

Treasury Management Report - June 2022

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| Report number: | FRS/WS/22/004 | |
| Report to and date(s): | Financial Resilience Sub Committee | 11 July 2022 |
| | Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee | 28 July 2022 |
| | Cabinet | 20 September 2022 |
| | Council | 27 September 2022 |
| Cabinet member: | Councillor Sarah Broughton Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Property Tel: 07929 305787 Email: sarah.broughton@westsuffolk.gov.uk | |
| Lead officer: | Gregory Stevenson Service Manager – Finance and Performance Tel: 01284 757264 Email: gregory.stevenson@westsuffolk.gov.uk | |

Decisions Plan: This item is included in the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All

Recommendation: It is recommended that, the Financial Resilience Sub Committee:

1. Notes the Treasury Management Report – June 2022; and
2. Makes recommendations as appropriate via the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet and Council.

1. Treasury Management Report – June 2022

- 1.1 The report is part of the Councils' management and governance arrangements for Treasury Management activities under the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. It provides a comprehensive assessment of activities from 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council held investments of £66,500,000 as at 30 June 2022. Interest achieved in the first quarter of the financial year amounted to £90,077.11 against a budget for the period of £11,250.
- 2.2 External borrowing as at 30 June 2022 was £13,875,000, a reduction of £125,000 from 1 April 2022 (relates to the repayment plan for the recent PWLB £10 million 40-year loan), with the Council's level of internal borrowing increasing slightly to £41,536,828 as at 30 June 2022. Overall borrowing (both external and internal) is expected to increase over the full financial year.
- 2.3 Borrowing costs (Interest Payable and MRP) for the year are forecast to be £1,090,606 against an approved budget of £2,268,350, although this could change if more external borrowing is undertaken than is currently forecast.

3. Interest Earned from Treasury Investments during the period

- 3.1 The 2022 to 2023 Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Statements (report COU/WS/22/002 approved 22 February 2022) sets out the Council's projections for the current financial year. The budget for investment income of 2022 to 2023 is £45,000 which is based on a 0.25 per cent target average rate of return on investments.
- 3.2 At the end of June 2022 interest actually earned during the first quarter of the financial year amounted to £90,077.11 (average rate of return of 0.582 per cent) against a profiled budget for the period of £11,250 (average rate of return 0.25 per cent); a budgetary surplus of £78,827.11. The surplus is due to two main reasons, the council were holding considerable amounts of grant money pending distribution and the frenzy of activity in the investment market which has seen interest rates rising almost daily.

- 3.3 The table below summaries the interest earned, and the average rate of return achieved at 30 June 2022.

| Interest Earned and Average Rate of Return Summary | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Investment Category | Total Average Investment | Average Rate of Return (%) | Interest Earned in period |
| Temporary Investments (Term Deposits) | nil | | nil |
| Santander 365 Day Account | 8,000,000 | 0.970% | 19,346.85 |
| Santander 95 Day Account | 500,000 | 0.740% | 922.47 |
| Lloyds Treasury Account | 8,337,912 | 0.080% | 1,663.01 |
| Barclays Deposit Account* | 6,000,000 | 0.010% | 149.59 |
| CCLA MMF | 4,000,000 | 0.655% | 6,534.36 |
| Local Authorities | 5,000,000 | 0.220% | 2,742.47 |
| HM Debt Management Office | 4,585,579 | 0.630% | 58,718.36 |
| Total Overall Average Return on Investments % | | | 0.582% |
| Total Interest Earned - 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022 | | | 90,077.11 |

* An annual interest bonus is paid at the end of the financial year if no withdrawals take place.

- 3.4 The table below summaries the investment activity during the period

| Treasury Management – Investment Activity Summary | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| | 2022 to 2023 (£) |
| Opening Balance 01 April 2022 | 65,500,000 |
| Investments made during the year (including transfers to business reserve accounts) | 68,250,000 |
| Sub Total | 133,750,000 |
| Less Investments realised during the year (including withdrawals from business reserve accounts) | 67,250,000 |
| Closing Balance 30 June 2022 | 66,500,000 |

Please note: The Councils cash balances are currently greater than forecast as a result of holding advanced business grant and support grant payments.

