from 4.25% at the beginning of April to 5.25% by the end of September. Short-dated cash rates rose commensurately, with 3-month rates rising to around 5.25% and 12-month rates to nearly 6%. The rates on DMADF deposits also rose, ranging between 4.8% and 5.4% by the end of September and Money Market Rates between 5.0% and 5.2%.

The progression of risk and return metrics are shown in the extracts from Arlingclose's quarterly investment benchmarking below.

Investment Benchmarking – Treasury investments managed in-house (excludes CCLA)

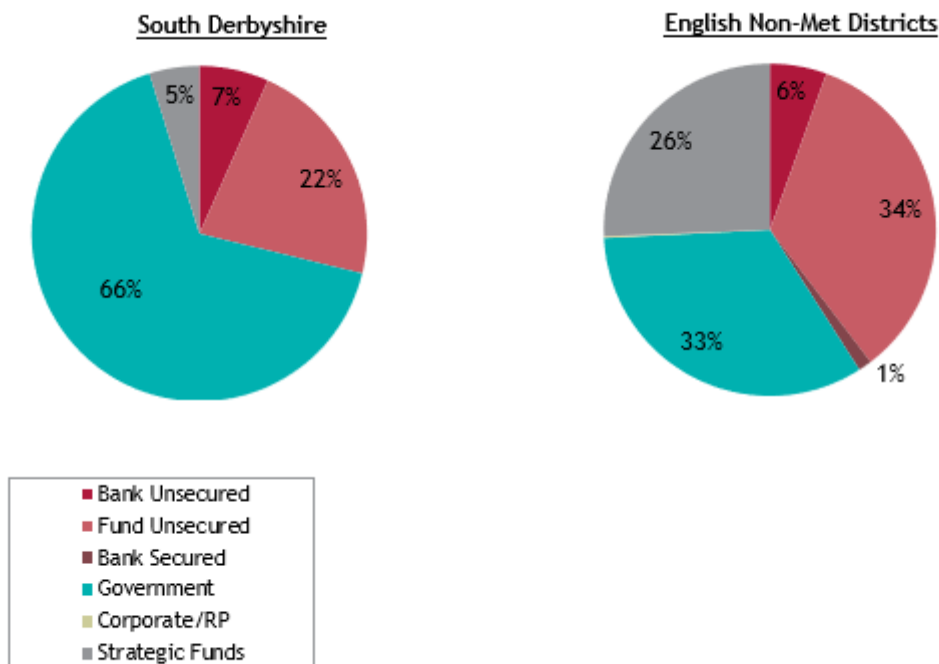
	Credit Score	Credit Rating	Bail-in Exposure	Weighted Average Maturity (days)	Rate of Return %
31.03.2023	4.93	A+	32%	72	2.06
30.09.2023	4.58	A+	30%	68	3.58
Similar LAs	4.43	AA-	56%	63	3.47
All LAs	4.47	AA-	59%	13	3.65

Credit Score: This is a value weighted average score calculated by weighting the credit score of each investment by its value. A higher number indicates a higher risk.

Credit Rating: This is based on the long-term rating assigned to each institution in the portfolio, by ratings agencies Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's. Ratings rang from AAA to D, and can be modified by +/-

Bail in Exposure: The adoption of a bail in regime for failed banks results in a potential increased risk of loss of funds for local authority should this need to be implemented. Therefore, a lower exposure to bail in investments reduces this risk.

Weighted Average Maturity: This is an indicator of the average duration of the internally managed investments. Similar authorities have a similar profile to South Derbyshire; other larger authorities tend to hold a greater proportion of fund in money markets than fixed term deposits with other LAs, due to their cash flow requirements.



This chart illustrates the type of investment funds held by the Council in comparison to other similar Local Authorities, this shows in greater detail, the comparisons in the bail in exposure and rate of return, on the above security benchmark table. The unsecured funds held by other Local Authorities is a much higher percentage of their investment portfolio, which will offer them a higher rate of return, however the bail in exposure risk to funds is 56% of their total portfolio., The Council have invested their funds in much safer secured investments (Government) which may produce a smaller yield but the risk to Council funds is low at 30%.

Externally Managed Pooled Funds

£4m of the Authority's investments is invested in externally managed strategic pooled property funds where short-term security and liquidity are lesser considerations, and the objectives instead are regular revenue income and long-term price stability. These funds are expected to generate an average return of £40k - £45k per quarter, its estimated £160k - £180k income return will be achieved this year, which is used to support services in year.

