

MERSEYSIDE PENSION FUND TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Merseyside Pension Fund adopts the key principles of 'CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice' (the Code), as described in Section 4 of that Code.
- 1.2 Accordingly, the Fund will create and maintain, as the cornerstones for effective treasury management:
 - This treasury management policy statement stating the policies, objectives and approach to risk management of its treasury management activities
 - Suitable treasury management practices (TMPs), setting out the manner in which this organisation will seek to achieve these policies and objectives, and prescribing how it will manage and control these activities.

2 DELEGATION

- 2.1 Pensions Committee will receive reports on its treasury management policies, practices and activities including an annual strategy and plan in advance of each financial year and an annual report after its close. The Investment Monitoring Working Party (IMWP) will receive interim reports on treasury management performance as required.
- 2.2 Pensions Committee is responsible for the implementation and regular monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices and will delegate execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Director of Pensions who will act in accordance with this policy statement, TMPs and CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.
- 2.3 The IMWP is responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy, policies and performance.

3 DEFINITION

- 3.1 Treasury management activities are defined as: the management of the Fund's cash flows, its banking, money market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.
- 3.2 The Fund regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on the risk implications for the Fund.

- 3.3 The Fund acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving value for money in treasury management and to employing suitable performance measurement techniques within the context of effective risk management.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (TMPs)

4 TMP 1 Risk Management

- 4.1 The Fund regards a key objective of its treasury management activities to be the security of the principal of the sums it invests. Accordingly, it will ensure that robust due diligence procedures cover all external investments.
- 4.2 The Director of Pensions will design, implement and monitor all arrangements for the identification, management and control of treasury management risk and will report annually on the adequacy/suitability thereof, and will report, as a matter of urgency, the circumstances of any actual or likely difficulty in achieving the Fund's objectives.
- 4.3 The Fund will ensure that its counterparty lists and limits reflect a prudent attitude towards organisations with whom funds may be deposited, and will limit its investment activities to the instruments, methods and techniques referred to in TMP 4 and listed in the schedule (4.1, 4.2) to this document. It also recognises the need to have, and will therefore maintain, a formal counterparty policy in respect of those organisations with whom it may enter into financing arrangements.
- 4.4 The Fund will ensure that it has adequate though not excessive cash resources to enable it at all times to have the level of funds available to it, which are necessary for the achievement of its business objectives.
- 4.5 The Fund will manage its exposure to interest rates with a view to securing its interest revenue as far as is possible within cash flow constraints and by the prudent use of permissible instruments.
- 4.6 The Fund will achieve these objectives by the prudent use of its approved investment instruments, methods and techniques, primarily to create stability and certainty of costs and revenues, but at the same time retaining a sufficient degree of flexibility to take advantage of unexpected, potentially advantageous changes in the level and structure of interest rates. The above are subject at all times to the consideration and, if required, approval of any policy or budgetary implications.
- 4.7 It will manage its exposure to fluctuations in exchange rates so as to minimise any detrimental impact.
- 4.8 The Fund will keep under review the sensitivity of its treasury activities to inflation and will seek to manage the risk accordingly in the context of the whole Fund's inflation exposures.
- 4.9 The Fund will ensure that all of its treasury management activities comply with its statutory powers and regulatory requirements. It will demonstrate such compliance, if required to do so, to all parties with whom it deals in such activities. In framing its

counterparty list, it will ensure that there is evidence of counterparties' powers, authority and compliance in respect of the transactions they may effect with the organisation, particularly with regard to duty of care and fees charged.

- 4.10 The Fund recognises that future legislative or regulatory changes may impact on its treasury management activities and so far as it is reasonably able to do so will seek to minimise the risk of these impacting adversely on the organisation.
- 4.11 The Fund will ensure that it has identified the circumstances, which may expose it to the risk of loss through fraud, error, corruption or other eventualities in its treasury management dealings. Accordingly, it will employ suitable systems and procedures, and will maintain effective contingency management arrangements, to these ends.
- 4.12 The Fund will seek to ensure that its stated treasury management policies and objectives will not be compromised by adverse market fluctuations in the value of the principal sums it invests and will accordingly seek to protect itself from the effects of such fluctuations.

5 TMP 2 Performance Measurement

- 5.1 The Fund is committed to the pursuit of value for money in its treasury management activities. Accordingly, the treasury management will be the subject of ongoing analysis of the value it adds. It will be the subject of regular examinations of alternative methods of service delivery and the scope for other potential improvements. The performance of the treasury management function will be measured using the criteria set out in the schedule (2.1) to this document.