- 3.5 The table below lists the investments held as at 30 June 2021

| Investments held as at 30 June 2022 | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Counterparty | Principal Amount (£) | Interest Rate | Date Loaned | Date Returned |
| Santander 365 Day | 8,000,000 | 0.97% | 01/04/22 | 365-day Notice |

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|----------|----------------------|
| Santander 95 Day | 500,000 | 0.74% | 01/04/22 | 95-day Notice |
| Lloyds Treasury Account | 4,000,000 | 0.08% | 01/04/22 | On call availability |
| Barclays Deposit Account | 6,000,000 | 0.01% | 01/04/22 | On call availability |
| CCLA Money Market Fund | 4,000,000 | Variable | 01/04/22 | On call availability |
| HM Debt Man. Office | 6,000,000 | 0.14% | 04/01/22 | 01/07/22 |
| HM Debt Man. Office | 5,000,000 | 0.22% | 18/01/22 | 15/07/22 |
| HM Debt Man. Office | 6,000,000 | 1.075% | 22/04/22 | 21/10/22 |
| HM Debt Man. Office | 3,000,000 | 0.99% | 28/04/22 | 27/10/22 |
| HM Debt Man. Office | 2,500,000 | 1.03% | 29/04/22 | 28/10/22 |
| HM Debt Man. Office | 1,500,000 | 0.95% | 10/05/22 | 22/07/22 |
| HM Debt Man. Office | 2,000,000 | 1.045% | 18/05/22 | 15/09/22 |
| HM Debt Man. Office | 7,000,000 | 1.01% | 01/06/22 | 19/07/22 |
| HM Debt Man. Office | 6,000,000 | 1.595% | 15/06/22 | 14/12/22 |
| Thurrock BC | 5,000,000 | 0.22% | 06/12/21 | 05/12/22 |
| There were no other fixed term investments | | | | |
| Total | 66,500,000 | | | |

Please note: The interest rates above are the rates as at 30 June 2022. Actual rates going forward could fluctuate.

- 3.6 The Council has an earmarked revenue reserve to mitigate against possible adverse fluctuations in the returns received from the council's investments and external borrowing costs, called the Capital Projects Financing Reserve. The balance in this reserve as at 30 June 2022 was £4,902,184.

4. Borrowing activity during the period

- 4.1 As with the 2021 to 2022 financial year, the Council continues to hold significant cash balances, see 3.4 above. A large amount of the funds currently being held are on behalf of others e.g. £14 million relates to HM Government for repayment of S31 grants, as well as council tax receipts held on behalf of Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioner.
- 4.2 On 30 June 2022 West Suffolk had £13.875 million of external borrowing, which is £125,000 less than it held on 1 April 2022, this relates to the repayment plan for the recent PWLB £10 million 40-year loan. With interest rates having increased and cash balances remaining healthy, it is unlikely that any further external borrowing will need to be undertaken in the 2022 to 2023 financial year, although this is kept under constant review and may change if circumstances and advice changes. The use of internal funds is beneficial whilst we still have available cash, as we would be paying interest at a much higher rate (around 3.50 per cent at the date of publishing this report) than we would get back from investing the extra surplus cash (current average return on our treasury investments of 0.582 per cent). This means we would have a significant cost of carrying external loans that are not currently required from a cash management perspective.

- 4.3 The table below is a summary of the external borrowings and temporary loans as at 30 June 2022.

| External Borrowings and Temporary Loans | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Lender | Balance – 1 April 2022 (£) | Movement (£) | Balance - 30 June 2022 (£) | Interest Rate | Maturity date |
| Barclays Bank | 4,000,000 | 0 | 4,000,000 | 4.24% | 31 March 2078 |
| PWLB | 10,000,000 | (125,000) | 9,875,000 | 1.84% | 1 December 2061 |

- 4.4 Although the council has not undertaken any further external borrowing in the period, its underlying need to borrow (Capital Financing Requirement – CFR, the amount the Council has invested in its communities) is forecast to increase which will lead to an increase in the level of borrowing (either external or internal) the council will have.
- 4.5 The table below details the forecast for the councils Capital Financing Requirement (underlying need to borrow) over the next 3 years.

