

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2022/2023

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Prudential Code is the key element in the system of capital finance that was introduced from 1 April 2004 as set out in the Local Government Act 2003. CIPFA published their updated 2021 edition of the Prudential Code on 20th December 2021. Although the updated Code applies with immediate effect, due to the late publication date, CIPFA has allowed Local Authorities to defer introducing the revised reporting requirements until the 2023/24 financial year. These include changes to the prudential indicators. Given the flexibility allowed by CIPFA, the following Prudential Indicators have been updated as far as time constraints would allow. However, they will be subject to further update in order to fully comply with the 2021 Prudential Code by 31st March 2023.
- 1.2 Individual authorities are responsible for deciding the level of their affordable borrowing, having regard to the CIPFA code, (which has legislative backing). Prudential limits apply to all borrowing, qualifying credit arrangements (e.g. some forms of lease) and other long term liabilities. The system is designed to encourage authorities that need, and can afford, to borrow for capital investment to do so.

2 CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities

- 2.1 The Code has been developed to support Local Authorities in taking capital investment decisions and to ensure that these decisions are supported by a framework which ensures proportionality, prudence, affordability and sustainability. The Code requires authorities to look at capital expenditure and investment plans in the light of overall organisational strategy and resources.
- 2.2 Another objective of the Code is that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice and in full understanding of the risks involved and how these risks will be managed to levels that are acceptable to the organisation. The rationale behind these concepts is set out in the code.
- 2.3 To demonstrate compliance with these objectives of proportionality, prudence, affordability and sustainability each local authority is required to produce a set of prudential indicators. These indicators are designed to support and record local decision making and are not for comparison with other authorities. The setting and revising of these indicators must be approved by Cabinet and Council.
- 2.4 In setting or revising its prudential indicators, the local authority is required to have regard to the following matters:
- service objectives (e.g. strategic planning);
 - stewardship of assets (e.g. asset management planning);
 - value for money (e.g. options appraisal);

- prudence and sustainability (e.g. risks, whole life costing and implications for external debt);
- affordability (e.g. implications for long-term resources including the council tax);
- practicality (e.g. achievability of the forward plan).

3 Prudential Indicators for Prudence

3.1 Estimates of Capital Expenditure to be Incurred

3.1.1 This is an estimate of the total amount of investment planned over the period. Not all investment necessarily has an effect on the Council Tax. Schemes funded by grant, third party contributions or by capital receipts mean that the effect on the Council Tax is greatly reduced.

	Estimate 2022/23 £000	Estimate 2023/24 £000	Estimate 2024/25 £000	Estimate 2025/26 £000	Estimate 2026/27 £000
To be delivered by the Council:					
General Fund	62,502	19,496	8,326	7,558	4,600
Housing Revenue Account	13,367	6,597	1,909	0	0
To be delivered by Subsidiary Companies, Partners and Joint Ventures:					
General Fund	14,200	9,500	3,250	3,250	0
Housing Revenue Account	9,008	6,887	6,348	0	0
Total	99,077	42,480	19,833	10,808	4,600

3.2 Estimate of the Capital Financing Requirement

3.2.1 Each year, the Council finances the capital programme by a number of means, one of which is borrowing. The capital financing requirement represents the cumulative amount of borrowing that has been incurred to pay for the Council's capital assets, less amounts that have been set aside for the repayment of debt over the years (i.e. Minimum Revenue Provision and Reserved Capital Receipts).

The estimates for the capital financing requirement are:

	Estimate 31st March 2023 £000	Estimate 31st March 2024 £000	Estimate 31st March 2025 £000	Estimate 31st March 2026 £000	Estimate 31st March 2027 £000
General Fund	327,745	341,007	353,355	364,820	375,317
Housing Revenue Account	99,091	99,091	99,091	99,091	99,091
Better Queensway senior lender (indicative)	0	0	0	30,000	30,000
Total	426,836	440,098	452,446	493,911	504,408

The Council is only allowed to borrow long term to support its capital investment programme. It is not allowed to borrow long term to support its revenue budget.