6 TMP 3 Decision Making and Analysis

- 6.1 The Fund will maintain full records of its treasury management decisions, and of the processes and practices applied in reaching these decisions, both for the purposes of learning from the past, and for demonstrating that reasonable steps were taken to ensure that issues relevant to those decisions were taken into account at the time. The issues to be addressed and processes and practices to be pursued in reaching decisions are detailed in the schedule (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4) to this document.

7 TMP 4 Approved Instruments, Methods and Techniques

- 7.1 The Fund will undertake its treasury management activities by employing only those instruments, methods and techniques detailed in the schedule (4.1, 4.2) to this document.

8 TMP 5 Organisation, Clarity and Segregation of Responsibilities, and Dealing Arrangements

- 8.1 The Fund considers it essential for the purposes of effective control and monitoring of its treasury management activities, for the reduction of the risk of fraud or error, and for the pursuit of optimum performance, that these activities are structured and managed in a fully integrated manner and that there is at all times clarity of treasury management responsibilities.

- 8.2 The principle on which this will be based is a clear distinction between those charged with setting treasury management policies and those charged with implementing and controlling these policies, particularly with regard to the execution and transmission of funds, the recording and administering of treasury management decisions, and the audit and review of the treasury management function.
- 8.3 If and when the Fund intends, as a result of a lack of resources or other circumstances to depart from these principles, the “responsible officer” will ensure that the reasons are properly reported, and the implications properly considered and evaluated.
- 8.4 The Director of Pensions is the responsible officer. The responsible officer shall ensure that there are clear written statements of the responsibilities for each post engaged in treasury management and the arrangements for absence cover. The responsible officer will also ensure that at all times those engaged in treasury management will follow the policies and procedures set out. The present arrangements are detailed in the schedule 5 to this document.
- 8.5 The responsible officer will ensure there is proper documentation for all deals and transactions, and that procedures exist for the effective transmission of funds.
- 8.6 The delegations to the responsible officer in respect of treasury management are set out in the schedule (5) to this document. The responsible officer will fulfil all such responsibilities in accordance with this policy statement and TMPs and the CIPFA Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

9 TMP 6 Reporting Requirements and Management Information Requirements

- 9.1 The Fund will ensure that regular reports are prepared and considered on the implementation of its treasury management policies; on the effects of decisions taken and transactions executed in pursuit of these policies.
- 9.2 Pensions Committee will receive an annual report on the strategy and plan to be pursued in the coming year.
- 9.3 An annual report on the performance of the treasury management function, on the effects of the decisions taken and the transactions executed in the past year, and on any circumstances of non-compliance with the Fund’s treasury management policy statement and TMPs, will be received by the Pensions Committee.
- 9.4 The Fund Operating Group (FOG) will receive interim reports on treasury management, with significant issues reported to IMWP.

10 TMP 7 Budgeting, Accounting and Audit Arrangements

- 10.1 The budget for the treasury management function will be included as part of the budget for the Fund which is submitted to Pensions Committee on an annual basis.
- 10.2 The Fund will account for its treasury management activities, for decisions made and transactions executed, in accordance with appropriate accounting practices and standards, and with statutory and regulatory requirements in force for the time being.

11 TMP 8 Cash and cash flow management

- 11.1 All monies in the hands of the Fund will be under the control of the Director of Pensions and will be aggregated for cash flow and investment purposes. Cash flow projections will be prepared on a regular and timely basis, and the responsible officer will ensure that these are adequate for the purposes of monitoring compliance with liquidity risk management. The present arrangements for preparing cash flow projections are set out in the schedule (8.1, 8.2) to this document.

12 TMP 9 Money Laundering

- 12.1 The Fund is alert to the possibility that it may become subject of an attempt to involve it in a transaction involving the laundering of money. Accordingly, it will maintain procedures for verifying and recording the identity of Counterparties and reporting suspicions and will ensure that staff involved in this are properly trained.

13 TMP 10 Training and Qualifications

- 13.1 The Fund recognises the importance of ensuring that all staff involved in the treasury management function are fully equipped to undertake the duties and responsibilities allocated to them. It will therefore seek to appoint individuals who are both capable and experienced and will provide training for staff to enable them to acquire and maintain an appropriate level of expertise, knowledge and skills. The responsible officer shall recommend and implement the necessary arrangements. The present arrangements are set out in the schedule (5.6) to this document.
- 13.2 The responsible officer shall ensure that Pension Committee Members tasked with Pension Fund responsibilities, including those responsible for scrutiny, have access to training relevant to their needs and responsibilities.

