

APPENDIX B - INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND OUTTURN 2023/24

Investment Strategy 2023/24

When the Treasury Strategy was approved in March 2023, our treasury advisor had predicted that there would be further Bank rate increases during 2023/24 due to the uncertainty around the inflation rate. Although it was anticipated that the bank rate may reduce later in the year depending on the economic conditions. The below forecast table was included in the Treasury Strategy report 2023/24.

UK Interest Rate Forecast

Bank Rate													
	NOW	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	3.50%	4.25%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.00%	3.75%	3.50%	3.25%	3.00%	2.75%	2.50%	2.50%
Capital Economics	3.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.25%	4.00%	3.50%	3.00%	-	-	-	-
5yr PWLB Rate													
	NOW	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	4.09%	4.20%	4.20%	4.10%	4.00%	3.90%	3.80%	3.60%	3.50%	3.40%	3.30%	3.20%	3.10%
Capital Economics	4.09%	4.00%	3.80%	3.70%	3.50%	3.50%	3.40%	3.30%	3.30%	-	-	-	-
10yr PWLB Rate													
	NOW	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	4.21%	4.40%	4.40%	4.30%	4.10%	4.00%	3.90%	3.80%	3.60%	3.50%	3.40%	3.30%	3.30%
Capital Economics	4.21%	4.00%	3.80%	3.70%	3.60%	3.50%	3.40%	3.40%	3.30%	-	-	-	-
25yr PWLB Rate													
	NOW	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	4.55%	4.60%	4.60%	4.50%	4.40%	4.20%	4.10%	4.00%	3.90%	3.70%	3.60%	3.50%	3.50%
Capital Economics	4.55%	4.40%	4.20%	4.00%	3.80%	3.80%	3.70%	3.60%	3.60%	-	-	-	-
50yr PWLB Rate													
	NOW	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	4.22%	4.30%	4.30%	4.20%	4.10%	3.90%	3.80%	3.70%	3.60%	3.50%	3.30%	3.20%	3.20%
Capital Economics	4.22%	4.10%	4.00%	3.90%	3.80%	3.80%	3.70%	3.60%	3.60%	-	-	-	-

Please note – The current PWLB rates and forecast shown above have taken into account the 20 basis point certainty rate reduction from the new Standard Loan rate of 100bps over Gilts effective as of the 26th November 2020.

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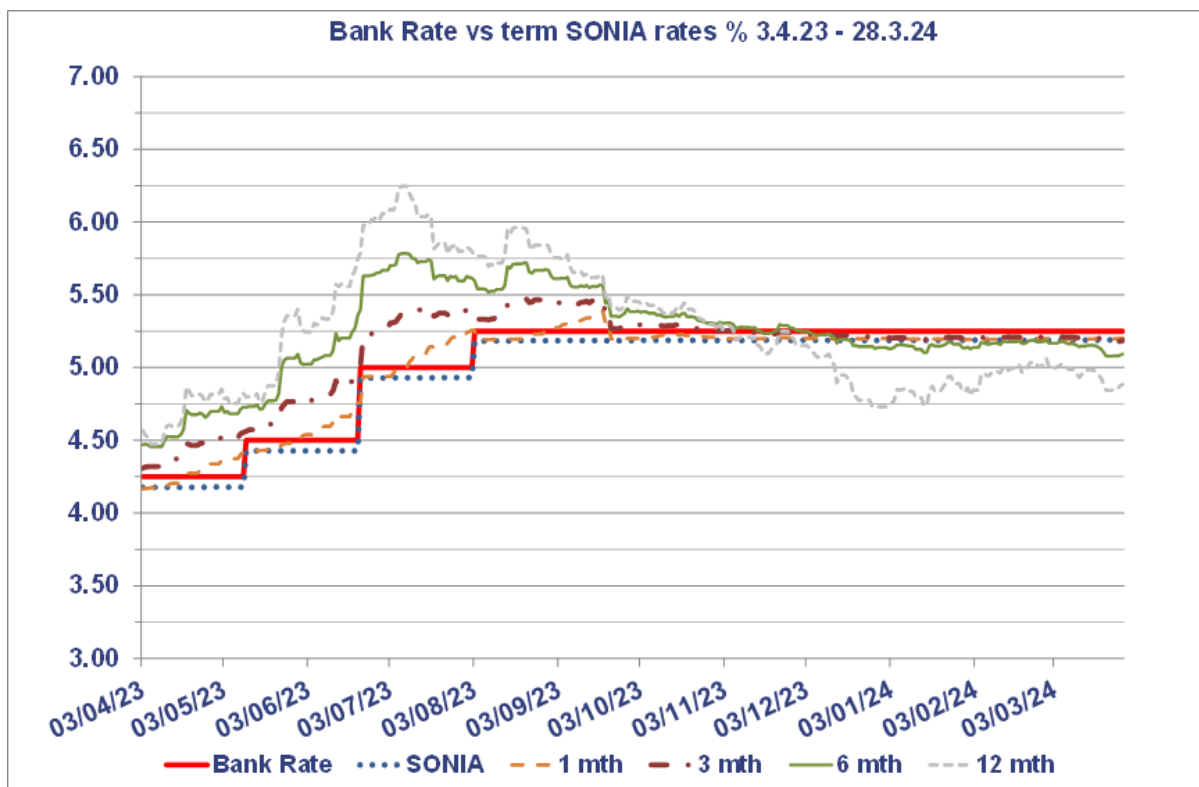
In 2023/24 investment of any surplus cash continued to be managed by the finance team. The investment priorities are the security of capital and the liquidity of its investments. The Council also aims to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. Investments are made in line with the Council's policy on creditworthiness which was approved in the Annual Investment Strategy.

Investment Outturn 2023/24

Investment returns picked up throughout the course of 2023/24 as central banks, including the Bank of England, continued to respond to inflationary pressures that were not transitory, and realised that tighter monetary policy was called for.

Starting April at 4.25%, Bank Rate moved up in stepped increases of either 0.25% or 0.5%, reaching 5.25% by August. By the end of the financial year, no further increases were anticipated. Indeed, the market is pricing in a first cut in Bank Rate in either June or August 2024.

The upward sloping yield curve that prevailed throughout 2023/24 meant that local authorities continued to be faced with the challenge of proactive investment of surplus cash, and this emphasised the need for a detailed working knowledge of cashflow projections so that the appropriate balance between maintaining cash for liquidity purposes, and “laddering” deposits on a rolling basis to lock in the increase in investment rates as duration was extended, became an on-going feature of the investment landscape. Movements in short term rates through the year are shown in the graph below. (NB - ‘SONIA’ is the ‘sterling overnight index average’ - a benchmark measure derived retrospectively from the actual overnight rates used for a selection of key financial institutions. The SONIA replaces the LIBOR or ‘London Interbank Offer Rate’ benchmark which was prospective and proved vulnerable to manipulation.)



At 31 March 2024 the allocation of the cash portfolio was as follows:

Maturity Date	£m
Under 1 month	36.4
1-3 months	0

3-6 months	0
6-9 months	0
9-12 months	0
TOTAL	36.4

The average return on cash investments for the internal treasury team during the year was a return of 1.81%. Recognising the need to manage short term cash flow requirements, the target for the internal team is the 3 Month SONIA rate (1.78%). Therefore the internal treasury team have outperformed the benchmark by 0.03%.