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10th September 2025

Q1 Finance and Performance Report 2025/26

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Baxter – Portfolio Holder for Finance					
	and Governance					
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes					
Relevant Head of Service	Debra Goodall					
Report Authors	Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer					
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Wards Affected	All Wards					
Ward Councillor(s)	No					
consulted						
Relevant Strategic	All					
Purpose(s)						
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	Key Decision / Non-Key Decision					
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance						
of the meeting.						
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended						
Scriedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended						

SUMMARY

Regular budget monitoring, reporting forms the basis of good governance and best practice in budget management. Councillors and committees should be able to rely on the information provided to assist in sound decision making around budgets and spending plans for the Council.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that the following are noted:

- 1) The current Revenue position of £0.173 million unfavourable variance.
- The current Capital spending of £3.326 million against a revised budget of £21.876 million as set out in Appendix A.
- 3) The current savings delivery is £0.398 million against an annual target of £1.733 million for 2025/26. This is included in the above Revenue position
- 4) The Earmarked Reserves balances of £11.266 million as set out in Appendix B.
- 5) The Ward Budget allocation position to date is 6 approved allocations at £5,450, leaving a balance of £56,550 to be allocated before year end as set out in Appendix C.
- 6) There is an updated procurements position set out in appendix D, with any new items over £200,000 to be included on the forward plan.
- 7) The position on Council Tax and Business Rates.

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- 8) The position on benefits processing.
- 9) The Performance data for the period April to June 2025 (Quarter 1) shown at Appendix F.

The Cabinet is asked to **RECOMMEND** that:

10) That the Balance Sheet Monitoring Position for Q1 is noted – which is the Treasury Monitoring Report and required to be reported to Council.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This Quarter 1 Financial and Performance Monitoring Report provides a comprehensive overview of Bromsgrove District Council's finance and performance for the period April to June 2025. It outlines the Council's revenue and capital positions, savings delivery, procurement pipeline, and progress on key strategic projects.
- 2.2 As of the end of Q1, the Council is forecasting a £0.173 million revenue overspend for the full financial year. This is primarily driven by cost pressures in Community and Housing Services, Environmental Services, Regeneration and Property and Finance and Customer Services, partially offset by significant underspends in Corporate Services and Corporate Financing.
- 2.3 The Council has delivered £0.398 million of its £0.913 million savings target, with further work ongoing to meet the full-year goal. Capital expenditure to date stands at £3.326 million against a revised budget of £21.876 million proposed to support ongoing commitments. This budget includes £4.524m of carry forwards from 2024/25.
- 2.4 Key capital projects include the Levelling Up-funded Windsor Street and Nailers Yard schemes. The Windsor Street scheme is nearing completion of phase one remediation works, and discussions are being held with the Environment Agency regarding any required remediation works under phase two. The Nailers' Yard scheme is progressing. A detailed survey of the culvert has uncovered that there is more work required to deliver the scheme to its full potential and this has led to a projected increase in the culvert element to £1,660,476.71 against a budgeted sum of £220,256; this is due to a clearer picture of the requirement now that the initial works on the culvert have commenced. This was always highlighted as a major project risk because the culvert works were only designed to RIBA stage 3. This has pushed the project over-budget by £165,000 and a supplement estimate has been agreed as an 'Urgent Decision' for £500,000 which includes contingency. The urgent decision was required to avoid having the contractor on site at a cost to the project but not work being carried out on site.
- 2.5 The Council's **collection rates** for Council Tax and Business Rates remain strong, with Q1 performance close to or exceeding national averages. Benefits processing times are

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within expected parameters, despite increased complexity in cases retained by the Council.

- 2.6 The report also includes updates on ward budget allocations, earmarked reserves, and treasury management performance, with no new borrowing undertaken and £3.5 million in short-term investments held at quarter-end.
- 2.7 The Council continues to monitor its financial position closely, with regular engagement between service managers and finance officers to address emerging risks and ensure delivery of strategic priorities.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's draft Revenue and Capital Outturn position for the first quarter of the financial year (April June 2025) and associated performance data. This report presents:
 - The Council's forecast yearly outturn revenue monitoring position for 2025/26 based on data to the end of Quarter 1 including delivery of the savings targets and fees and charges income as set out in the MTFP.
 - The position in respect of balance sheet monitoring as requested by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee including the Treasury Management Report.
 - The spending as of Q1 of Ward Budget Funds.
 - The updated procurement pipeline of Council projects to be delivered over the next 12 months in order to properly resource plan for the delivery of these projects.
 - The Council's performance against the strategic priorities outlined in the Council Plan Addendum, including operational measures to demonstrate how the council is delivering its services to customers is the subject of separate report elsewhere on the agenda.

4. <u>DETAILED PERFORMANCE</u>

Financial Performance

4.1 As part of the monitoring process a detailed review has been undertaken to ensure that issues are considered, and significant savings and cost pressures are addressed. This report sets out, based on the position at the end of Quarter 1, the projected revenue outturn position for the full 2025/26 financial year and explains key variances against budget.

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4.2 The £15.3m full year revenue budget included in the table below is the budget that was approved by Council in February 2025.

