2024/25 Treasury Management Outturn Report – (as at 31st March 2025)

1. External market conditions

1.1. Economic background: Both the UK and US elected new governments during the period, whose policy decisions impacted the economic outlook. The Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered her Spring Statement in March 2025, following her Budget in October 2024. Based on the plans announced, the Office for Budget Responsibility downgraded its predictions for UK growth in 2025 to 1% from 2%. However, it upgraded its predictions for the four subsequent years. Inflation predictions for 2025 were pushed up, to 3.2% from 2.6%, before seen as falling back to target in 2027. The market reaction to the Spring Statement was more muted compared to the Budget, with very recent market turbulence being driven more by US trade policy decisions and President Trump.

1.2. After revising its interest rate forecast in November following the Budget, the council's treasury management advisor, Arlingclose, maintained its stance that Bank Rate will fall to 3.75% in 2025.

1.3. UK annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation continued to stay above the 2% Bank of England (BoE) target in the later part of the period. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported headline consumer prices at 2.8% in February 2025, down from 3.0% in the previous month and below expectations. Core CPI also remained elevated, falling slightly in February to 3.5% from 3.7% in January, just below expectations for 3.6% but higher than the last three months of the calendar year.

1.4. The UK economy Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 0.1% between October and December 2024, unrevised from the initial estimate. This was an improvement on the zero growth in the previous quarter, but down from the 0.4% growth between April and June 2024. Of the monthly GDP figures, the economy was estimated to have contracted by 0.1% in January, worse than expectations for a 0.1% gain.

1.5. The labour market continued to cool, but the ONS data still require treating with caution. Recent data showed the unemployment rate rose to 4.4% (3mth/year) in the three months to January 2025 while the economic inactivity rate fell again to 21.5%. The ONS reported pay growth over the same three-month period at 5.9% for regular earnings (excluding bonuses) and 5.8% for total earnings.

1.6. The BoE's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) held Bank Rate at 4.5% at its March 2025 meeting, having reduced it in February. This follows earlier 0.25% cuts in November and August 2024 from the 5.25% peak. At the March MPC meeting, members voted 8-1 to maintain Bank Rate at 4.5%, with the one dissenter preferring another 25 basis points cut. The meeting minutes implied a slightly more hawkish tilt compared to February when two MPC members wanted a 50bps cut. In the minutes, the Bank also upgraded its Q1 2025 GDP forecast to around 0.25% from the previous estimate of 0.1%.

1.7. The February Monetary Policy Report (MPR) showed the BoE expected GDP growth in 2025 to be significantly weaker compared to the November MPR. GDP is forecast to rise by 0.1% in Q1 2025, less than the previous estimate of 0.4%. Four-quarter GDP growth is expected to pick up from the middle of 2025, to over 1.5% by the end of the forecast period. The outlook for CPI inflation showed it remaining above the MPC's 2% target throughout 2025. It is expected to hit around 3.5% by June before peaking at 3.7% in Q3 and then easing towards the end of the year, but staying above the 2% target. The unemployment rate was expected to rise steadily to around 4.75% by the end of the forecast horizon, above the assumed medium-term equilibrium unemployment rate of 4.5%.

1.8. Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, maintained its central view that Bank Rate would continue to fall throughout 2025. From the cuts in August and November 2024 and February 2025, which took Bank Rate to 4.50%, May is considered the likely month for the next reduction, with other cuts following in line with MPR months to take Bank Rate down to around 3.75% by the end of 2025.

1.9. The US Federal Reserve paused its cutting cycle in the first three months of 2025, having reduced the Fed Funds Rate by 0.25% to a range of 4.25%-4.50% in December, the third cut in succession. Fed policymakers noted uncertainty around the economic outlook but were anticipating around 0.50% of further cuts in the policy rate in 2025. Economic growth continued to rise at a reasonable pace, expanding at an annualised rate of 2.4% in Q4 2024 while inflation remained elevated over the period. However, growth is now expected to weaken by more than previously expected in 2025, to 1.7% from 2.1%. The uncertainty that President Trump has brought both before and since his inauguration in January is expected to continue.

1.10. The European Central Bank (ECB) continued its rate cutting cycle over the period, reducing its three key policy rates by another 0.25% in March, acknowledging that monetary policy is becoming meaningfully less restrictive. Euro zone inflation has decreased steadily in 2025, falling to 2.2% in March, the lowest level since November 2024. Over the current calendar year, inflation is expected to average 2.3%. GDP growth stagnated in the last quarter of the 2024 calendar year, after expanding by 0.4% in the previous quarter. For 2025, economic growth forecasts were revised downwards to 0.9%.

1.11. **Financial markets:** Financial market sentiment was reasonably positive over most of the period, but economic, financial and geopolitical issues meant the trend of market volatility remained. In the latter part of the period, volatility increased and bond yields started to fall following a January peak, as the economic uncertainty around likely US trade policy impacted financial markets. Yields in the UK and US started to diverge in the last month of the period, with the former rising around concerns over the fiscal implications on the UK government from weaker growth, business sentiment and higher rates, while the latter started falling on potential recession fears due to the unpredictable nature of policy announcements by the US President and their potential impact.