Financial market conditions were volatile during the six-month period. Global bond yields rose and remained elevated as it became apparent that policymakers were looking to keep rates high for some time amid persistently higher core inflation and tight labour markets.

The UK, Euro area and US equity markets were initially helped by resilient growth data and diminishing talk of recession. A weaker currency and better-than-expected fundamentals were broadly supportive for UK equities. Much of the US stock market's performance was driven by a small number of mega stocks and enthusiasm over artificial intelligence. However, the global outlook was clouded by the slowdown in China. On a sectoral level, the energy sector was supported by higher oil prices and expectation of decreasing supply due to OPEC+

group agreeing on production cuts. The FTSE All Share index was marginally lower at the end of the 6-month period at 4127 on 30/9/23 v 4157 on 31/3/23. The MSCI All Countries World Index was higher at 2853 on 30/9/23 v 2791 on 31/3/23.

Investor sentiment for UK commercial property was more settled than in Q3 and Q4 of 2022 when the sharp rise in bond yields resulted in a big fall in property valuations. There were signs of returning investor interest, occupier resilience and a perception that the downturn in commercial real estate may be bottoming out. It helped rental income and led to some stabilisation in capital values. However, the combination of high interest rates and bond yield, higher funding costs and the prospect of sluggish economic growth constrain the outlook for commercial property.

The combination of the above had a marginal negative effect on the combined value of the Authority's strategic funds since March 2023. The bid market value on the CCLA property fund has reduced from £3,532,118 in March 2023 to £3,485,944 in September 2023.

Income returns remained broadly consistent. The Authority has budgeted £136,000 income from these investments in 2023/24. Income received up to 30th September was £41,746, whilst a further £46,601 has been declared and is due to be paid by October.

Because the Authority's externally managed 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 are regularly reviewed. Strategic fund investments are made in the knowledge that capital values will move both up and down on months, quarters and even years; but with the confidence that over a three- to five-year period total returns will exceed cash interest rates.

Statutory override: In April 2023 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities published the full outcome of the consultation on the extension of the statutory override on accounting for gains and losses on pooled investment funds. The override has been extended for 2 years until 31st March 2025 but no other changes have been made; whether the override will be extended beyond the new date is unknown but commentary to the consultation outcome suggests not. The Authority will discuss with Arlingclose the implications for the investment strategy and what action may need to be taken.

CCLA Property Fund Performance

		2022/23	2023/24
		Q4	Q2
Dividend Received	£	38,409	46,601
Annual Equivalent Interest Rate	%	4.35%	5.34%
Bid (Selling) Price	pence/unit	283.80	280.09

The mid-market value of the fund as at the 30 September 2023 is £3,540,830 and the bid market value is £3,485,944. The quarters market and bid values have decreased from March 23 by 1.3%. This reinforces the notion that the Fund should only be considered for long-term investments.

The authority's investment in the CCLA fund will remain stable throughout 23/24 with performance continuing to yield positive dividends.

Performance

Average 7-Day Money Market Rate

The main indicator the Council uses to measure its return on short-term investments to average over the year, is the Average 7-Day Money Market Rate. This is a standard measure of performance. Performance for the second quarter is shown below.

	As at 31.03.23	As at 30.09.23
Average 7-Day Money Market Rate (Target)	3.89%	5.18%
Average Interest Rate Achieved on Short Term Deposits	3.43%	4.99%

Our current investment profile includes several local authority loans which were dealt during the 22/23 financial year when interest rates were not as favourable. This therefore brings down the overall average interest-rate on short term deposits. The expectation being, as these loans mature higher interest rates will be achieved upon new dealings.

Cost of Debt

This indicator shows how much the costs of borrowing impact upon each household (at Band D Council Tax rate) in the District. The impact on Council Tax is positive as the General Fund has no actual debt. The performance for the first quarter is shown below using the current interest received and the estimated annual interest based on current returns. This is compared to the actual annual interest received last year.

General Fund Impact per Council Tax Payer	Actual 31.03.2023	Actual 30.9.23	Estimated 31.03.2024
	£	£	£
Net Interest Received - General Fund	-£751,544	-£1,836,552	-£846,658
Band D Properties	36,702	37,663	38,468
Cost per Band D Property	-£20.48	-£48.76	-£22.01

The cost of debt on each council tenant (HRA) is shown below. The performance for the first quarter is the actual costs compared to the estimated costs for the year.