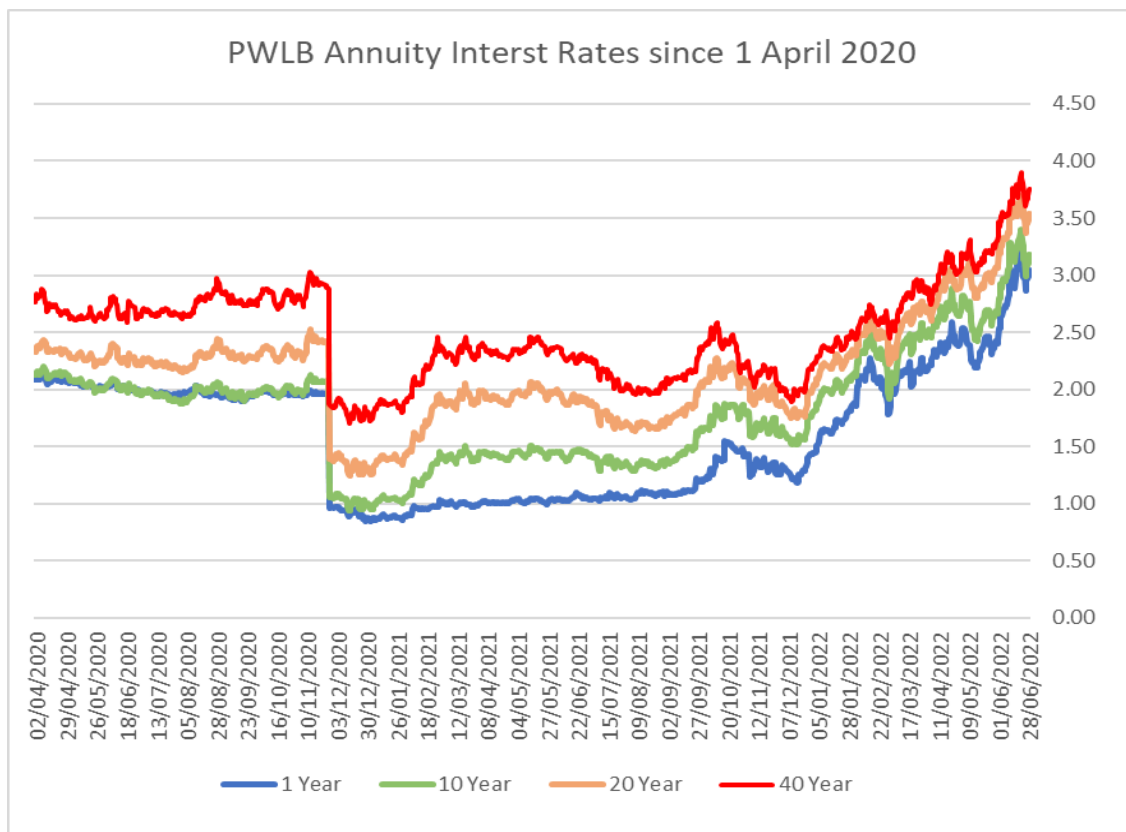
| | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2023 | 31 March 2023 | 31 March 2024 | 31 March 2025 |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Actual £ millions | Approved Budget £ millions | Forecast £ millions | Forecast £ millions | Forecast £ millions |
| Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) | 55.49 | 81.07 | 69.49 | 118.56 | 159.84 |

5. Borrowing Strategy and Sources of Borrowing

- 5.1 As detailed in the 2022 to 2023 Treasury Management Strategy Statement, the current borrowing strategy is still to make short-term use of internal funds (internal borrowing). This is being continually monitored by the Council, along with Arlingclose (treasury advisors), to determine whether this is still the most optimal strategy or whether to look at borrowing additional sums at long-term fixed rates.
- 5.2 There are various sources of borrowing that the Council is able to make use of for longer term borrowing, which are detailed in the strategy statement. The traditional method for local authorities, and the default method the Council uses in all of its business cases, is to borrow from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). In the medium term, if the Council were to look at fixing out