1.12. The 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started the period at 3.94% and ended at 4.69%, having reached a low of 3.76% in September and a high of 4.90% in January in between. While the 20-year gilt started at 4.40% and ended at 5.22%, hitting a low of 4.27% in September and a high of 5.40% in January. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.90% over the period.

1.13. The period in question ended shortly before US President Donald Trump announced his package of 'reciprocal tariffs', the immediate aftermath of which saw stock prices and government bond yields falling and introduced further uncertainty over the economic outlook.

1.14. **Credit review:** In October, Arlingclose revised its advised recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on most banks on its counterparty list to six months. Duration advice for the remaining five institutions, including the newly added Lloyds Bank Corporate Markets, was kept to a maximum of 100 days. This advice remained in place at the end of the period.

1.15. Fitch revised the outlook on Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) to positive from stable while affirming its long-term rating at AA-, citing its consistent strong earnings and profitability.

1.16. Other than CBA, the last three months of the period were relatively quiet on the bank credit rating front, with a small number of updates issued for a number of lenders not on the Arlingclose recommended counterparty list.

1.17. On local authorities, S&P assigned a BBB+ to Warrington Council, having previously withdrawn its rating earlier in 2024, and also withdrew its rating for Lancashire County Council due to the council deciding to stop maintaining a credit rating. However, it still holds a rating with Fitch and Moody's. Moody's withdrew its rating of Cornwall Council after it chose to no longer maintain a rating.

1.18. Credit default swap prices generally trended lower over the period but did start to rise modestly in March, but not to any levels considered concerning. Once again, price volatility over the period remained generally more muted compared to previous periods.

1.19. Financial market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and, credit default swap levels will be monitored for signs of ongoing credit stress. As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remain under constant review.

2. Movement in Treasury balances

2.1. 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 to offset the CFR or for investment.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	31.3.24 £m	Movement £m	31.3.25 £m
General Fund CFR	198.3	11.2	209.6
Less: *Other debt liabilities	(2.3)	0.4	(1.9)
Borrowing CFR	**196.0**	**11.6**	**207.7**
Less: External borrowing	(173.9)	(28.4)	(202.3)
Net External borrowing	**22.2**	**(16.7)**	**5.4**
Less: Usable reserves	(25.3)	2.1	(25.3)
Less: Working capital	(8.8)	(10.6)	3.9
(Net Investments) at 31st March 2023	**(11.9)**	(4.1)	**(16.0)**

* finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

2.2. The Authority pursued its strategy of keeping borrowing and investments below their underlying levels for the majority of the year, known as internal borrowing, in order to reduce risk and keep interest costs low. Table 1 above highlights that at the end of the year the Authority was internally borrowed by £5.4m, meaning that reserves and working capital were being used in lieu of external borrowing.

2.3. At the end of the year the Authority had net investments of £16.0m. Balances over the year ranged from between £10.2m and £50.1m due to timing differences between income and expenditure and borrowing activity.

2.4. The treasury management position at 31st March 2025 and the change during the year is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Borrowing and Investment Summary

	31.3.24 Balance £m	31.3.24 Rate %	Movement	31.3.25 Balance £m	31.3.25 Rate %
Long-term borrowing	124.2	3.3	14.5	138.7	3.5
Short-term borrowing	49.7	4.2	13.9	63.6	4.9
Total borrowing	**173.9**	**3.5**	**28.4**	**202.3**	**3.9**
Long-term investments	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A
Short-term investments	(3.0)	4.93	0.0	(3.0)	5.09
Pooled Funds	(4.0)	5.60	0.0	(4.0)	5.42
Cash and cash equivalents	(4.9)	Included in ST above	(4.1)	(9.0)	Included in ST above
Total investments	**(11.9)**	**5.16**	**(4.1)**	**(16.0)**	**5.17**
Net Borrowing	**162.0**		**24.3**	**186.3**	

2.5. The authorities net borrowing position has increased over the year which is reflective of an increasing CFR, and additional long term loans taken out during the year to provide a further degree of certainty over future interest costs in a rising interest rate environment.

3. Borrowing activity during the year

3.1. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio and, where practicable, to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, known as internal borrowing.

3.2. Economic, financial and geopolitical issues has resulted in the trend of market volatility remaining during the year. In the latter part of the year, volatility increased and bond yields started to fall following a January peak, as the economic uncertainty around likely US trade policy impacted financial markets.

3.3. The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 4.80% at the beginning of the period and 5.42% at the end. The lowest available 10-year maturity rate was 4.52% and the highest was 5.71%. Rates for 20-year maturity loans ranged from 5.01% to 6.14% during the financial year, and 50-year maturity loans from 4.88% to 5.88%.

3.4. For the majority of the year the cost of short-term borrowing from other local authorities closely tracked Base Rate at around 5.00% - 5.25%. However from late 2024 rates began to rise, peaking at around 6% in February and March 2025.