3.3 *Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit 2022/23 to 2026/27*

3.3.1 The Council must set an operational boundary and authorised limit for its total gross external debt, separately identifying borrowing from other long-term liabilities. The operational boundary is how much gross external debt the Council plans to take up, and reflects the decision on the amount of debt needed for the Capital Investment Programme for the relevant year. The authorised limit is higher than the operational boundary as it allows sufficient headroom to take account of unusual cash movements. If at any time during the year, it is likely that this limit will be breached it will be reported to members as soon as possible and the Leader advised immediately.

Operational boundary	Estimate 2022/23 £000	Estimate 2023/24 £000	Estimate 2024/25 £000	Estimate 2025/26 £000	Estimate 2026/27 £000
Borrowing	381,400	391,600	396,700	406,900	397,200
Liabilities outstanding under credit arrangements	3,600	3,400	3,300	3,100	2,800
Better Queensway – senior lender (indicative)	0	0	0	30,000	30,000
Total	385,000	395,000	400,000	440,000	430,000

Authorised Limit	Estimate 2022/23 £000	Estimate 2023/24 £000	Estimate 2024/25 £000	Estimate 2025/26 £000	Estimate 2026/27 £000
Borrowing	391,400	401,600	406,700	416,900	407,200
Liabilities outstanding under credit arrangements	3,600	3,400	3,300	3,100	2,800
Better Queensway – senior lender (indicative)	0	0	0	30,000	30,000
Total	395,000	405,000	410,000	450,000	440,000

3.4 *Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement*

3.4.1 Gross external debt is long term external debt (e.g. PWLB loans taken out), short term borrowing from other Local Authorities and credit arrangements relating to finance leases. The estimates for the external debt are:

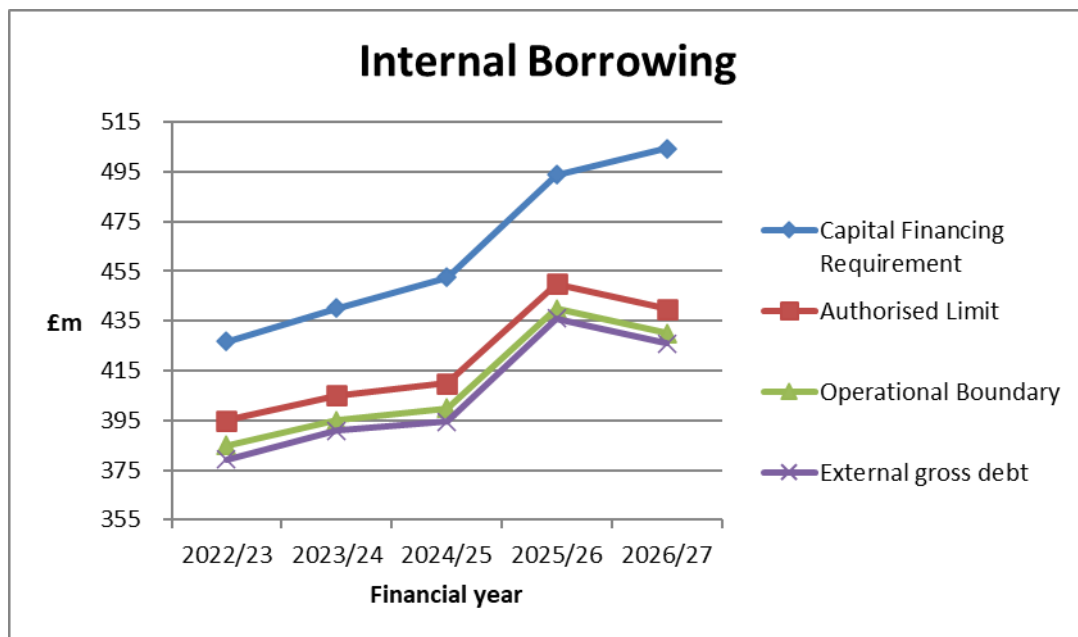
	Estimate 31st March 2023 £000	Estimate 31st March 2024 £000	Estimate 31st March 2025 £000	Estimate 31st March 2026 £000	Estimate 31st March 2027 £000
External gross debt	379,154	390,765	394,458	436,020	426,000

3.4.2 Under the Prudential Code, gross external borrowing must not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement for the previous year, plus any additional amounts for the current year and the next two financial years. This means that gross external borrowing cannot exceed £452.446m at 31 March 2023, £493.911m at 31 March 2024 and £504.408m at 31 March 2025.