	2025-26	2025-26	2025-26	Q1	Full Year	Full Year
	Approved	Revised	Revised Q1	Adjusted	Projected	Projected
Service Description	Budget	Budget	Budget	Spend	Forecast	Variance
Business Transformation and Organisational Development	2,197,136	2,133,071	485,219	488,459	2,164,067	30,996
Community and Housing GF Services	1,471,273	1,455,819	372,622	244,895	1,673,042	217,223
Corporate Services	817,413	1,139,602	-	265,339	1,037,867	-616,735
Environmental Services	4,266,050	4,266,050	-	-1,005,517	4,442,020	
Financial and Customer Services	2,387,557	2,347,370	658,990	802,208	2,540,366	192,996
Legal, Democratic and Elections Services	1,178,898	1,158,315	260,244	309,282	1,196,476	78,161
Planning and Leisure Services	1,248,863	1,199,381	262,734	256,085	1,291,561	92,180
Regeneration & Property	1,101,406	968,988	154,866	165,538	1,099,063	191,076
Regulatory Client	646,139	646,139	161,535	182,091	688,898	42,759
Starting Well	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	15,314,735	15,314,735	2,129,360	1,708,380	16,133,360	404,626
	2025-26	2025-26	2025-26	Q1	Full Year	Full Year
	Approved	Revised	Revised Q1	Adjusted	Projected	Projected
Service Description	Budget	Budget	Budget	Spend	Forecast	Variance
Corporate Financing	-15,314,735	-15,314,735	-3,828,684	-933,027	-15,546,000	-231,265
Grand Total	-15,314,735	-15,314,735	-3,828,684	-933,027	-15,546,000	-231,265
TOTALS	0	0	-1,699,324	775,353	587,360	173,361

Table 1 – Approved and working budget by service area

Budget Variances

- 4.3 The draft position is set out in the above table.
- 4.4 Overall, the Council is currently forecasting a full year revenue overspend of £0.173m at Quarter 1 as explained in the Executive Summary. This position will continue to be reviewed particularly given the impact of the increasing costs linked to inflation and further updates will be provided to Councillors throughout 2025/26. This includes service projections as follows:

Business Transformation £0.031m overspend

4.4.1 Business Transformation & Organisational Development are forecasting an overspend of £0.031m for Apprenticeship Levy due to increased planned training requirements across the Council.

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Community and Housing GF Services £0.217m overspend

4.4.2 Community & Housing Services are forecasting a £0.217m overspend due to £0.101m increased charges from BT and additional equipment in Lifeline Services, £0.142m in additional Bed & Breakfast costs in line with national trends offset by £0.026m other net variations.

Corporate Services £0.617m underspend

4.4.3 Corporate Services is forecasting a £0.617m underspend due to £0.640m on vacancy management and savings efficiency targets offset by £0.023m additional Postage costs.

Environmental Services £0.176m overspend

4.4.4 Environmental Services are forecasting a £0.176m overspend due to £0.041m on Tiger Cat purchase for Cemeteries, £0.100m on Agency Costs in the Vehicle Workshop due to continuing pressures on the team and £0.035m due to other net variations.

Financial and Customer Services £0.193m overspend

4.4.5 Finance & Customer Services are forecasting an overspend of £0.193m due to £0.028m on VAT support from Lavat Consulting on the VAT returns to HMRC, £0.050m to Bruton Knowles for Insurance Property valuations for the Statement of Accounts, £0.012m on General Grants and £0.103m on Agency staff due to cover for vacancies within the Finance Team.

Legal, Democratic and Elections Services £0.078m overspend

4.4.6 Legal, Democratic and Property Services are forecasting a £0.078m overspend due to £0.030m unbudgeted Landlord costs on the Artrix, £0.040m Ward Budget was included in Democratic Services in error which now changes recharges to Redditch Council and £0.008m other net variations.

Planning and Leisure Services £0.092m overspend

4.4.7 Planning and Leisure Services are forecasting a £0.092m overspend due to £0.019m additional staffing costs as a result of increased costs of agency staff, £0.075m underachieved income in Development Control and £0.030m on Consultancy fees for the Play Areas Review offset by £0.032m on small various underspends.

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Regeneration & Property £0.191m overspend

4.4.8 Regeneration & Property are forecasting a £0.191m overspend due to £0.220m shortfall in Parking Income as a result of the introduction of the 2-hour free parking, £0.021m on utility costs and overtime in Public Conveniences and other net variances of £0.008m. This has been offset by a reduction in establishment costs due to a number of posts being funding from the use of additional UK Shared Prosperity Fund Administration Grant income of £0.038m and savings within Property Services of £0.020m due to lower than anticipated staff costs.

Regulatory Client £0.043m overspend

4.4.9 Regulatory Client are forecasting a £0.043m overspend due to £0.039m underachieved income in Taxi Licensing as a result of lower than anticipated licencing volumes. This is a re-occurring year on year pattern. There have also been other net variations of £0.004m.

Corporate Financing £0.231m underspend

4.4.10 Corporate Financing is showing additional income of £0.231m due to £0.170m Grant Income, £0.150m Investment Interest Income, £0.036m savings on Interest Payable offset by £0.125m in underachieved Fees & Charges Income.

Savings Targets

4.4.11 The Council had £1.733m of savings targets in 2025/26. The Council has delivered 0.398m of these savings in Q1. These are shown in the table below:

	2025/26 £m	Adjusted 2025/26 £m	Total 2025/26 £m	Savings YTD	
Service Reviews	(0.405)	0.405	0		Consolidated corporately
Finance Vacancies	(0.100)	0.100	0		Consolidated corporately
Environmental Service Partnerships	(0.050)	0.050	0		Consolidated corporately
Move to all out elections	(0.170)		(0.170)	0	Unlikely to be met
Town Hall	(0.400)		(0.400)	0	Work ongoing
2023/24 Items	(1.125)	0.555	(0.570)	0	
In year corporate target		(0.913)	(0.913)	(0.398)	£0.343m from vacancy management and £0.55 from efficiencies.