3.5. At 31st March 2025 the Authority held £202.3m of loans, an increase of £28.4m from 31st March 2024, as part of its strategy for funding previous and current years' capital programmes. Outstanding loans on 31st March are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Borrowing Position

	31.3.24 Balance £m	31.3.24 Weighted Average Rate %	31.3.24 Weighted Average Maturity (years)	Balance Movement	31.3.25 Balance £m	31.3.25 Weighted Average Rate %	31.3.25 Weighted Average Maturity (years)
Public Works Loan Board	125.1	3.3	20.1	20.4	145.5	3.7	17.0
Banks (LOBO)	3.0	4.5	19.6	(3.0)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Welsh Gov Interest Free	7.7	0.0	1.8	(1.0)	6.7	0.0	2.7
Local authorities /Other	38.0	4.9	0.4	12.0	50.0	5.3	0.4
Total borrowing	**173.9**	**3.5**	**14.9**	**28.4**	**202.3**	**3.9**	**12.4**

3.6. The Authority's chief objective when borrowing has always 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.

3.7. To that end, during the year some short-term borrowing was replaced with long-term PWLB borrowing at competitive rates of interest.

Table 4: Long-dated Loans borrowed

	Amount £m	Rate %	Period (years)
PWLB Maturity Loan – 26/03/2025	5.0	4.85	1.3
PWLB EIP Anuity – 05/03/2025	2.3	5.4	20
PWLB Maturity Loan – 03/02/2025	5.0	4.90	1.25
PWLB Maturity – 24/12/2024	5.0	5.22	1.3
PWL Maturity – 09/12/2024	5.0	5.09	1.0
PWLB EIP Loan – 07/08/2024	5.0	4.71	16
PWLB EIP Loan – 28/06/2024	1.0	4.75	9
Total	**28.3**		

3.8. **Other borrowing activity**

3.9. **LOBO Loans:** On 1st April 2024 the Authority held £3.0m of LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Authority has the option to either accept the new rate and terms or to repay the loan at no additional cost. The LOBO loans repaid in year are summarised in Table 5 below.

Table 5: LOBO Loans repaid in Year

	Amount £m	Rate %	Final Maturity	New rate proposed %	Action taken by Authority
Loan 1	3.0	4.5	04/11/2043	8.2	Repaid at no cost and refinanced by PWLB loan @ 4.71% for 16 years
Total	3.0	**4.50**		**8.2**	

3.10. 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. No activities of this type were undertaken throughout the financial year.

3.11. The Authority currently holds commercial investments that were purchased prior to the change in the CIPFA Prudential Code. The Authority is not planning to purchase any investment assets primarily for yield within the next three years and so is able to access PWLB borrowing if considered cost effective.

4. <u>Investment activity during the year</u>

4.1. The CIPA 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.

4.2. The Authority holds significant invested funds during the year, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the year, the Authority's investment balances ranged from between £10.2m and £50.1m due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position at year end was:

Table 6: Treasury Investment Position

	31.3.23 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.3.25 Balance £m	31.3.25 Income Return %	31.3.25 Weighted Average Maturity Days
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	(1.9)	(0.1)	(2.0)	Average 5.09%	Up to 180 days
Government (incl. local authorities	(3.0)	0.0	(3.0)		
Money Market Funds (MMFs)	(3.0)	(4.0)	(7.0)		
Multi asset income, Pooled funds	(4.0)	0.0	(4.0)	5.42%	N/A

Total investments	(11.9)	(4.1)	(16.0)		

4.3. 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.

4.4. The Authority expects to be a long-term borrower and new treasury investments are therefore primarily made to manage day-to-day cash flows using short-term low risk instruments. The existing portfolio of strategic pooled funds will be maintained to diversify risk into different asset classes and boost investment income.

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

4.6. Bank Rate reduced from 5.25% to 5.00% in August 2024, again to 4.75% in November 2024 and again to 4.5% in February 2025 with short term interest rates largely being around these levels. The rates on DMADF deposits ranged between 4.45% and 5.19% and money market rates between 4.5% and 5.3%.

Table 7: Investment Benchmarking – Treasury investments managed in-house

	Credit Score	Credit Rating	Bail-in Exposure	Weighted Average Maturity (days)	Rate of Return %
MCC 31.03.2024	A+	4.51	62%	4	5.01
MCC 31.03.2025	A+	4.50	75%	3	5.17
Similar LAs	AA-	3.92	30%	105	4.53
All LAs	A+	4.77	64%	8	4.65

4.7. Whilst bail-in exposure as a percentage metric remains higher in comparison to similar Local Authorities, this is skewed by the overall lower value of investments held at 31st March 2025.

4.8. **Externally Managed Pooled Funds:** £4m of the Authority's investments are invested in externally managed strategic pooled multi-asset and property funds where short-term security and liquidity are lesser considerations, and the objectives instead are regular revenue income and longer-term price stability.

4.9. These funds provide and important diversification for the Authority and generated £197k (5.42%) income return, together with a £10k (0.27%) unrealised capital loss in year.

