

Investment Strategy 2020/21

Introduction

The Authority invests its money for three broad purposes:

- because it has surplus cash as a result of its day-to-day activities, for example when income is received in advance of expenditure (known as **treasury management investments**),
- to support local public services by lending to or buying shares in other organisations (**service investments**), and
- to earn investment income (known as **commercial investments** where this is the main purpose).

This investment strategy was a new reporting requirement introduced for 2019/20, meeting the requirements of statutory guidance issued by the government in January 2018, and focuses on the second and third of these categories.

Treasury Management Investments

The Authority typically receives its income in cash (e.g. from taxes and grants) before it pays for its expenditure in cash (e.g. through payroll and invoices). It also holds reserves for future expenditure. These activities, plus the timing of borrowing decisions, lead to a cash surplus which is invested in accordance with Treasury Management guidance both from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and MHCLG. Average cash balances in 2020/21 for the purpose of treasury management investment are expected to average £30m plus, with fluctuations between £20m and £50m.

Contribution: The contribution that these investments make to the objectives of the Authority is to support effective treasury management activities.

Further details: Full details of the Authority's policies and its plan for 2020/21 for treasury management investments are covered in the treasury management strategy report 2020/21 to which this Investment Strategy is appended.

Service Investments: Loans

Contribution: The Council makes investments to assist local public services, including making loans to a variety of organisations, mainly local businesses, the local education college and local residents to support local public services and stimulate local economic growth.

The Council provided a significant loan to Kirklees College to help facilitate a new campus in Huddersfield and the delivery of a successful further education provision for post 16 students and adults across the District.

Smaller loans have also been provided to local residents to be able to provide energy efficient heating within their own homes. The Council is part of the Leeds City Region Investment Fund where all local authorities contribute to the fund which provides individual loans to support infrastructure and construction projects which help deliver economic growth and job creation.

From 20/21 the Council is planning on providing significant development finance loans to support major town centre regeneration and economic growth, up to a Council approved £38m (per the 5 year Capital Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25), through a combination of Property Investment Fund (£25m) and HD-One Fund (£13m). Amounts have been set aside in the capital plan for this type of investment.

From 20/21 the Council is earmarking (up to £1m) to provide financial loans to support 3rd sector partners and anchor organisations. A further element (up to £1m) will be provided for loans and/or match funding in support of community asset transfers. The Council is underwriting this provision from within the existing earmarked property and other loan reserve.

Security: The main risk when making loans is that the borrower will be unable to repay the principal lent and/or the interest due. Investment Strategy guidance states that in order to limit this risk, and ensure that total Council exposure to loans remains proportionate to the size of the Authority, upper limits on the outstanding loans to each category of borrower have to be set, and approved annually by Council. The proposed upper limits for Council loans are set out at Table 1 below:

Table 1: Loans for service purposes in £ millions

Category of borrower	31.3.2019 actual			2020/21
	Balance owing	Loss allowance	Net figure in accounts	Approved Limit
Further education college	15.9	-0.6	15.3	16.4
Leeds City Region revolving investment fund	3.0	0.0	3.0	4.2
Local businesses and charities	0.8*	-0.1	0.7*	40.8
Local residents	2.2	0.0	2.2	2.2
TOTAL	21.8	-0.7	21.1	63.6

* This is made up of numerous small investments, the largest of which are £0.2m for the Media Centre and £0.2m for KSDL.

Accounting standards require the Authority to set aside a loss allowance for loans, reflecting the likelihood of non-payment. The figures for loans in the Authority's statement of accounts are shown net of this loss allowance. However, the Authority makes every reasonable effort to collect the full sum lent and has appropriate credit control arrangements in place to recover overdue repayments.

Risk assessment:

The Authority assesses the risk of loss before entering into and whilst holding service loans. This will include the nature of the market/sector to which the loan relates, and loan security against business/sector assets. The single largest current loan relates to Kirklees College which is a public sector entity and considered to be a viable going concern. The strength of the Council's partnership with key anchor organisations in the district like the College, and ability to influence, support and monitor the College's ongoing financial position, are also key factors, including Council senior finance representation on the College's finance committee.

Development finance loans such as Property Investment Fund (PIF) and HD-One will allow the Council to offer loans to development projects which offer significant economic benefits to the Council and the wider Kirklees district.