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					Expected to be met in
					full.
Directorate savings		(0.250)	(0.250)	In progress	Expected to be met
2025/26 Items	0	(1.163)	(1.163)	(0.398)	
Total Savings	(1.125)	(0.608)	(1.733)	(0.398)	

4.5 Cash Management

Borrowing

• As of the 30th June 2025, there were no short-term borrowings. The Council has no long-term borrowings.

Investments

• On 30th June 2025 there were £3.5m short-term investments held.

Capital Monitoring

- 4.6 A capital programme of £17.352m was approved in the Budget for 2025/26 in February 2025. This has been fully reviewed as part of the MTFP using actual data as at the end of December 2024. The table below and detail in **Appendix A** set out the Capital Programme schemes that are approved for the MTFP time horizon. Additional grants of £4.524m have also been received in year revising the total capital budget for 2025/26 to £21.876m.
- 4.7 Many of these schemes are already in partial delivery in the 2025/26 financial year. By approving this list, the Council also agreed sums not spent in 2024/25 (and 2023/24 by default if schemes originated earlier than 2024/25 as sums have been carried forward through to the 2024/25 MTFS Report) to be carried forward into 2025/26. The table also splits amounts by funding source, Council or third party.

Year	Total Programme	Revised Total	Council Funded	Grant Funded
2024/5	6,376,987	21,267,936	10,996,671	10,271,265
Carry Fwd	14,890,949			
2025/6	17,351,727		8,017,369	9,334,358
2026/7	3,222,841		2,422,841	800,000
2027/8	2,469,459		1,669,459	800,000
2028/9	2,310,531		1,510,531	800,000
2029/30	2,373,749		1,573,749	800,000

4.8 Included in this funding the Council also have the following Grant Funded Schemes which are being delivered in 2024/25:

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- The two Levelling Up schemes Windsor Street (formerly project titled as 'Old Fire Station') and Nailers' Yard (formerly known as 'Market Hall) which are funded via £14.5m of Government Funding, and the Council is funding £1.6m of works. A contribution of £2,425,000 has also been requested from the monies held in trust by Birmingham City Council on behalf of the former Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP)
 - For the Nailers' Yard Scheme:
 - Construction is progressing on site. The steel structures for both buildings are now complete with the precast lift shaft and stairs installed on the commercial building. The next stage will see the installation of rooflight steelwork and complete purlins to the Pavilion building and the reinforcement and concrete to all floors and fire boxing of steelwork which commenced in late June. There is a six-week delay to the programme due to unforeseen ground conditions. The costs for this delay are covered by project contingency and provisional sums so there is no increase to the budget.
 - Arcadis have been appointed as employer's agent and Quantity Surveyor for RIBA Stage 5 of the project.
 - GJS Dillon have been appointed to develop the marketing strategy for the commercial building and will manage letting enquiries. They have received significant interest from potential tenants.
 - For the Windsor Street Scheme
 - o Brownfield Solutions are continuing to undertake ground water monitoring on site. There are six wells in total, with monthly testing taking place. The results have been submitted to the Environment Agency. They will advise the Council if the presence of PFAS/PFOS chemicals (per and polyfluorinated alkyl substances) across the site within the soils and groundwater are at an acceptable level and the site can be redeveloped. If they are not, a further six-month remediation strategy will be undertaken through to January 2026.
 - The access road has been reinstated for the property to the north of the site and the Wendron Centre. No issues have been reported to date by either party.
 - The project is continuing to progress in line with timescales and remains to be on track to be delivered by January 2026. This is due to time saved during phase 2 of the project. By early 2026, the Council will have a clean site that is ready to be redeveloped.
 - Thomas Lister were commissioned appointed to support with the development appraisal that will inform the options paper.
 - Public Realm work is now fully completed and the underspend is approximately £925,000

The Council can claim up to £2.425m from the monies held in trust by Birmingham City Council (BCC) on behalf of the former Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) and an application has now been submitted to BCC. Birmingham City Council have informed all Councils wanting to access

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money from GBSLEP fund in 2025/26 that funds will not be available until the 2026/2027 financial year. Therefore, BDC may have to use short-term borrowing until the funding is available.

- UK Shared Prosperity Schemes totalling £917,878 (although it should be noted that these grants funded schemes are a mix of capital - £300,000 and revenue -£617,878) need to be completely spend by the end of the 2024/5 financial year.
- 4.9 The outturn spend is £3.326m against the revised capital budget totals £21.876m and is detailed in **Appendix A**. It should be noted that as per the budget decision carry forwards of £14.891m will be rolled forward from 2024/25 into 2025/26 to take account of slippage from 2024/25.

Earmarked Reserves

4.10 The updated position, taking account of the now submitted draft accounts for 2024/25, are set out in **Appendix B**. As part of the MTFP all reserves were thoroughly reviewed for their requirement and additional reserves set up as per that report. At the 30 June 2025, based on the present MTFP that was approved by Council on the 19th February, the Council holds £11.266 million of General Fund Reserves.

