MEETING:	**PENSIONS COMMITTEE**
DATE:	1**7 OCTOBER 2014**
TITLE:	**TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2013/14**
PURPOSE:	**CIPFA's Code of Practice requires that a report be produced on the results of the Council's actual Treasury Management on behalf of the Pension Fund.**
RECOMMENDATION:	**RECEIVE THE REPORT FOR INFORMATION**
AUTHOR:	**CAROLINE ROBERTS, INVESTMENT MANAGER**

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1. Introduction and Background

CIPFA's revised Code of Practice on Treasury Management was adopted by the Council on 1st March 2011 and the Council fully complies with its requirements. The Code requires that I report on the results of the Council's actual treasury management in the previous financial year against expectations.

In accordance with the Welsh Assembly Government's Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which requires an authority to produce an Annual Investment Strategy, it was considered best practice for the Gwynedd Pension Fund (the "Fund") to adopt Gwynedd Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2013/14, as amended for the purpose of the Pension Fund. The Pensions Committee approved the TMSS at its meeting on 22 March 2013. As a result, I am required to report on the results of the actual treasury management in 2013/14 against expectations.

2. Investment Activity

The Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG's) revised Investment Guidance came into effect on 1st April 2010 and reiterated the need to focus on security and liquidity, rather than yield. It also recommended that strategies include details of assessing credit risk, reasons for borrowing in advance of need and the use of treasury advisers.

Pension Fund Balances	Balance on 31/03/2013 £m	Balance on 31/03/2014 £m
Balances	7.4	10.7

As requested by the Pensions Committee on 22 March 2013, the pension fund's money was pooled with the Council's general cashflow. As agreed at the Pensions Committee on 17 March 2014 this arrangement continues in 2014/15. Currently interest rates are very low but there is no reason to change this decision.

The table below shows a summary of where this pooled money was invested during 2013/14.

Investments	Balance on 01/04/2013 £'000	Investments Made £'000	Maturities/ Investments Sold £'000	Balance on 31/03/2014 £'000	Avg Rate %
Short Term Investments	35,629	208,200	(216,746)	27,083	0.63
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	**35,629**	**208,200**	**(216,746)**	**27,083**	**0.63**
Increase/ (Decrease) in Investments £m				(8,546)	

Security of capital remained the Authority's main investment objective. This was maintained by following the Authority's counterparty policy as set out in its Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2013/14 which defined "high credit quality" organisations as those having a long-term credit rating of A- or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher.

Investments with banks and building societies included call accounts, fixed-rate term deposits and certificates of deposit. The maximum duration of these investments was 12 months in line with the prevailing credit outlook during the year as well as market conditions.

Credit developments and credit risk management

The Authority assessed and monitored counterparty credit quality with reference to credit ratings; credit default swaps; GDP of the country in which the institution operates; the country's net debt as a percentage of GDP and share price. The minimum long-term counterparty credit rating determined by the Authority for the 2013/14 treasury strategy was A- across rating agencies Fitch, S&P and Moody's.

The debt crisis in Cyprus was resolved by its government enforcing a 'haircut' on unsecured investments and bank deposits over €100,000. This resolution mechanism, in stark contrast to the bail-outs during the 2008/2009 financial crisis, sent shockwaves through Europe but allowed banking regulators to progress reform which would in future force losses on investors through a 'bail-in' before taxpayers were asked to support failing banks.

The Financial Services (Banking Reform) Act 2013 gained Royal Assent in December, legislating for the separation of retail and investment banks and for the introduction of mandatory bail-in in the UK to wind up or restructure failing financial institutions. EU finance ministers agreed further steps towards banking union, and the Single Resolution Mechanism (SRM) for resolving problems with troubled large banks which will shift the burden of future restructurings/rescues to the institution's shareholders, bondholders and unsecured investors.

Proposals were also announced for EU regulatory reforms to Money Market Funds which may result in these funds moving to a VNAV (variable net asset value) basis and losing their 'triple-A' credit rating wrapper in the future.