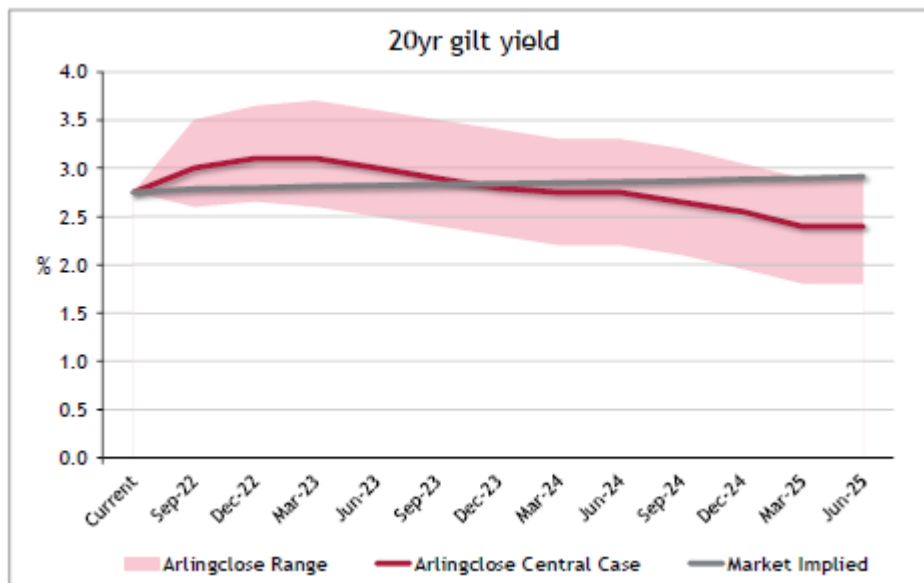
some of its internal borrowing into a long-term external loan, then it could do so by borrowing through the PWLB.

- 5.3 The graph below shows historic PWLB interest rates over the previous 2 years, for different durations based on borrowing using the annuity method.



- 5.4 The graph above shows how PWLB rates fluctuate on a daily basis, as they are linked to UK Gilt rates – current PWLB rates are 1.00 per cent above the relevant UK Gilt rate. West Suffolk Council has access to PWLB Certainty Rates which are only 0.80 per cent above the relevant UK Gilt rate. In October 2019, PWLB increased the margin above UK Gilts from 1.00 per cent (0.80 per cent for Certainty Rate) to 2.00 per cent (1.80 per cent for Certainty Rate) overnight as a result of significant increases in the level of borrowing from PWLB. After undertaking consultation on changes to PWLB lending terms, the margin over UK Gilts was dropped back to 1.00 per cent (0.80 per cent for Certainty Rate) in November 2020.

- 5.5 As you can see from the graph above, PWLB rates have been steadily increasing over the past 6 months, with a sharp increase over the past month. This is largely as a result of global inflation being at high levels, with the market expectation that these high levels will last longer than originally anticipated. This has led to central banks in the UK, US and EU to raise central interest rates and follow policies of monetary tightening beyond original expectations. These higher rates are expected to remain in the short to medium term, but then drop back down when inflationary pressures have subsided on the expectation of slowed growth with the major economies. See graph below.



5.6 PWLB interest rates for 40-year borrowing using the annuity method were 3.69 per cent (3.49 per cent for Certainty Rate) on 30 June 2022. Using the current value of internal borrowing of £41,536,828, if we were to transfer all of that internal borrowing to a 40-year PWLB loan using the 3.49 per cent Certainty Rate, the Council would incur an initial annual interest payable cost of £1,801,290 (including our current external borrowing). This compares to our interest payable budget for 2022 to 2023 of £1,529,400. As detailed in 4.1 and 4.2, the council is currently holding significant cash balances and as such does not need to transfer this level of internal borrowing to external. The Council also has an earmarked revenue reserve to mitigate against possible adverse fluctuations in interest and borrowing rates, called the Capital Projects Financing Reserve. The balance in this reserve as at 30 June 2022 was £4,902,184.

5.7 The Council, along with Arlingclose, will continue to explore alternative sources of borrowing to ensure the Council will be ready to externally borrow in the most advantageous way when it needs to.

6. Borrowing and Capital Costs - Affordability

6.1 The 2022 to 2023 Budget had assumptions on borrowing costs for capital projects included within it. These borrowing costs are a combination of interest payable on external borrowing, and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), which is an amount set aside each year to repay that borrowing requirement. The main projects which make up the majority of the Councils borrowing requirement are:

- Western Way development
- Mildenhall Hub
- West Suffolk Operational Hub
- Toggam Solar Farm
- Investing in our Growth Fund

- 6.2 The business cases for each of these projects considered affordability based on what each project would deliver in terms of income and savings against the borrowing requirement for the project.
- 6.3 Borrowing costs only form part of the Councils revenue budget once the project has been completed, so although there may be a borrowing requirement, until such time as the project is complete there will be no MRP or interest payable as part of the revenue budget.
- 6.4 The details of these Budgets is laid out below.