Ward Budgets

4.11 This report is the quarterly report to show what has been spent to date on Ward budgets. Each Ward Member has £2,000 to spend on Ward Initiatives subject to the rules of the Scheme which were approved by Council. As of the 30th June there have been applications from 6 Members approved totalling £5,450. There are still 25 Members who have not allocated any funding and overall, £56,550 is still to be allocated. This year's funding allocations must be spent by the 31st March. Full detail is set out in **Appendix C.**

Balance Sheet Monitoring Position

- 4.12 There has been the request from Audit Committee that the Council include Balance Sheet Monitoring as part of this report.
- 4.13 This initial balance sheet reporting is set out as the Q1 Treasury Report which is attached as **Appendix D**. This report sets out the Councils debt and borrowing position for Q1 2025/26. Included in this is how the Council is using its working capital as well as measurement of the Councils Prudential Indicators, this appendix will need to be noted and approved that Council note the position.

Procurement Pipeline

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- 4.14 The Procurement pipeline is shown in **Appendix E**. The Council's Procurement Pipeline includes details of contracts expected to be reprocured and new procurement projects expected to be undertaken in the future. Those happening in the next 12 months and over £0.200m will need to be put on the Forward Plan. The pipeline is refreshed quarterly.
 - There are 10 contracts that are over the key decision threshold of £0.200m
 - There are 4 contracts procured by Redditch Borough Council on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council.

Collection Fund

- 4.15 The Council acts as collecting authority for itself, other major preceptors and the parishes for Council Tax. The Council also collects business rates on behalf of central government, the County Council and for itself. The Council's own precept accounts for about 11% of monies collected from Council tax and about 40% of business rates collected after paying government levies, additional tariff to central government and 10% across to Worcestershire County Council.
- 4.16 The Council aims to collect 98.5% of Council receipts (national average is 95.8%) which equates to a total sum of £87.560 million. Performance against this target for this financial year is shown in the table below:

	Target %age (cumulative)	Actual %age (cumulative)	Amount collected (cumulative) £ millions
Quarter 1	28.89	28.80	25.605
Quarter 2			
Quarter 3			
Quarter 4	98.5		

- 4.17 Due to the use of ten monthly collections the percentage for each quarter is not a simple 25%. Government reforms are proposing enforcing a move to monthly collections (in twelfths).
- 4.18 The Council aims to collect 98.0% of business rate receipts (national average is 95.8%) which equates to a total sum of £31.399 million. Performance against this target for this financial year is shown in the table below:

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	Target %age (cumulative)	Actual %age (cumulative)	Amount collected (cumulative)
			£ millions
Quarter 1	25.84	28.34	9.082
Quarter 2			
Quarter 3			
Quarter 4	98.0		

Benefits

4.19 Benefit claim statistics are summarised in the table below:

New claims Average processing time	20 days	Number processed this quarter	95
Changes to claims			
Average processing time	10 days	Number processed this quarter	1215

4.20 Recent changes to benefits has meant that many of the simpler claims have been transferred to DWP, leaving the more complex cases with local authorities – this has impacted on average processing time. DWP expect new claims to be processed within a 30-day timeframe.

Performance

4.21 Corporate Performance Indicators are included as Appendix F to this report.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 These are contained in the main body of the report.

6. <u>Legal Implications</u>

6.1 No Legal implications have been identified.

7. <u>Strategic Purpose Implications</u>

Relevant Strategic Purpose

7.1 The Strategic purposes are included in the Council's corporate plan and guides the Council's approach to budget making ensuring we focus on the issues and what are most important for the borough and our communities. Our Financial monitoring and strategies are integrated within all of our Strategic Purposes.

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Climate Change Implications

7.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan. The Financial monitoring report has implications on climate change, and these will be addressed and reviewed when relevant by climate change officers to ensure the correct procedures have been followed to ensure any impacts on climate change are fully understood.

8. Other Implications

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

8.1 None as a direct result of this report.

Operational Implications

8.2 Managers meet with finance officers to consider the current financial position and to ensure actions are in place to mitigate any overspends.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 Items identified in the Finance and Performance monitoring is included in a number of the Corporate Risks. These are listed below. The mitigations to these risks are set out in the Risk Report, of which the Quarter 1 Report is reported to Audit, Governance and Standards Committee in July:

COR 10 - Decisions made to address financial pressures and implement new projects.

- COR16 Management of Contracts.
- COR17 Resolution of the Approved Budget Position.
- COR19 Adequate Workforce Planning.
- COR20 Financial Position Rectification.
- COR22 Delivery of Levelling Up and UK SPF Initiatives
- COR23 Cost of Living Crisis
- COR25 The new Environment Bill

10. APPENDENCES

Appendix A – Capital Outturn

Appendix B – Reserves Position

Appendix C – Ward Budget Position

Appendix D – Treasury Management Position

Appendix E – Procurement Pipeline

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Appendix A - Capital Outturn

Capital Project	Description		2025/26 Total		25/26 Spend
Project			(Original)	(Incl C/F's)	1
*		•	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	÷	•
	Large Schemes				
	Levelling Up Fund				
200072	- Market Hall		9,228,000	11,555,322	2,790,609
200073	- Ex-Fire Station/Windsor Street		0	-54,247	105,165
	UK Shared Prosperity Fund				
200086	(UKSPF Funding BDC 2024/2025)		918,000	938,000	
200082	CCTV Digital Upgrade (UKSPF)		0	33,668	
200083	Centres Public Realm Improvement Programme (UKSPF)				18,83
	Other Schemes				
200008	Funding for DFGs		1,285,847	1,442,899	234,930
200009	Home Repairs Assistance		50,000	215,602	
200010	Energy Efficiency Installation		0	212,190	
200019	Fleet Replacemnet new line		1,265,000	3,173,318	17,88
200022	Replacement Parking Machines		100,000	94,134	5,00
200030	Wheelie Bin Purchase		120,000	-48,671	48,22
200033	Bus Shelters		18,000	34,345	
200045	Greener Homes		0	-6,125	
200069	Cisco Network Update		34,877	34,877	
200070	Server Replacement		18,500	188,049	67,038

