

Cabinet

11 February 2025

Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Vince Maple, Leader of the Council
Report from: Phil Watts, Chief Finance Officer
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Summary

This report presents the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for the 2025/26 financial year. The Treasury Management Strategy incorporates within it the Treasury Management Policy Statement, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy.

The report was previously considered by the Audit Committee on 28 January 2025. Comments from the Committees will be set out in a Supplementary Agenda.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1. The Cabinet is requested to note the comments of the Audit Committee, as set out in Appendix D within the Supplementary Cabinet Agenda
- 1.2. The Cabinet is asked to recommend the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25, as set out in Appendix A to the report, to Full Council for approval.
- 1.3. The Cabinet is asked to approve the Treasury Management Practices, as set out in Appendix C to the report.

2. Suggested reasons for decisions

- 2.1. Cabinet has the responsibility to make recommendations to Full Council on the approval of the Council's Treasury Management, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and has responsibility for the implementation of the Treasury Management Practices and associated schedules.

3. Budget and policy framework

- 3.1. Audit Committee is responsible for the scrutiny of the Council's Treasury Management, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement. The Constitution also specifies the role of Cabinet in implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices.
- 3.2. Following consideration by Audit Committee, Cabinet will consider the Strategy on 11 February 2025 taking into account the Audit Committee's comments.
- 3.3. Final approval of the policy and the setting of prudential indicators is a matter for Council on 27 February 2025.

4. Background

- 4.1. The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low-risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.
- 4.2. The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans or using longer-term cash flow surpluses. On occasion any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.
- 4.3. Medway Council defines its treasury management activities as: *"The management of the local authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks"*.

5. Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26

- 5.1. The Strategy (Appendix A) has been prepared in line with CIPFA's Local Authority Treasury Management Code, and sets out the Council's borrowing requirement and strategy, its strategy in respect of investments, provides details of the Council's current portfolio position and sets out the prudential and treasury indicators that will be used to monitor and measure treasury performance. A Diversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the Strategy, as set out in Appendix B to the report.

6. Risk management

6.1. Risk and the management thereof is a feature throughout the strategy and in detail within the Treasury Management Practices 1. (Appendix C).

7. Financial and legal implications

7.1. The finance and legal positions are set out throughout the Treasury Management Strategy itself. To achieve a balanced budget, the authority relies upon generating maximum interest from its investments whilst minimising the exposure to risk. To achieve this, investments are only placed with institutions which meet the criteria set out within this report. Investment durations do not exceed those as advised by Link Asset Services credit ratings which are associated with the specific institutions. Where the authority is required to borrow to meet the needs of the authority, officers will seek advice from Link Asset Services on timings and options to ensure the best deal for the authority.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26
Appendix B - Diversity Impact Assessment Screening Form
Appendix C - Treasury Management Practices
Appendix D - Audit Committee Minutes, 28 January 2025 (to follow in Supplementary Agenda)

Background papers

None