4.10. Accumulated unrealised capital loses over the lifetime of the investment stand at £378k. The Authority maintains an adequate treasury risk reserve to mitigate against the risk that capital losses on pooled funds become realised and consequently result in a charge against the Council Fund.

4.11. Because these 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 medium to long-term 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 the longer term that total returns will exceed cash interest rates.

4.12. **Statutory override:** The IFRS 9 Statutory Override was originally set to end on 31 March 2025. However, following feedback from the 2025 Local Government Finance Settlement consultation, the Government has decided to implement transitionary arrangements for legacy investments.

4.13. The key points are:

• The IFRS 9 Statutory Override will remain in place for existing pooled fund investments held as of 1 April 2024. The override will continue to apply to these investments until 1 April 2029.

• Any new pooled fund investments made after 1 April 2024 will not benefit from the override and will be subject to IFRS 9 compliance, meaning fair value movements must be recognised directly in the General Fund.

4.14. The Government's intention is that this transitionary period will provide councils with additional time to manage their pooled fund investment strategies, ensuring a smoother alignment with industry accounting standards.

4.15. For Monmouthshire County Council, this means that

• During 2024/25 and subsequent financial years up to 2028/29, fair value movements on our existing pooled fund investments will continue to be recorded in an unusable reserve, rather than impacting the General Fund.

• Any new pooled fund investments acquired after 1 April 2024 will need to account for fair value movements directly in the General Fund.

• As of the date of this report, the Council has not made any new pooled fund investments after 1 April 2025 and currently has no plans to do so.

5. Environmental, Social and Governance

5.1. Throughout the year the investment portfolio has been assessed against 3 charters that organisations can voluntarily sign up for to ensure that all are meeting minimum level of ESG responsibility. These are shown in the table below:

Table 8: ESG Charter Signatories

	UN Principles for Responsible Investment	Uk Stewardship Code 2020	Net-Zero Asset Managers Initiative
Aberdeen Asset Liquidity	✓	✓	✓
Aegon	✓	✓	✓
CCLA Investment Management	✓	✓	✓
Federated (Prime Rate) Liquidity Fund	✓	✓	✓
HSBC Global Asset Management	✓	✓	✓
LEGAL AND GENERAL MMF	✓	✓	✓
Ninety-One	✓	✓	✓

STATE STREET	✓	✓	✓
Morgan Stanley - No Longer Used	✓	✓	x
Goldman Sachs - No Longer Used	✓	✓	x

5.2. The majority of the Authorities funds were invested in organisations that were signatories of all three charters. Investments in two funds that were not signatories of the Net-Zero Asset Managers Initiative have subsequently been unwound.

5.3. An updated list of signatories to the three charters is provided by the Authority's treasury advisors each quarter and will continue to be monitored. Any counterparties not signed up to all three charters will be removed from the Authorities investment portfolio.

5.4. The authority continues to utilise a ESG specific Investment product opened in 2023/24. This fund aims to provide security of capital and liquidity while focussing on the performance of the underlying issuers on a range of environmental, social and governance.

5.5. At 31st March 2025 the ESG specific Money Market Fund returned 4.41% compared to an average rate of 4.52% for the authorities non ESG Money Market Funds.

5.6. The Council will continue to monitor further opportunities to expand its proactive approach to ESG through specific investments.

6. Non-Treasury Investments

6.1. The definition of investments in CIPFA's revised 2021 Treasury Management Code covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return.

6.2. Investments that do not meet the definition of treasury management investments (i.e. management of surplus cash) are categorised as either for service purposes (made explicitly to further service objectives) and/or for commercial purposes (made primarily for financial return).

6.3. Investment Guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Welsh Government also broadens the definition of investments to include all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.

6.4. The Authority held a net book value of £28.2m of such non-financial asset investments at the 31st March 2025 (£31.1m as at 31st March 2024) made up of:

	Net (income) / loss 2024/25 £000's	**Carrying Value 31.03.25 £000's**	**Net return 2024/25 %**	**Net return 2023/24 %**
Oak Grove Solar Farm	(304)	5,785	5.25	9.45
Newport Leisure Park & service loan	(220)	15,616	1.41	0.15*
Castlegate Business Park	513	6,784	-7.56**	-3.46
Total	**(11)**	**28,185**	**0.04**	**1.06**

*includes a one-off write-off of £217k of historic bad debt. Net return excluding this write-off would be 1.31% (overall portfolio 1.76%).

**includes one-off provision for bad debt of £248k & £169k relating to service charges and business rates respectively. Net return excluding this write-off would be -1.42% (overall portfolio 1.52%)

6.5. The Authority also holds a portfolio of legacy non-financial asset investments that have been held for over a decade and are retained for income generation, capital gain or to support wider economic development or broader policy objectives. These assets are managed as part of the Asset Investment Strategy. Income generation for these agricultural, retail and industrial assets are a secondary consideration and as such return against original investment would be considered negligible.