Capital	Description	2025/26 Total	2025/26 Total	25/26 Spend
Project		(Original)	(Incl C/F's)	£
~	•	*	* *	₩
200071	Laptop Refresh	5,000	36,249	10,600
200075	Sanders Park	0	-103,763	24,727
200102	Fleet Replacement cost	15,000	24,400	
200103	Wheely Bin Increases		85,000	
200076	Play Area, POS and Sport improvements at Lickey End Recreation Ground in accordance with the S106 Agreement	0	30,582	
200079	Footpaths	75,000	32,020	
200104	Buildings	100,000	262,426	2,945
200105	Initial Play Audit Requirements	0	451,000	
	Updated Play Audit Requirements (Dec 24)	166,242	166,242	
200106	New ongoing Cyber securty budget	25,000	50,000	
200107	Artrix - Landlord Obligations	20,000	22,414	
	Wild Flower Machinery	0	62,000	
	Food Waste Collection - fund for Vechicles and containers	902,511	902,511	
	Replacement Wheeled Bins	2,200,000	2,200,000	
	Parkside - Requirement for a firewall	9,750	9,750	
	Laptops for new Starters	25,000	25,000	
	Salary Capitalisation	750,000	750,000	
200016	New Finance Enterprise system	20,000	40,000	
		17,351,727	21,876,441	3,325,957

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Appendix B - Earmarked Reserves

		Transfers In	Transfers Out		Transfers In	Transfers Out	
	Balance as at 31 March 2023 £000	2023/24 £000	2023/24 £000	Balance as at 31 March 2024 £000	2024/25 £000	2024/25 £000	Balance as at 31 March 2025 £000
General Fund:							
Building Control Other	7	0	0	7	0	0	7
Building Control Partnerships	82	0	0	82	0	0	82
Commercialism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	321	0	(125)	196	0	0	196
Economic Regeneration	1,348	50	0	1,398	0	0	1,398
Election Services	85	0	0	85	0	0	85
Environmental Services	27	0	0	27	0	0	27
Financial Services	4,705	430	(500)	4,635	89	0	4,724
Housing Schemes	864	0	0	864	0	0	864
ICT/Systems	197	0	0	197	0	0	197
Leisure/Community Safety	115	0	0	115	0	0	115
Local Neighbourhood Partnerships	16	0	0	16	0	0	16
Other	67	0	0	67	14	0	81
Planning & Regeneration	463	0	0	463	136	0	599
Regulatory Services (Partner Share)	85	0	0	85	1	0	86
Shared Services (Severance Costs)	311	0	0	311	0	0	311
Covid-19 (General Covid Grant)	766	0	0	766	0	0	766
Covid-19 (Collection Fund)	1,604	0	0	1,604	0	0	1,604
Shopmobility Donations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Hardship Fund	79	0	0	79	0	0	79
Artrix Holding Trust	17	0	0	17	12	0	29
Total General Fund	11,159	480	(625)	11,014	252	0	11,266

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Appendix C - Ward Budget Spending Q1 - Funds Allocated to 31 July

Councillor Ward Fund Balances – 25/26

Activity	Spend	Balance
		£2,000
Cllr Alan Bailes	0	2,000.00
Cllr Ruth Lambert	0	2,000.00
Cllr Sam Ammar	1,300.00	700.00
Cllr Ester Gray	0	2,000.00
Cllr Peter McDonald	400.00	1,600.00
Cllr Harrison Rone-Clarke	0	2,000.00
Cllr Anita Dale	0	2,000.00
Cllr Webb	2,000.00	0
Cllr Hunter	0	2,000.00
Cllr Rachel Bailes	0	2,000.00
Cllr Sue Baxter	0	2,000.00
Cllr J Clarke	0	2,000.00
Cllr Stephen Colella	0	2,000.00
Cllr J Elledge	0	2,000.00
Cllr Derek Forsythe	0	2,000.00
Cllr D Hopkins	0	2,000.00
Cllr Charlie Hotham	0	2,000.00
Cllr Helen Jones	0	2,000.00
Cllr B Kumar	0	2,000.00
Cllr M Marshall	1,000.00	1,000.00
Cllr Karen May	0	2,000.00
Cllr Bernard McEldowney	500.00	1,500.00

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Activity	Spend	Balance
		£2,000
Cllr D Nicholl	250.00	1,750.00
Cllr Simon Nock	0	2,000.00
Cllr S Peters	0	2,000.00
Cllr J Robinson	0	2,000.00
Cllr S Robinson	0	2,000.00
Cllr J Stanley	0	2,000.00
Cllr Kit Taylor	0	2,000.00
Cllr Peter Whittaker	0	2,000.00
Cllr S Evans	0	2,000.00
Overall Totals	5,450	56,550

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Appendix D - Q1 Treasury Management Position

1. **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to set out a quarterly update on the Council's Capital and Treasury Management Strategies, including all prudential indicators.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet are asked to:

- Note the Council's Treasury performance for Q1 of the financial year 25/26.
- Note the position in relation to the Council's Prudential indicators.

3. BACKGROUND

Introduction

- 3.1 The Authority has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve, as a minimum, treasury management semi-annual and annual outturn reports.
- 3.2 This quarterly report provides an additional update and includes the requirement in the 2021 Code of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The non-treasury prudential indicators are incorporated in the Authority's normal quarterly revenue report.