HRA Debt Interest per Dwelling	31.03.23 Actual	31.03.2024 Estimated
HRA Interest Payable	1,504,805	1,504,805

Dwellings	2,937	2,919
Annual Cost per Dwelling	£512.36	£515.52

Compliance

The Chief Finance Officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the quarter complied fully with the principles in the Treasury Management Code and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in the table below:

Investment limits

Sector	Maximum Investment Q2 2024	Counterparty Limit	Time Limit	Sector Limit	Complied
The UK Government	£19m	£25m	364 days	n/a	✓
Local authorities & other government entities	£33m	£5m	364 days	Unlimited	✓
Banks (unsecured)*	£2.8m	£3m	35 days	Unlimited	✓
Building societies (unsecured)*	£2m	£2m	35 days	£5m	✓
Money Market Funds*	£16m	£2m	60 days	£14m	✓
Strategic Pooled Funds	£4m	£4m	n/a	£4m	✓
Other Investments*	0	£1m	35 days	Unlimited	✓

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

As required by the 2021 CIPFA Treasury Management Code, the Authority monitors and measures the following treasury management prudential indicators.

Liability Benchmark:

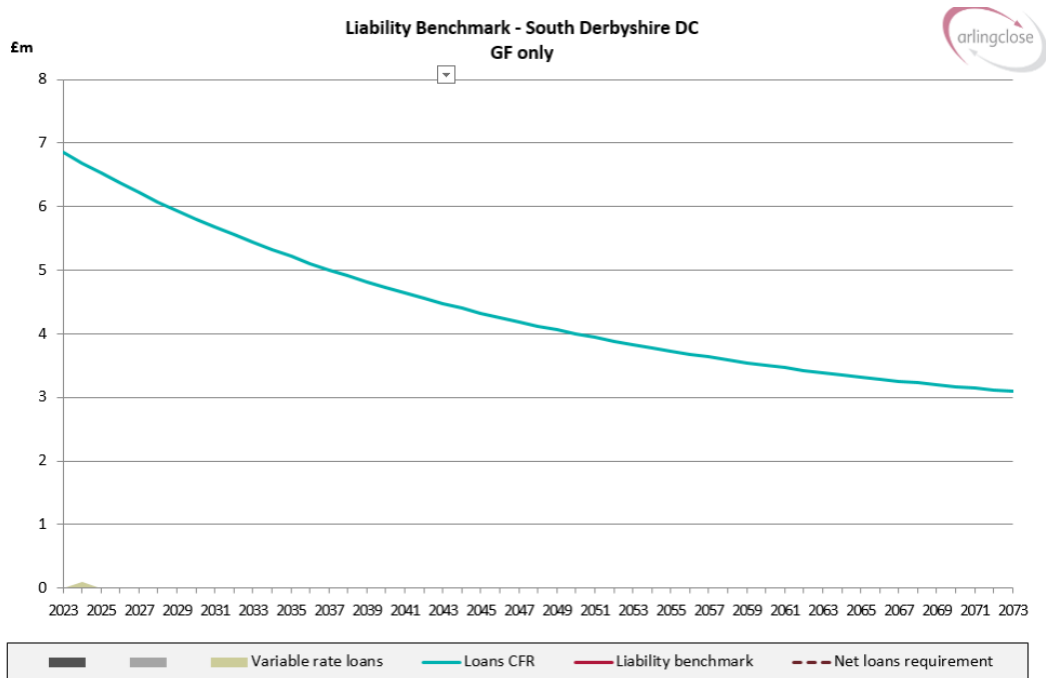
This new indicator compares the Authority's actual existing borrowing against a liability benchmark that has been calculated to show the lowest risk level of borrowing. The liability