| Summary of Capital Borrowing Budget 2022 to 2023 | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Project – all supported by business cases | Borrowing Requirement (Budget) | Borrowing Costs | |
| | | Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) | Interest Payable |
| Investing in our Growth Fund | £4,319,027 | £0 | £0 |
| Western Way Development | £5,600,000 | £0 | £0 |
| Mildenhall Hub | £16,175,947 | £145,600 | £204,050 |
| West Suffolk Operational Hub | £9,383,968 | £173,000 | £306,750 |
| Newmarket Leisure Centre | £2,740,261 | £12,800 | £169,600 |
| Toggam Solar Farm | £1,756,244 | £188,050 | £344,950 |
| 20 High St Haverhill | £1,784,905 | £29,400 | £55,900 |
| 113 High St Newmarket | £676,709 | £11,700 | £22,100 |
| Olding Road DHL Depot | £3,549,684 | £0 | £0 |
| Provincial House | £3,434,468 | £55,450 | £98,200 |
| Vicon House, Western Way | £3,288,232 | £50,800 | £100,700 |
| 33-35 High St, Haverhill | £364,930 | £5,450 | £10,850 |
| 17/18 Cornhill | £2,655,845 | £39,550 | £84,550 |
| Elsley's Yard | £240,124 | £5,300 | £11,100 |
| St Edmunds Guest House | £982,579 | £11,050 | £34,700 |
| Incubation Units, Suffolk Business Park | £12,100,000 | £0 | £0 |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Net Zero / Community Energy Plan | £2,590,000 | £0 | £0 |
| Loans and other | £9,425,800 | £10,800 | £85,950 |
| Total borrowing and associated servicing costs | £81,068,723 | £738,950 | £1,529,400* |
| % of Gross Revenue Income Budget | | 1.3% | 2.6% |

* This represents an average interest rate of 2.75 per cent.

6.5 The affordability of borrowing and capital costs is a key metric in our financial planning and resilience assessments. Current and future financial affordability and resilience to such costs is key when evaluating any new opportunities. As set out in the approved West Suffolk Capital Strategy we are using the per cent of the Gross Revenue Income Budget for both MRP and Interest Payable to assess the Councils affordability position. In other words, how much (in percentage terms) of our gross revenue income budget is committed to servicing our external debt.

6.6 Whilst the budget for interest payable are derived from the business cases of each individual project, when borrowing actually occurs is a treasury management decision and is generally not directly linked to any specific project. It is therefore not easy to match the interest payable the Council will actually incur to specific projects. The table below therefore gives an overall summary of forecast capital borrowing for 2022 to 2023 but does not split it out by project.

| Summary of Forecast Capital Borrowing for 2022 to 2023 | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| External Borrowing | Internal Borrowing | Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) | Interest Payable |
| £13,750,000 | £55,740,662 | £738,950 | £351,656 |
| Total Borrowing | £69,490,662 | £1,090,606 | |
| % of Gross Revenue Income (excl COVID-19 Grants) | | 1.4% | 0.7% |

6.7 The original budget position, as set out in paragraph 6.4, has moved due to the following reasons:

- Forecast use of internal borrowing instead of external borrowing during 2022 to 2023.

- Reviewing the Western Way development in light of the COVID-19 outbreak, which led to a timing delay in the project programme against what was originally forecast.
- Forecast underspend against the Investing in our Growth Fund.

7. Borrowing and Income - Proportionality

- 7.1 The concept of proportionality, alongside that of affordability, is a key consideration when considering funding projects through borrowing.
- 7.2 The costs and risks associated with that borrowing should be looked at as part of the whole financial position of the council in our financial planning and resilience assessments. Awareness of the scale and relationship with the asset base and revenue delivery is essential to informed decision making.
- 7.3 As at 31 March 2022, the Councils asset base was valued at £261.9 million. As such the budgeted borrowing requirement of £81.07 million would have represented 30.95 per cent of our long-term asset base. The forecast borrowing requirement at the end of the financial year is £69.49 million, which represents 26.53 per cent of our long-term asset base. It is worth noting that the capital projects being undertaken would increase the overall asset base of the council, leading to the borrowing requirement being a smaller percentage of the asset base than detailed above.