7. Treasury performance

7.1. The Authority measures the financial performance of its treasury management activities in terms of its impact upon the revenue budget. The following table shows that the overall net cost of its activities was £317K (5.35%) less than originally budgeted at the start of the year. The large variance is reflective of the volatile economic environment that continues to impact treasury management forecasts.

Table 9: Budget performance

	Actual £000's	Budget £000's	Over / (under) Budget £000's
Interest Payable			
PWLB	4,651	4,046	605
Market loans	12	135	(123)
Short term loans	2,198	2,916	(718)
Total Interest payable on borrowing	**6,861**	**7,097**	**(236)**
Interest Receivable			
Internally managed investments	(1,051)	(1,176)	125
Pooled Funds	(204)	Included above	(204)
Other Interest	(2)	0	(2)
Total income from Investments	**(1,257)**	**(1,176)**	**(81)**
Total	**5,604**	**5,921**	**(317)**

8. Compliance with treasury limits and indicators

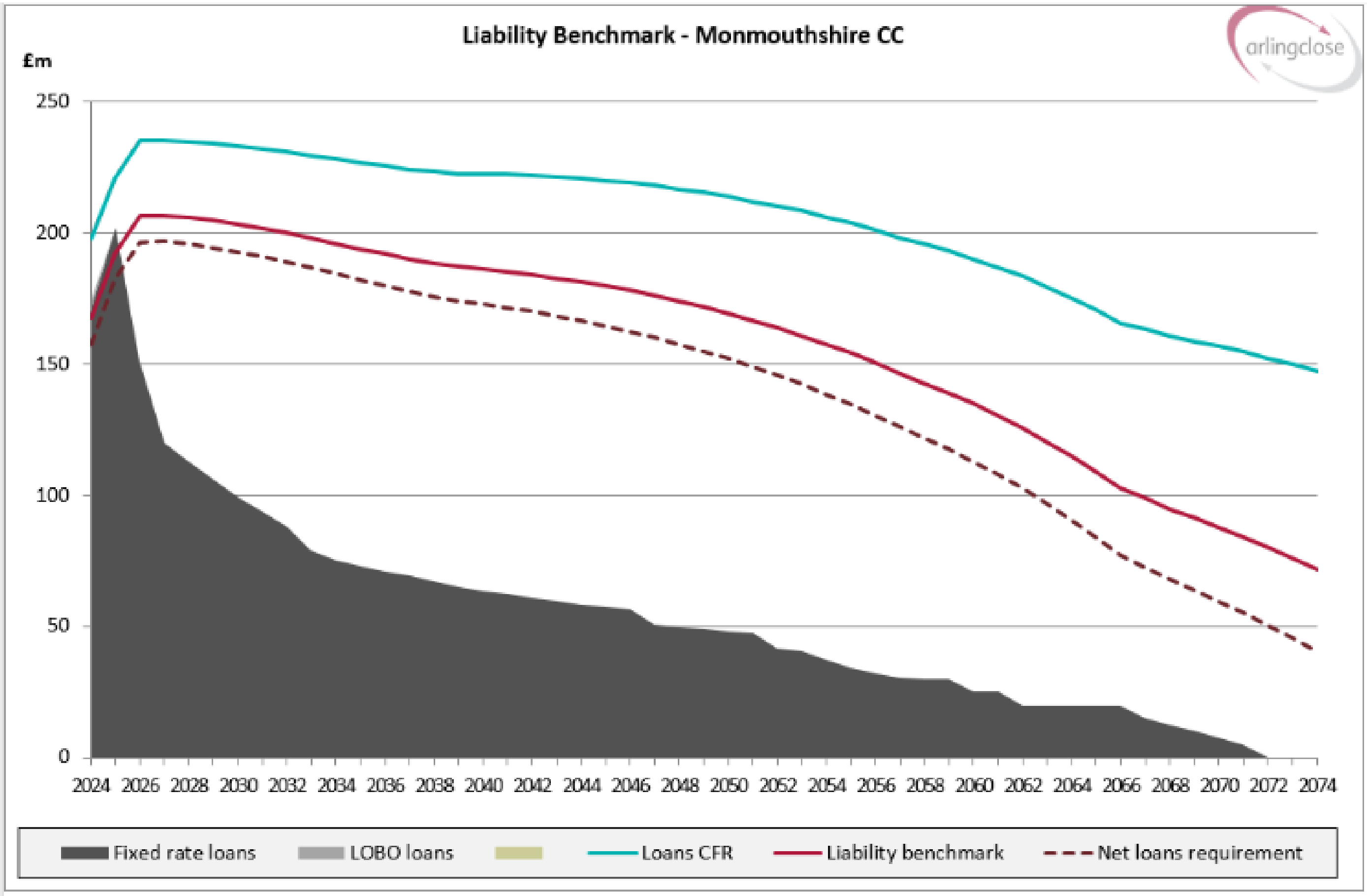
8.1. The Section 151 officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the year complied fully with the CIPFA code and the limits and indicators as set out in the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

8.2. **Liability Benchmark:** This 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 required to manage day-to-day cash flow.