Any funding offers made will be on the basis that the loan repayments made by the recipient will cover the Council's financing costs and allow for an appropriate margin on cost of funds reflecting the level of risk involved and consistent with State Aid principles. All funding offers made will be subject to appropriate due diligence, including external specialist advice where appropriate, availability of credit ratings in respect of any potential loanee where appropriate, and loan security arrangements. Each individual loan offer will be the subject of a further Cabinet report.

It would not be the intention for the Council to directly compete with existing providers of investment funding. The Council would only look to invest, at its discretion, when there was a clear and demonstrable added value case to be made in terms of local economic benefits for development finance involvement. In many instances the Council investment would be short term to cover the construction phase of development which is the most critical period for schemes to locate finance that is timely and on reasonable terms.

Once out of the development phase there is sufficient liquidity at an appropriate risk margin in the existing investment markets for schemes to be refinanced at which point the Council investment would be repaid. Any investment from the PIF would be on terms that allowed the Council to fully cover its costs, including the costs of borrowing to fund any advance, and creation of an appropriate risk contingency.

Service Investments: Shares

Contribution: The Council invests in the shares of local businesses to support local public services and stimulate local economic growth. The main share investment

(£0.9m) is a 9.9% holding in Kirklees School Services Ltd which operates 20 schools on our behalf on a 32 year contract under PFI. The council also has a 40% shareholding in KSDL, a 14% holding in in QED KMC Holdings Ltd (£0.3m) and a 50% shareholding in KHBP Ltd (£0.1m).

Security: One of the risks of investing in shares is that they fall in value meaning that the initial outlay may not be recovered. In order to limit this risk, upper limits on the sum invested in each category of shares have been set as follows:

Table 2: Shares held for service purposes in £ millions

Category of company	31.3.2019 actual			2020/21
	Amounts invested	Gains or losses	Value in accounts	Approved Limit
Local businesses	1.3	0.1	1.4	3.8

Risk assessment: The Authority entered into these shareholdings for the purposes of participating in the governance and control of organisations that it considered to be important for the purposes of securing economic benefits to the borough. The Council is also the sole client in respect of one of these investments. The Council assessed the risk of participation taking account of the financial and public benefits, including the opportunity to make a potential gain in the event of the business being successful, although this was not the core purpose for initial participation. The Council assesses the risk of losses whilst holding shares by continued oversight and involvement in the strategic and operational aspects of the business, and participation in decision making, although the financial risk of the investment is perhaps lower than the operational and or reputational impacts of any failure by the companies in which the Council holds share based investments.

Liquidity: The Council has entered into these shareholdings for the purposes of delivery of its public service and community leadership obligations and the investments are considered to be long term. Viability of the investments in the long term is an important part of the strategy, but as the Councils share ownership and participation is strategic rather than financial the daily or periodic value is of less concern than the overall long term health of the organisation in which the investment is held.

Non-specified Investments: Shares are the only investment type that the Authority has identified that meets the definition of a non-specified investment in the government guidance. The limits above on share investments are therefore also the Authority's upper limits on non-specified investments. The Authority has not adopted any procedures for determining further categories of non-specified investment since none are likely to meet the definition.

Commercial Investments: Property

Contribution: The Council invests in local commercial property such as retail town centre shops and buildings.

These assets fall under the definition of Investment Properties in the CIPFA Accounting Code and are valued at fair value in the accounts in accordance with IFRS13. Fair value is when an asset is valued at its highest and best use.

Table 3: Property held for investment purposes in £ millions

Property type	Actual	31.3.2019 actual		31.3.2020 expected	
	Purchase cost	Gains or (losses)	Fair value in accounts	Gains or (losses)	Value in accounts
Commercial Property	*See below	0.0	20.7	0.0	20.7

*The purchase cost cannot be ascertained as the majority of these assets have been owned by Kirklees for many years and purchased by Huddersfield Corporation during the 1920's from Ramsdens Estate. There is a signed legal document and also a 'book of acquisition' which is a hard backed ledger held in legal services.

Security: In accordance with government guidance, the Authority considers a property investment to be secure if its accounting valuation is at or higher than its purchase cost including taxes and transaction costs.

A fair value assessment of the Authority's investment property portfolio has been made within the past twelve months, and the underlying assets provide security for capital investment. Should the 2019/20 year end accounts preparation and audit process value these properties below their purchase cost, then an updated investment strategy will be presented to full council detailing the impact of the loss on the security of investments and any revenue consequences arising there from.

Risk assessment: The Authority's current commercial asset portfolio held for investment purposes is largely a historical portfolio. It is monitored and reviewed annually as part of the Council's wider asset strategy including potential future appreciation and potential receipt value.