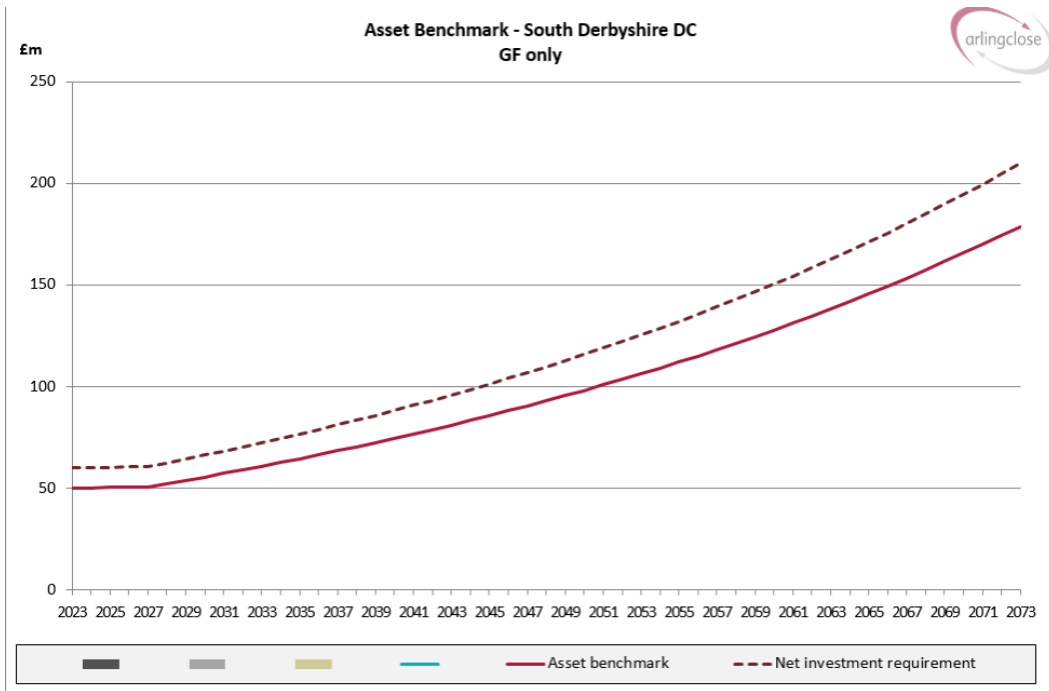
benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. It represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level of £10m required to manage day-to-day cash flow.

	31.3.23 Actual	31.3.24 Forecast	31.3.25 Forecast	31.3.26 Forecast
Loans CFR	55,798	45,610	45,447	45,293
Less: Balance sheet resources	(76,350)	(67,158)	(62,428)	(57,364)
Net asset requirement	20,552	21,548	16,981	12,071
Liquidity allowance	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Asset benchmark	10,552	11,548	6,981	2,071
Existing borrowing	47,423	37,423	37,423	37,423

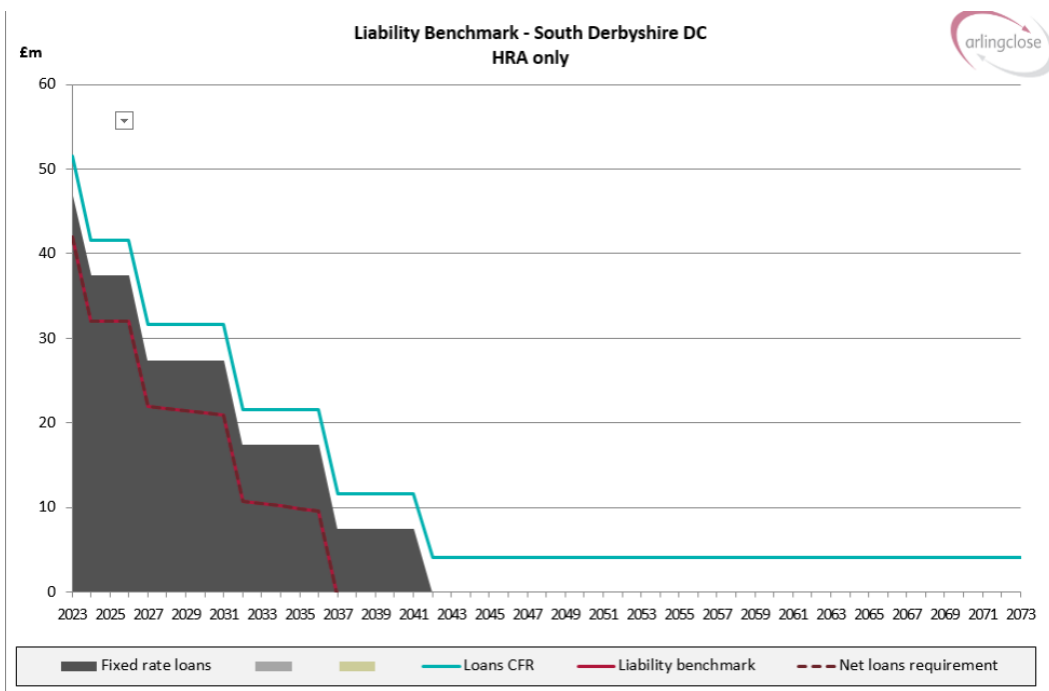
Following on from the medium-term forecasts above, the long-term asset benchmark assumes borrowing is repaid when due and no additional borrowing is required. Capital expenditure is funded from reserves.