8. Borrowing and Asset Yields

- 8.1 Borrowing, whether internally from available cash balances or externally from other institutions, bears a cost which will affect the yield of investments made with that money. The yield is the return on the investment, whether through additional income of savings, less the borrowing costs associated with the investment, against the value of the investment.
- 8.2 West Suffolk Council makes investment decisions to support its strategic priorities which are not solely focussed on financial return, in line with our agreed Investing in our Growth Agenda Strategy. There are therefore a range of yield returns delivered by these investments that varies from project-to-project dependant on the wider blended socio-economic returns that these projects give.
- 8.3 In order to aid comparison between projects and returns from 'normal' treasury management cash investment (section 2 above), the table below shows the income and net return from the current project portfolio.

| 2022/23 BUDGET | Asset Value £m | Borrowing £m | Annual Income £m | Net Return (Excl. Borrowing Costs *) | Net Return (Incl. Borrowing Costs) | Yield % (E/A) |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| | A | B | C | D | E | F |
| Industrial Units | £28.1 | £13.4 | £2.6 | £2.1 | £1.7 | 6.0% |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Retail Units | £20.0 | £2.6 | £2.0 | £1.6 | £1.5 | 7.5% |
| Land | £11.8 | £0.0 | £1.0 | £1.0 | £1.0 | 8.4% |
| Solar Farm | £15.0 | £1.8 | £1.8 | £1.3 | £0.7 | 4.7% |
| Growth Fund | | £4.3 | £0.0 | £0.0 | £0.0 | 0.0% |
| Other | | £33.4 | £0.5 | £0.4 | £0.1 | 0.0% |
| TOTAL | £74.9 | £81.1 | £7.9 | £6.4 | £5.0 | 6.7% |

| 2022/23 | Asset Value £m | Borrowing £m | Annual Income £m | Net Return (Excl. Borrowing Costs *) | Net Return (Incl. Borrowing Costs) | Yield % (E/A) |
|------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| | A | B | C | D | E | F |
| Industrial Units | £28.1 | £0.0 | £2.6 | £2.1 | £2.0 | 3.4% |
| Retail Units | £20.0 | £0.0 | £2.0 | £1.6 | £1.6 | 8.0% |
| Land | £11.8 | £0.0 | £1.0 | £1.0 | £1.0 | 8.4% |
| Solar Farm | £15.0 | £0.0 | £1.8 | £1.3 | £0.7 | 4.7% |
| Growth Fund | | £0.0 | £0.0 | £0.0 | £0.0 | 0.0% |
| Other | | £14.0 | £0.5 | £0.4 | £0.0 | 0.0% |
| TOTAL | £74.9 | £14.0 | £7.9 | £6.4 | £5.3 | 7.1% |

* Includes direct operating costs

9. PWLB Rule Changes

- 9.1 Updated guidance from PWLB in May 2022 advised that the PWLB would be able to restrict new borrowing to local authorities where there is a more than negligible risk that the newly advanced loan will not be repaid without future government support. However, it does state that HM Treasury considers compliance with the Prudential Framework generally provides sufficient assurance regarding the risk of non-repayment help by a local authority. As such, local authorities should not expect any change in their ability to access PWLB loans unless contacted by HM Treasury regarding specific concerns. West Suffolk has not been contacted by HM Treasury regarding any investment or borrowing concerns.
- 9.2 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has also published proposed new intervention powers to directly tackle excessive risk within the local government capital system in England. The powers should provide the government the flexibility to intercede where it is appropriate and necessary to do so based on the government's assessment of risk. This could require authorities to provide specific information, undertake commissioned

reviews, place borrowing caps in relation to a range of risky activities or take specific actions to reduce its level of risk.

9.3 There are a range of metrics which the government will have regard to in determining whether it is appropriate to use the statutory powers, which include:

- Proportionality of debt
- Proportion of capital assets which are investments taken in order to generate net financial return or profit
- Estimates show that the authority is not meeting its statutory duty to make sufficient provision to repay debt
- Proportion of debt held by the local authority where the counterparty is not local or central government.

These metrics will serve as a trigger for review, rather than intervention.

10. Market Information

10.1 The Council's treasury management advisors provide economic and interest rate forecasts on a monthly basis. Appendix 1 has details from this forecast from June 2022.

11. Background documents associated with this report

11.1 Capital Strategy 2022 to 2023, Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022 to 2023 and Treasury Management Code of Practice.