External Context

- 3.3 **Economic background:** The quarter started to significant financial market volatility as US President Donald Trump announced a wide range of 'reciprocal' trade tariffs in early April, causing equity markets to decline sharply which was subsequently followed by bond markets as investors were increasingly concerned about US fiscal policy. As the UK was included in these increased tariffs, equity and bond markets here were similarly affected by the uncertainty and investor concerns.
- 3.4 President Trump subsequently implemented a 90-day pause on most of the tariffs previously announced, which has been generally positive for both equity and bond markets since, but heighted uncertainty and volatility remained a feature over the period.
- 3.5 UK headline consumer price inflation (CPI) increased over the quarter, rising from an annual rate of 2.6% in March to 3.4% in May, well above the Bank of England's 2% target. The core measure of inflation also increased, from 3.4% to 3.5% over the same period. May's inflation figures were generally lower than in the previous month, however, when

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CPI was 3.5% and core CPI 3.8%. Services inflation was 4.7% in May, a decline from 5.4% in the previous month.

- 3.6 Data released during the period showed the UK economy expanded by 0.7% in the first quarter of the calendar year, following three previous quarters of weaker growth. However, monthly GDP data showed a contraction of 0.3% in April, suggesting growth in the second quarter of the calendar year is unlikely to be as strong as the first.
- 3.7 Labour market data appeared to show a softening in employment conditions as weaker earnings growth was reported for the period February to April 2025, in what would no doubt be welcome news to Bank of England (BoE) policymakers. Regular earnings (excluding bonuses) was 5.2% 3mth/yoy while total earnings was 5.3%. Both the employment and unemployment rates increased, while the economic inactivity rate and number of vacancies fell.
- 3.8 Having started the financial year at 4.5%, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) cut Bank Rate to 4.25% in May. The 5-4 vote was split with the majority wanting a 25bps cut, two members voting to hold rates at 4.5% and two voting for a 50bps reduction. At the June MPC meeting, the committee voted by a majority of 6-3 to keep rates on hold. The three dissenters wanted an immediate reduction to 4%. This dovish tilt by the Committee is expected to continue and financial market expectations are that the next cut will be in August, in line with the publication of the next quarterly Monetary Policy Report (MPR).
- 3.9 The May version of the MPR highlighted the BoE's view that disinflation in domestic inflation and wage pressures were generally continuing and that a small margin of excess supply had opened in the UK economy, which would help inflation to fall to the Bank's 2% over the medium term. While near-term GDP growth was predicted to be higher than previously forecast in the second quarter of calendar 2025, growth in the same period the following year was trimmed back, partly due to ongoing global trade developments.
- 3.10 Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, maintained its central view that Bank Rate would continue to fall, and that the BoE would focus more on weak GDP growth rather than stickier and above-target inflation. Two more cuts to Bank Rate are expected during 2025, taking the main policy rate to 3.75%, however the balance of risks is deemed to be to the downside as weak consumer sentiment and business confidence and investment impact economic growth.
- 3.11 Despite the uncertainty around US trade policy and repeated calls for action from the US President, the US Federal Reserve held interest rates steady the period, maintaining the Fed Funds Rate at 4.25%-4.50%. The decision in June was the fourth consecutive month where no changes were made to the main interest rate and came despite forecasts from

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Fed policymakers that compared to a few months ago they now expected lower growth, higher unemployment and higher inflation.

- 3.12 The European Central Bank cut rates in June, reducing its main refinancing rate from 2.25% to 2.0%, and representing the eighth cut in just over a year. ECB noted heightened uncertainty in the near-term from trade and that stronger economic growth in the first quarter of the calendar may weaken. Inflation in the region rose to 2.0% in June, up from an eight-month low of 1.9% in the previous month but in line with the ECB's target. Inflation is expected to stay broadly around the 2% target over the next year or so.
- 3.13 Financial markets: After the sharp declines seen early in the quarter, sentiment in financial markets showed signs of improvement during the period, but bond and equity markets remained volatile. Early in the period bond yields fell, but then uncertainty from the impact of US trade policy caused bonds to sell-off but from the middle of May onwards, yields have steadily declined, but volatility continues. Equity markets sold off sharply in April but have seen gained back most of the previous declines, with investors seemingly remaining bullish in the face of ongoing uncertainty.
- 3.14 Over the quarter, the 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started at 4.65% and ended at 4.49% having hit 4.82% early in April and falling to 4.45% by the end of the same month. While the 20-year gilt started at 5.18%, fell to 5.02% a few days later before jumping to 5.31% within a week, and then ending the period at 5.16%. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.31% over the quarter to 30th June.
- 3.15 **Credit review:** Arlingclose maintained its advised recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on the majority of the banks on its counterparty list at 6 months. The other banks remain on 100 days.
- 3.16 During the quarter, Fitch upgraded NatWest Group and related entities to AA- from A+ due to the generally stronger business profile. Fitch also placed Clydesdale Bank's long-term A- rating on Rating Watch Positive
- 3.17 Moody's downgraded the long-term rating on the United States sovereign to Aa1 in May and also affirmed OP Corporate's rating at Aa3.
- 3.18 Credit default swap prices on UK banks spiked in early April following the US trade tariff announcements but have since generally trended downwards and ended the quarter at levels broadly in line with those in the first quarter of the calendar year and throughout most of 2024.
- 3.19 European banks' CDS prices followed a fairly similar pattern, albeit some German banks are modestly higher compared to the previous quarter. Trade tensions between Canada and the US caused Canadian bank CDS prices to rise over the quarter and remain elevated

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compared to earlier in 2025 and in 2024, while Singaporean and Australian lenders CDS rose initially in April but have since trended downwards, albeit are modestly higher than in previous recent periods.