Table 10: Liability Benchmark

	31.3.25 Actual	31.3.26 Forecast	31.3.27 Forecast	31.3.28 Forecast
Loans CFR	207.7	235.2	235.4	234.8
Less: Balance sheet resources	(5.4)	(38.7)	(38.7)	(38.7)
Net loans requirement	202.3	196.5	196.7	196.1
Plus: Liquidity allowance	0.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Liability benchmark	**202.3**	**206.5**	**206.7**	**206.1**
Current loan profile	(202.3)	(151.7)	(120.6)	(113.6)
Borrowing requirement	**0.0**	**54.8**	**86.1**	**92.5**

8.3. Following on from the medium-term forecast above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes capital expenditure funded by borrowing is in line with the medium-term financial plan, minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure is based on the annuity method, and expenditure and reserves all increasing by inflation of 2.5% p.a. This is shown in the chart below together with the maturity profile of the Authority's existing borrowing.



8.4. The gap between the dotted red line and the grey shaded area of the chart represents the forecast difference between the estimated borrowing requirement and the Council's current borrowing profile. If capital expenditure plans remain accurate, this represents a borrowing requirement which will need be met by new and replacement borrowing over time.

8.5. **Borrowing limits:** Compliance with the authorised limit and operational boundary for external debt is demonstrated in the table below.

Table 11: Borrowing Limits

	2024/25 Maximum during the year £m	31.3.25 Actual £m	2024/25 Operational Boundary £m	2023/24 Authorised Limit £m	Complied? Yes/No
Borrowing	202.3	202.3	252.6	268.0	Yes
PFI, Finance Leases & Other LT liabs	2.3	1.9	2.8	3.8	Yes
Total debt	**204.6**	**204.2**	**255.4**	**271.8**	**Yes**

8.6. **Note**: Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the operational boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure.

8.7. **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:

Table 12: Maturity Structure of borrowing

Maturity	31.3.25 Actual	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Complied?	31.3.24 Actual (For info)
Under 12 months	31%	0%	50%	Yes	29%
12 months and within 24 months	10%	0%	30%	Yes	3%
24 months and within 5 years	10%	0%	30%	Yes	10%
5 years and within 10 years	12%	0%	30%	Yes	16%
10 years and within 20 years	9%	0%	30%	Yes	10%
20 years and within 30 years	11%	0%	30%	Yes	12%
30 years and within 40 years	7%	0%	30%	Yes	10%
40 years and within 50 years	10%	0%	30%	Yes	12%
50 years and above	0%	0%	30%	Yes	0%

Table 13: Investment Limits

	Maximum in year	2024/25 Limit	Complied? Yes/No
The UK Government	£24.1m	Unlimited	Yes
Local Authorities per counterparty	£0m	£4m	Yes
Secured Investments	£0m	£4m	Yes
Banks per counterparty, rating A- or above	£2m (£3m total for the Councils operational bank)	£2m (£3m total for the Councils operational bank)	Yes
Building societies (unsecured)	£0m	£2m	Yes
Registered providers (e.g. Housing Associations (unsecured)	£0m	£2m	Yes
Money Market Funds	£4m	£4m	Yes
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£2m	£5m	Yes
Real estate investment trusts	£0m	£5m	Yes
Limit per non-UK country	£0m	£4m	Yes
Other Investments	£0m	£2m	Yes

8.8. **Security:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating and credit score of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Table 14: Credit Risk

	31.3.25 Actual	2024/25 Target	Complied?
Portfolio average credit	A+/4.50	A-/5.0	Yes

8.9. **Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than a year:** 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 limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end were:

Table 15: Principal invested for period longer than a year

	During 2024/25
Actual principal invested for 365 days & beyond year end	£0m
Limit	£5m
Complied?	Yes

8.10. 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.