The material changes to UK banks' creditworthiness were (a) the strong progress made by the Lloyds Banking Group in strengthening its balance sheet, profitability and funding positions and the government reducing its shareholding in the Group to under 25%, (b) the announcement by Royal Bank of Scotland of the creation of an internal bad bank to house its riskiest assets (this amounted to a material extension of RBS' long-running restructuring, further delaying the bank's return to profitability) and (c) substantial losses at Co-op Bank which forced the bank to undertake a liability management exercise to raise further capital and a debt restructure which entailed junior bondholders being bailed-in as part of the restructuring.

In July Moody's placed the A3 long-term ratings of Royal Bank of Scotland and NatWest Bank and the D+ standalone financial strength rating of RBS on review for downgrade amid concerns about the impact of any potential breakup of the bank on creditors. As a precautionary measure the Authority reduced its duration to overnight for new investments with the bank(s). In March Moody's downgraded the long-term ratings of both banks to Baa1. As this rating is below the Authority's minimum credit criterion of A-, the banks were withdrawn from the counterparty list for further investment.

The Co-op's long-term ratings were downgraded by Moody's and Fitch to Caa1 and B respectively, both sub-investment grade ratings. The Co-op Bank's capital raising plans to plug a capital shortfall include a contribution from the Co-op Group which is committed to injecting £313m in 2014 of which £50m has been paid so far. However, in order to cover future expected losses and to meet the Prudential Regulation Authority's capital targets, a further £400m is being sought from shareholders, of which Co-operative Group's share is approximately £120m. Given the Co-op Group's own financial position, payment of these sums is by no means certain, leaving the bank with a precarious capital position.

The Authority's counterparty credit quality has weakened as demonstrated by the Credit Score Analysis summarised below. The table in Appendix 3 explains the credit score.

Credit Score Analysis 2013/14

Date	Value Weighted Average Credit Risk Score	Value Weighted Average Credit Rating	Time Weighted Average Credit Risk Score	Time Weighted Average Credit Rating	Average Life (days)
31/03/2013	5.17	A+	4.97	A+	81
30/06/2013	5.18	A+	5.30	A+	42
30/09/2013	5.44	A+	4.66	A+	68
31/12/2013	5.72	A	5.55	A	110
31/03/2014	5.69	A	5.80	A	102

Liquidity Management

In keeping with the Welsh Government Guidance on Investments, the Authority maintained a sufficient level of liquidity, averaging £63.8m through the use of Money Market Funds, overnight deposits and call accounts. The Authority uses cash flow forecasting to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed.

Yield

The UK Bank Rate was maintained at 0.5% through the year. Short term money market rates also remained at very low levels which continued to have a significant impact on investment income. The average 3-month LIBID rate during 2013/14 was 0.45%, the 6-month LIBID rate averaged 0.53% and the 1-year LIBID rate averaged 0.78%. The low rates of return on the Authority's short-dated money market investments reflect prevailing market conditions and the Authority's objective of optimising returns commensurate with the principles of security and liquidity.

The funds' performance and continued suitability in meeting the Authority's investment objectives are monitored regularly.

The Authority's budgeted investment income for the year had been estimated at £0.56m. The average cash balances representing the Authority's reserves, working balances etc. were £63.8m during the period and interest earned was £0.40m.

Update on Investment with Heritable Bank

The authority has now recovered 94% of its investments in Heritable Bank. It is likely that further distributions will be received, although the administrators have not made any further estimate of final recoveries yet.

CIPFA issued further guidance on the accounting treatment surrounding these transactions in September 2013 when LAAP 82 (update 8) was issued. CIPFA has no plans to issue any additional updates.

4. Recommendation

The Pensions Committee is asked to receive the report for information on investment of the Fund's cash, pooled with the Council's cash, in 2013/14.

APPENDIX

Credit Score Analysis

Scoring:

Long-Term Credit Rating	**Score**
AAA	1
AA+	2
AA	3
AA-	4
A+	5
A	6
A-	7
BBB+	8
BBB	9
BBB-	10
Not rated	11
BB	12
CCC	13
C	14
D	15

The value weighted average reflects the credit quality of investments according to the size of the deposit. The time weighted average reflects the credit quality of investments according to the maturity of the deposit

The Council aimed to achieve a score of 7 or lower, to reflect the Council's overriding priority of security of monies invested and the minimum credit rating of threshold of A- for investment counterparties.