- 3.20 Overall, at the end of the period CDS prices for all banks on Arlingclose's counterparty list remained within limits deemed satisfactory for maintaining credit advice at current durations.
- 3.21 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.

Local Context

3.22 On 31st March 2025, the Authority had £16.89m net borrowing arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while balance sheet resources are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	31.3.25	31.3.26
	Actual	Forecast
	£m	£m
General Fund CFR	31.26	33.94
Total CFR	31.26	33.94
Less: External borrowing**	0	-10.00
Internal borrowing	31.26	23.94
Less: Usable reserves	-11.27	-11.72
Less: Working capital	-3.10	-3.10
Net borrowing	16.89	9.12

^{*} Finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

^{**} shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

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3.23 The treasury management position at 30th June and the change over the quarter is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	31.3.25 Balance £m	Movement £m	30.6.25 Balance £m	30.6.25 Rate %
Long-term borrowing				
Short-term borrowing	0	0	0	
Total borrowing	0	0	0	
Short-term investments Cash and cash equivalents	4.2	-0.7	3.5	
Total investments	4.2	-0.7	3.5	
Net investments	4.2	-0.7	3.5	

Borrowing Strategy and Activity

- 3.24 As outlined in the treasury strategy, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately risk balance between securing lower 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. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. At the present time short term interest rates are higher than long term interest rates.
- 3.25 Policy interest rates have risen substantially since 2021 although they have largely plateaued over the last year. Over the last quarter gilt yields have risen slightly overall, having had a number of peaks and troughs. There has been downward pressure from lower inflation figures, but also upward pressure from unexpectantly positive economic data. Data from the US continues to impact global markets including UK gilt yields.
- 3.26 The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 5.38% at the beginning of the period and 5.27% at the end. The lowest available 10-year maturity rate was 5.17% and the highest was 5.56%. Rates for 20-year maturity loans ranged from 5.71% to 6.16% during the period, and 50-year maturity loans from 5.46% to 5.97%. The cost of short-term

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borrowing from other local authorities has been similar to Base Rate during the period at 4.0% to 4.5%.

- 3.27 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. The Authority has no new plans to borrow to invest primarily for financial return.
- 3.28 **Loans Portfolio:** At 30th June the Authority held no loans, with no movement from 31st March 2025 as per table 3 below, as part of its strategy for funding previous and current years' capital programmes.

Table 3: Borrowing Position

	31.3.25 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	30.6.25 Balance £m
Public Works Loan Board			
Banks (LOBO)			
Banks (fixed term)			
Local authorities (long-term)			
Local authorities (short-term)	0	0	0
Total borrowing	0	0	0

Treasury Investment Activity

3.29 The CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (revised in 2021) defines treasury management investments as investments that arise from the organisation'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.

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3.30 The Authority does not hold any invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the period, the Authority's investment balances ranged between £1.0 and £13.2 million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	31.3.25 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.6.25 Balance £m	31.6.25 Income Return %	31.6.25 Weighted Average Maturity days
Banks & building societies (unsecured) Banks & building societies (secured deposits)					
Covered bonds (secured) Government Local authorities and other govt entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Corporate bonds and loans Money Market Funds	4.2	-0.7	3.5	3.2%	29
Total investments	4.2	-0.7	3.5		

- 3.31 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.
- 3.32 As demonstrated by the liability benchmark in this report, the Authority expects to be a long-term investor and treasury investments therefore include both short-term low risk instruments to manage day-to-day cash flows and longer-term instruments where limited additional risk is accepted in return for higher investment income to support local public

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services.

3.33 Bank Rate remained at 4.25% through the quarter with short term interest rates largely being around this level. The rates on DMADF deposits have been constant at 4.21%.

Non-Treasury Investments

- 3.34 The definition of investments in the Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. 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).
- 3.35 Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Welsh Government also includes within the definition of investments all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.

Treasury Performance

3.36 The Authority measures the financial performance of its treasury management activities both in terms of its impact on the revenue budget and its relationship to benchmark interest rates, as shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Performance

	Actual	Budget	Over/	Actual	Benchmark	Over/
	£m	£m	under	%	%	under
Total borrowing	0.0	0.0	0.0			
PFI and Finance leases	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Total debt	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Total treasury investments	3.5	0.0	3.5			
				n/a	n/a	n/a

MRP Regulations

3.37 On 10th April 2024 amended legislation and revised statutory guidance were published on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The majority of the changes take effect from the

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2025/26 financial year, although there is a requirement that for capital loans given on or after 7th May 2024 sufficient MRP must be charged so that the outstanding Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) in respect of the loan is no higher than the principal outstanding less the Expected Credit Loss (ECL) charge for that loan.

3.38 The regulations also require that local authorities cannot exclude any amount of their CFR from their MRP calculation unless by an exception set out in law. Capital receipts cannot be used to directly replace, in whole or part, the prudent charge to revenue for MRP (there are specific exceptions for capital loans and leased assets).

Compliance

3.39 The Director of Resources and Section 151 officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the quarter complied fully with the principles in the Treasury Management Code and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy. Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in table 6 below.