Background paper: Glossary of Treasury Terms

Authorised Limit	The affordable borrowing limit determined in compliance with the Local Government Act 2003 (English and Welsh authorities) and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. This Prudential Indicator is a statutory limit for total external debt. It is set by the Authority and needs to be consistent with the Authority's plans for capital expenditure financing and funding. The Authorised Limit provides headroom over and above the *Operational Boundary* to accommodate expected cash movements. Affordability and prudence are matters which must be taken into account when setting this limit. (see also *Operational Boundary*, below)
Balances and Reserves	Accumulated sums that are maintained either earmarked for specific future costs or commitments or generally held to meet unforeseen or emergency expenditure.
Bail-in	Refers to the process which the banking regulatory authorities will use to restructure a financial institution which is failing or likely to fail. Unsecured creditors of and investors in that financial institution will participate in its restructure who will, as a consequence, incur a non-recoverable loss (commonly referred to as a 'haircut') on their obligation/investment. Local authority investments with banks and building societies such as term deposits, certificates of deposit, call accounts and non-collateralised bonds are unsecured investments and are therefore vulnerable to bail-in.
Bank Rate	The official interest rate set by the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee and what is generally termed at the "base rate". This rate is also referred to as the 'repo rate'.
Bond	A certificate of debt issued by a company, government, or other institution. The bond holder receives interest at a rate stated at the time of issue of the bond. The price of a bond may vary during its life.
Capital Expenditure	Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of capital assets
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes representing the cumulative capital expenditure of the local authority that has not been financed.
Capital growth	Increase in the value of the asset (in the context of a collective investment scheme, it will be the increase in the unit price of the fund)
Capital receipts	Money obtained on the sale of a capital asset.
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
Constant Net Asset Value (CNAV)	Also referred to as Stable Net Asset Value. A term used in relation to the valuation of 1 share in a fund. This means that at all times the value of 1 share is £1/€1/US$1 (depending on the currency of the fund). The Constant NAV is maintained since dividend income (or interest) is either added to the shareholders' account by creating shares equal to the value of interest earned or paid to the shareholder's bank account, depending on which option is selected by the shareholder.
Collective Investment Schemes	Funds in which several investors collectively hold units or shares. The assets in the fund are not held directly by each investor, but as part of a pool (hence these funds are also referred to as 'Pooled Funds'). Unit Trusts and Open-Ended Investment Companies are types of collective investment schemes / pooled funds.
Corporate Bonds	Corporate bonds are bonds issued by companies. The term is often used to cover all bonds other than those issued by governments in their own currencies and includes issues by companies, supranational organisations and government agencies.

Corporate Bond Funds	Collective Investment Schemes investing predominantly in bonds issued by companies and supranational organisations.
CPI ***Also see RPI***	Consumer Price Index. (This measure is used as the Bank of England's inflation target.)
Credit Default Swap (CDS)	A Credit Default Swap is similar to an insurance policy against a credit default. Both the buyer and seller of a CDS are exposed to credit risk. Naked CDS, i.e. one which is not linked to an underlying security, can lead to speculative trading.
Credit Rating	Formal opinion by a registered rating agency of a counterparty's future ability to meet its financial liabilities; these are opinions only and not guarantees.
Cost of carry	When a loan is borrowed in advance of requirement, this is the difference between the interest rate and (other associated costs) on the loan and the income earned from investing the cash in the interim.
Credit default swaps	Financial instrument for swapping the risk of debt default; the buyer effectively pays a premium against the risk of default.
Diversification / diversified exposure	The spreading of investments among different types of assets or between markets in order to reduce risk.
Derivatives	Financial instruments whose value, and price, are dependent on one or more underlying assets. Derivatives can be used to gain exposure to, or to help protect against, expected changes in the value of the underlying investments. Derivatives may be traded on a regulated exchange or traded 'over the counter'.
ECB	European Central Bank
Federal Reserve	The US central bank. (Often referred to as "the Fed")
Floating Rate Notes	A bond issued by a company where the interest rate paid on the bond changes at set intervals (generally every 3 months). The rate of interest is linked to LIBOR and may therefore increase or decrease at each rate setting
GDP	Gross domestic product – also termed as "growth" in the economy. The value of the national aggregate production of goods and services in the economy.
General Fund	This includes most of the day-to-day spending and income. (All spending and income related to the management and maintenance of the housing stock is kept separately in the HRA).
Gilts (UK Govt)	Gilts are bonds issued by the UK Government. They take their name from 'gilt-edged': being issued by the UK government, they are deemed to be very secure as the investor expects to receive the full face value of the bond to be repaid on maturity.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	A ring-fenced account of all housing income and expenditure, required by statute
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standards

Income Distribution	The payment made to investors from the income generated by a fund; such a payment can also be referred to as a 'dividend'
Investments - **Secured** - **unsecured**	Secured investments which have underlying collateral in the form of assets which can be called upon in the event of default Unsecured investments do not have underlying collateral. Such investments made by local authorities with banks and building societies are at risk of bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail.
Liability Benchmark	Term in CIPFA's Risk Management Toolkit which refers to the minimum amount of borrowing required to keep investments at a minimum liquidity level (which may be zero).
LOBOs	LOBO stands for 'Lender's Option Borrower's Option'. The underlying loan facility is typically long term and the interest rate is fixed. However, in the LOBO facility the lender has the option to call on the facilities at predetermined future dates. On these call dates, the lender can propose or impose a new fixed rate for the remaining term of the facility and the borrower has the 'option' to either accept the new imposed fixed rate or repay the loan facility.
LVNAV (Low Volatility Net Asset Value)	From 2019 Money Market Funds will have to operate under a variable Net Value Structure with minimal volatility (fluctuations around £1 limited to between 99.8p to 100.2p)
Maturity	The date when an investment or borrowing is repaid.
Maturity profile	A table or graph showing the amount (or percentage) of debt or investments maturing over a time period. The amount or percent maturing could be shown on a year-by-year or quarter-by-quarter or month-by-month basis.
MiFID II	MiFID II replaced the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID I) from 3 January 2018. It is a legislative framework instituted by the European Union to regulate financial markets in the bloc and improve protections for investors.
Money Market Funds (MMF)	Pooled funds which invest in a range of short term assets providing high credit quality and high liquidity.
Minimum Revenue Provision	An annual provision that the Authority is statutorily required to set aside and charge to the Revenue Account for the repayment of debt associated with expenditure incurred on capital assets
Non-Specified Investments	Term used in the Communities and Local Government Guidance and Welsh Assembly Guidance for Local Authority Investments. It includes any investment for periods greater than one year or those with bodies that do not have a high credit rating, use of which must be justified.
Net Asset Value (NAV)	A fund's net asset value is calculated by taking the current value of the fund's assets and subtracting its liabilities.
Operational Boundary	This is the limit set by the Authority as its most likely, i.e. prudent, estimate level of external debt, but not the worst case scenario. This limit links directly to the Authority's plans for capital expenditure, the estimates of the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and the estimate of cashflow requirements for the year.
Permitted Investments	Term used by Scottish Authorities as those the Authority has formally approved for use.