4 Prudential Indicators for Affordability

4.1 Internal Borrowing/Interest Rate Risk

4.1.1 The graph below shows the estimated Capital Financing Requirement, Authorised Limit, Operational Boundary and levels of external borrowing over the next five years.



4.1.2 The gap between the Capital Financing Requirement and the levels of external debt illustrates the level of internal borrowing. This reflects the Council's exposure to interest rate movements equivalent to the interest lost on investment income. Also, when the borrowing is taken out the rate will be dependent on the prevailing economic and market conditions at the time. This is a risk if PWLB rates rise significantly. For every 1 basis point (0.01%) increase in rates the interest paid on borrowing £10m for 50 years rises by £50,000 over the life of the loan. A 1% increase in rates on a £10m loan would increase the cost to £5m over the life of the loan.

4.1.3 The gap between the Capital Financing Requirement and the Operational Boundary/Authorised Limit highlights the potential scope and flexibility to borrow further, if the cash flow and treasury management position allows.

4.2 *Estimates of the Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream*

4.2.1 This indicator records estimated capital financing costs as a percentage of the net revenue stream.

4.2.2 Capital financing costs are the revenue cost of financing the debt which includes the interest payments and the amount set aside annually to repay debt. This is an important indicator because it shows how much of the Council's revenue resources are 'tied up' in fixed capital financing costs. Setting and reviewing this, means that the Council can ensure that its capital financing costs do not become too large a part of the revenue budget, compared to the cost of running services.

	Estimate 2022/23 %	Estimate 2023/24 %	Estimate 2024/25 %	Estimate 2025/26 %	Estimate 2026/27 %
General Fund	15.05	15.58	15.90	16.30	16.69
Housing Revenue Account	38.20	38.68	39.02	39.09	40.57

5 **Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management**

5.1 *Maturity Structure of Borrowing during 2022/23*

5.1.1 The table below shows the limits within which the Council delegates its length of borrowing decisions to the Executive Director (Finance and Resources)/Section 151 Officer in 2022/23.

	Upper limit %	Lower limit %	Estimated outstanding debt maturity at 31st March 2023 %
Under 12 months	20	0	0
12 months and within 24 months	30	0	0
24 months and within 5 years	40	0	9
5 years and within 10 years	60	5	19
10 years and within 20 years	100	15	22
20 years and within 30 years	100	0	3
30 years and above	80	20	47

5.1.2 The percentages in each category for the upper and lower limits do not add up to 100% as they do not represent an actual allocation.

5.1.3 The actual maturities of new borrowing will be decided taking account of the maturities of existing loans and the interest rates for the various maturity periods available at the time.

5.2 *Total Principal Sums Invested for Periods over 365 Days*

5.2.1 A large part of the Council's investments are managed by external fund managers. However, a working cash balance is also managed internally within the Council. Part of this cash balance is utilised to smooth out the day to day movements on the cash flow. It is not therefore the intention that this part of the balance would be invested for more than 365 days. The rest of the cash balance is invested to achieve the optimum returns consistent with the effective control of risk.

5.2.2 This indicator sets a prudential limit for principal sums invested for periods over 365 days. The following limits are for principal sums invested in-house:

	<i>Estimate 2022/23 %</i>	<i>Estimate 2023/24 %</i>	<i>Estimate 2024/25 £m</i>	<i>Estimate 2025/26 £m</i>	<i>Estimate 2026/27 £m</i>
Limits on the total principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end	25	25	25	25	25