Table 6: Investment Limits

	2025/26 Maximum	30.6.25 Actual	2025/26 Limit	Complied? Yes/No
Any single organisation, except the UK Government	£4m each			
UK Central Government	Unlimited			
Unsecured investments with banks and building societies	£2.5m in total			
Loans to unrated corporates	£1m in total			
Money Market Funds	£20m in total	3.5m		Yes
Foreign countries	£5m per country			
Real Estate Investment Trusts	£2.5m in total			

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3.40 Compliance with the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for external debt is demonstrated in table 7 below.

Table 7: Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

	Q1 2025/26 Maximum	30.6.25 Actual	2025/26 Operational Boundary	2025/26 Authorised Limit	Complied? Yes/No
Borrowing	0m	0m	55,000	60,000	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	Nil	Nil	1,000	1,000	Yes
Total debt	0m	0m	56,000	61,000	

3.41 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

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

3.42 As required by the 2021 CIPFA Treasury Management Code, the Authority monitors and measures the following treasury management prudential indicators.

Liability Benchmark

3.43 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 of £2m required to manage day-to-day cash flow

	31.3.25	31.3.26	31.3.27	31.3.28
	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Loans CFR	31.26	34.54	36.26	38.12
Less: Usable Reserves	-11.27	-11.14	-10.42	-9.86
Less: Working Capital	-3.10	-3.10	-3.10	-3.10
Net loans requirement	16.89	20.30	22.74	25.16

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Plus: Liquidity allowance	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
Liability benchmark	17.09	20.50	22.94	25.36
Existing borrowing	0	6.20	11.10	12.95

3.44 Following on from the medium-term forecast above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes capital expenditure funded by borrowing of £12.95m, minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on a 40-year asset life and income, expenditure and reserves all increasing by inflation of 2.0% p.a. This is shown in the chart below together with the maturity profile of the Authority's existing borrowing. Presently borrowing has been delivered through the use of internal resources and the Council has no long-term borrowing.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing

3.45 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:

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	30.6.25 Actual	Complied?
Under 12 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
12 months and within 24 months	50%	0%	0%	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes

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5 years and within 10 years	50%	0%	0%	Yes
10 years and above	100%	0%	0%	Yes

3.46 Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

Long-term Treasury Management Investments

3.47 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 prudential limits on the long-term treasury management limits are:

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	No fixed date
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£0.5m	£0.5m	£0.5m	£0.5m
Actual principal invested beyond year end	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Complied?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

3.48 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.

Additional indicators

Security:

3.49 The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating 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.

	2025/26 Target	30.6.25 Actual	Complied?
Portfolio average credit rating	Α	UK Govt	Yes

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Liquidity:

3.50 The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period, without additional borrowing.

	30.6.25 Actual	2025/26 Target	Complied?
Total cash available within 3 months	Nil	Nil	Yes
Total sum borrowed in past 3 months without prior notice	Nil	Nil	Yes

Interest Rate Exposures:

3.51 This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk.

Interest rate risk indicator	2025/26 Target	30.6.25 Actual	Complied?
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	500,000	0	Yes

3.52 For context, the changes in interest rates during the quarter were:

	01/04/25	30/06/25
Bank Rate	4.50%	4.25%
1-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.82%	4.50%
5-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	4.94%	4.70%
10-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.38%	5.27%
20-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.88%	5.88%
50-year PWLB certainty rate, maturity loans	5.63%	5.71%

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3.53 The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investment will be replaced at new market rates.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

4.1 A number of statutes governing the provision of services covered by this report contain express powers or duties to charge for services. Where an express power to charge does not exist, the Council has the power under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to charge where the activity is incidental or conducive to or calculated to facilitate the Councils statutory function.

Service / Operational Implications

4.2 Monitoring is undertaken to ensure that income targets are achieved, with Treasury Management activities taking place on a daily basis.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

4.3 The only impact of treasury transactions is in respect of ethical investment linked to the Councils investment counterparties. Presently the Council has a limited counterparty list based on financial risk to the Authority.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 There is always significant risk in relation to treasury transactions, this is why Councils appoint Treasury advisors, which in the case of Bromsgrove is Arlingclose. In addition, there is the requirement in this area to provide an Annual Strategy report containing indicators/limits that must be met, a quarterly update and closure report all of which must be reported to full Council.

6. APPENDICES

None

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

MTFP 2025/26 – February 2025 which contains this year's Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and MRP Policy.

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AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Appendix E - Procurement Pipeline

Title	Council	Contract Value
Fleet Replacement	Bromsgrove	£2,846,000.00
Wheeled Bin Purchase, Delivery, and Collection for Recycling of existing wheeled bins.	Bromsgrove	£2,200,000.00
Refuse and Recyling products	Bromsgrove	£700,000.00
Replacement Parking Machines	Bromsgrove	£517,000.00
Microsoft Licenses	Bromsgrove	£483,000.00
PROVIDE Kennelling of Dogs	Bromsgrove	£450,000.00
Planning/GIS/Gazetteer	Bromsgrove	£400,000.00
Supply of HVO fuel	Bromsgrove	£300,000.00
Air Quality Analysers	Bromsgrove	£250,000.00
Data Access Services	Bromsgrove	£200,000.00
Domestic Food Waste Collection Contract	Joint	£23,000,000.00
Hybrid Mail Solution - sending letters	Joint	£2,500,000.00
Corporate Building Electrical contract	Joint	£2,500,000.00
Food Caddy Purchase & Delivery	Joint	£1,300,000.00
Public Space CCTV Maintenance	Joint	£400,000.00
Fire alarm, Extinguisher contract service contract	Joint	£380,000.00
Lifeline Call handling	Joint	£200,000.00

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