Pooled funds	See Collective Investment Schemes (above)
Premiums and Discounts	In the context of local authority borrowing, (a) the premium is the penalty arising when a loan is redeemed prior to its maturity date and (b) the discount is the gain arising when a loan is redeemed prior to its maturity date. If on a £1 million loan, it is calculated* that a £100,000 premium is payable on premature redemption, then the amount paid by the borrower to redeem the loan is £1,100,000 plus accrued interest. If on a £1 million loan, it is calculated that a £100,000 discount receivable on premature redemption, then the amount paid by the borrower to redeem the loan is £900,000 plus accrued interest. PWLB premium/discount rates are calculated according to the length of time to maturity, current market rates (plus a margin), and the existing loan rate which then produces a premium/discount dependent on whether the discount rate is lower/higher than the coupon rate. *The calculation of the total amount payable to redeem a loan borrowed from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) is the present value of the remaining payments of principal and interest due in respect of the loan being repaid prematurely, calculated on normal actuarial principles. More details are contained in the PWLB's lending arrangements circular.
Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	Private Finance Initiative (PFI) provides a way of funding major capital investments, without immediate recourse to the public purse. Private consortia, usually involving large construction firms, are contracted to design, build, and in some cases manage new projects. Contracts can typically last for 30 years, during which time the asset is leased by a public authority.
Prudential Code	Developed by CIPFA and introduced on 01/4/2004 as a professional code of practice to support local authority capital investment planning within a clear, affordable, prudent and sustainable framework and in accordance with good professional practice.
Prudential Indicators	Indicators determined by the local authority to define its capital expenditure and asset management framework. They are designed to support and record local decision making in a manner that is publicly accountable; they are not intended to be comparative performance indicators between authorities.
PWLB	Public Works Loans Board. It is a statutory body operating within the United Kingdom Debt Management Office, an Executive Agency of HM Treasury. The PWLB's function is to lend money from the National Loans Fund to local authorities and other prescribed bodies, and to collect the repayments.
Quantitative Easing	In relation to the UK, it is the process used by the Bank of England to directly increase the quantity of money in the economy. It "does not involve printing more banknotes. Instead, the Bank buys assets from private sector institutions – that could be insurance companies, pension funds, banks or non-financial firms – and credits the seller's bank account. So the seller has more money in their bank account, while their bank holds a corresponding claim against the Bank of England (known as reserves). The end result is more money out in the wider economy". Source: Bank of England
Registered Provider of Social Housing	Formerly known as Housing Association
Revenue Expenditure	Expenditure to meet the continuing cost of delivery of services including salaries and wages, the purchase of materials and capital financing charges

RPI	Retail Prices Index. A monthly index demonstrating the movement in the cost of living as it tracks the prices of goods and services including mortgage interest and rent. Pensions and index-linked gilts are uprated using the CPI index.
SORP	Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting (Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom).
Specified Investments	Term used in the CLG Guidance and Welsh Assembly Guidance for Local Authority Investments. Investments that offer high security and high liquidity, in sterling and for no more than 1 year. UK government, local authorities and bodies that have a high credit rating.
Supported Borrowing	Borrowing for which the costs are supported by the government or third party.
Supranational Bonds	Instruments issued by supranational organisations created by governments through international treaties (often called multilateral development banks). The bonds carry an AAA rating in their own right. Examples of supranational organisations are those issued by the European Investment Bank, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
Treasury Management Code	CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services.
Temporary Borrowing	Borrowing to cover peaks and troughs of cash flow, not to fund spending.
Term Deposits	Deposits of cash with terms attached relating to maturity and rate of return (interest)
Unsupported Borrowing	Borrowing which is self-financed by the local authority. This is also sometimes referred to as Prudential Borrowing.
Usable Reserves	Resources available to finance future revenue and capital expenditure
Variable Net Asset Value (VNAV)	A term used in relation to the valuation of 1 share in a fund. This means that the net asset value (NAV) of these funds is calculated daily based on market prices.
Working Capital	Timing differences between income/expenditure and receipts/payments
Yield	The measure of the return on an investment instrument