It is not the Council's intention to invest in any new commercial portfolio investments at this time. If any new investments are identified a risk assessment would be performed.

Liquidity: Compared with other investment types, property is relatively difficult to sell and convert to cash at short notice, and can take a considerable period to sell in certain market conditions. To ensure that the invested funds can be accessed when they are needed, for example to repay capital borrowed, the Council will ensure it has adequate though not excessive cash resources, borrowing arrangements, overdraft or standby facilities to enable it at all times to have the level of funds available to which are necessary for the achievement of its business/service objectives. Cash flow projections are prepared on a regular and timely basis.

Loan Commitments and Financial Guarantees

Although not strictly counted as investments, since no money has exchanged hands yet, loan commitments and financial guarantees carry similar risks to the Authority and are included here for completeness. The Council does not have any loan commitments, however there are some guarantees that the Council holds including a guarantee on outstanding contributions to Pension Fund in the event of a default by certain bodies and a guarantee to the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) in the event of a default by Kirklees Community Association (KCA) on the redevelopment of the Fieldhead Estate. The Council also act as a guarantor to a loan of £1.3m that KSDL hold in the event of default. Along with other YPO members, the Council are potential joint guarantors to a strategic acquisition loan to be taken out on YPO's behalf by Wakefield Council (currently subject to due diligence checks); the individual member share of the loan guarantee is likely to be up to £4.5m.

Capacity, Skills and Culture

The Council employs professionally qualified and experienced staff in senior positions with responsibility for making capital expenditure, borrowing and investment decisions. For example, the Service Director Finance is a qualified accountant with extensive local government experience, the Strategic Director – Economy and Infrastructure has extensive experience of major Council regeneration schemes and partnerships with major business and 3rd party partners, as do key Service Directors. The Council pays for staff to study towards relevant professional qualifications including CIPFA and AAT.

Where Council staff do not have the knowledge and skills required, use is made of external advisers and consultants that are specialists in their field. The Council currently employs Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers. This approach is more cost effective than employing such staff directly, and ensures that the Council has access to knowledge and skills commensurate with its risk appetite.

Cabinet is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of any Investment policy. The Corporate Governance and Audit Committee undertake a scrutiny role with regard to Investment. Regular training for members of the Committee is provided by our treasury advisors to enable them to make decisions to ensure accountability and responsibility on investment decisions within the context of the

Council's corporate values. Any new investment decisions are also approved at full Council.

Investment Indicators

The Authority has set the following quantitative indicators to allow elected members and the public to assess the Authority's total risk exposure as a result of its investment decisions.

Total risk exposure: The first indicator shows the Authority's total exposure to potential investment losses. This includes amounts the Authority is contractually committed to lend but have yet to be drawn down and guarantees the Authority has issued over third party loans.

Table 5: Total investment exposure in £millions

Total investment exposure	31.03.2019 Actual	31.03.2020 Forecast	31.03.2021 Forecast
Treasury management investments	39.1	30.0	30.0
Service investments: Loans	21.1	23.3	44.9
Service investments: Shares	1.4	1.4	1.4
Commercial investments: Property	20.7	20.7	20.7
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	82.3	75.4	97.0
Commitments to lend	0.0	0.0	0.0
Guarantees issued on loans	1.3	5.8	5.8
TOTAL EXPOSURE	83.6	81.2	102.8

How investments are funded: Government guidance is that these indicators should include how investments are funded. Since the Authority does not normally associate particular assets with particular liabilities, this guidance is difficult to comply with. However, the following investments could be described as being funded by borrowing. The remainder of the Authority's investments are funded by usable reserves and income received in advance of expenditure

Table 6: Investments funded by borrowing in £m

Investments funded by borrowing	31.03.2019 Actual	31.03.2020 Forecast	31.03.2021 Forecast
Service investments: Loans	18.0	19.5	38.1

Rate of return received: This indicator shows the investment income received less the associated costs, including the cost of borrowing where appropriate, as a proportion of the sum initially invested. Note that due to the complex local government accounting framework, not all recorded gains and losses affect the revenue account in the year they are incurred.

Table 7: Investment rate of return (net of all costs)

Investments net rate of return	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Forecast
Treasury management investments	0.7%	1.2%	1.3%
Service investments: Loans	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Service investments: Shares	None	None	None
Commercial investments	10.1%	10.0%	10.0%
ALL INVESTMENTS	11.3%	11.7%	11.8%