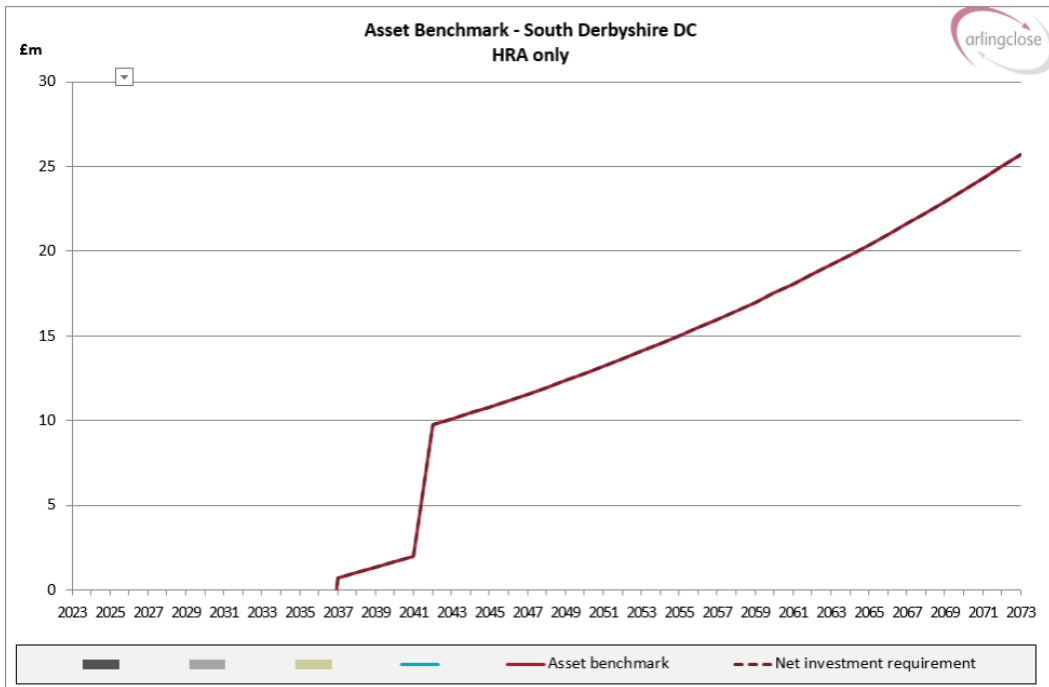
General Fund





HRA





As shown from the above graphs the asset benchmark increases over the medium term as debt is repaid and then decreases as reserves are utilised.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing:

This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	30.6.23 Actual	Complied?
Under 12 months	10000	10000	10000	✓
12 months and within 24 months	0	0	0	✓
24 months and within 5 years	10000	10000	10000	✓
5 years and within 10 years	10000	10000	10000	✓
10 years and above	17423	17423	17423	✓

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

Long-term Treasury Management Investments:

The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The prudential limits on the long-term treasury management limits are:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	No fixed date
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£4m	£4m	£4m	£4m

Actual principal invested beyond year end	£4m	£4m	£4m	£4m
Complied?	✓	✓	✓	✓

Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds, real estate investment trusts and directly held equity but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term.

Interest Rate Exposures:

This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. Bank Rate rose by 1.25% from 4.25% on 1st April to 5.25% by 30th September.

For context, the changes in interest rates during the quarter were:

	<u>31/3/23</u>	<u>30/9/23</u>
Bank Rate	4.25%	5.25%
1-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.78%	5.69%
5-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.31%	5.22%
10-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.33%	5.26%
20-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.70%	5.64%
50-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.41%	5.43%

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investment will be replaced at new market rates.