14 TMP 11 Use of external service providers

- 14.1 The Fund recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the Fund at all times. The Fund recognises there may be potential value of employing external providers of treasury management services, in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. When it employs such service providers, it will ensure it does so for reasons, which will have been subjected to a full evaluation of the costs and benefits. It will also ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented and subjected to regular review.
- 14.2 The Fund will ensure, where feasible and necessary that a spread of service providers is used, to avoid over reliance on one or a small number of companies. Where services are subject to formal tender or re-tender arrangements, legislative requirements will always be observed. The monitoring of such arrangement's rests with the Director of Pensions. Details of the current arrangements are set out in the schedule (9.1, 9.2) to this document.

15 TMP 12 Corporate Governance

- 15.1 The Fund is committed to the pursuit of proper corporate governance throughout its businesses and services, and to establishing the principles and practices by which this can be achieved. Accordingly, the treasury management function and its activities will be undertaken with openness and transparency, honesty, integrity and accountability.

- 15.2 The Fund has adopted and has implemented the key principles of the Treasury Management Code. This, together with the other arrangements detailed in the schedule to this document, are considered vital to the achievement of proper corporate governance in treasury management and the responsible officer shall monitor and, if and when necessary, report upon the effectiveness of these arrangements.

MERSEYSIDE PENSION FUND:

SCHEDULE TO TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY

SCHEDULE 1: RISK MANAGEMENT

- 1.1 The Fund has the following range of approved maximum limits for counterparties subject to meeting the high credit criteria determined by the Fund

CATEGORY	LIMIT Per Institution/Group
Fund's Bank	£50m
Approved Bank	£20m
Approved Building Societies	£15m
All Local Authorities	£20m
Money Market Funds	£30m
Fund's Custodian (Money Market Fund) (Internal and External Managers guideline)	£100m*

**All funds deposited with the Custodian do not form part of the Treasury Management team's decision-making, some funds represent cash with fund managers awaiting investment or cash collateral. Cash left by internal and external managers is subject to their market calls. Subject to the restrictions within their individual Investment Management Agreements, the aggregate of their deposits could potentially exceed the £100m guideline in certain situations. The cash with the custodian is held within a money market fund and the risk of default is diversified across a wide number of names.*

At the time of placing a deposit, a maximum country limit of 10% of the cash portfolio in any single jurisdiction outside the UK will be maintained.

- 1.2 Under exceptional circumstances e.g. transitional arrangements on appointment of new Investment Managers, these limits may be exceeded for a limited period with the prior written approval of the Director of Pensions and/or Fund Operating Group (FOG). Such instances will be reported to Pensions Committee as part of the Treasury Management Annual Report.
- 1.3 The Fund and the administering Authority (Wirral Council) and its advisors, Arlingclose Ltd, select financial institutions after analysis and ongoing monitoring of:
- Published credit ratings for financial institutions (minimum long term rating of A- or equivalent for counterparties; AA+ or equivalent for non-UK sovereigns)
 - Credit Default Swaps (where quoted)
 - Economic fundamentals (for example Net Debt as a percentage of GDP)

- Sovereign support mechanisms
 - Share Prices
 - Corporate developments, news, articles, markets sentiment and momentum
 - Subjective overlay – or, put more simply, common sense.
 - Any institution can be suspended or removed should any of the factors identified above give rise to concern.
- 1.4 It remains the Fund’s policy to make exceptions to counterparty policy established around credit ratings, but this is conditional and directional. What this means is that an institution that meets criteria may be suspended, but institutions not meeting criteria will not be added.
- 1.5 The Fund is in a position to use a wide range of research from its investment activities to support this and achieve the aim set on the CIPFA guidance to place a greater emphasis on acceptable credit quality rather than purely credit ratings for counterparts.
- 1.6 The Fund requires liquid resources to meet pension payments, investment commitments and administrative expenses. The cash flows from realisation and purchase of investments can be large and concentrated and the Fund needs to maintain facilities and resources to meet these. On days when there is a significant transition of assets between asset managers, appropriate arrangements are made with the Fund’s bankers regarding the timings of the receipt and payments of cash flows (day light exposure).
- 1.7 The Fund’s cash flows for dealing with members is negative with outflows to pensioners more than income from contributions. In an environment where a significant proportion of investment income is directly re-invested, the levels of liquid resources held need to be adequate and daily cashflows and regular reporting is essential.
- 1.8 It will manage its exposure to fluctuations in exchange rates. In general, the Fund will only hold foreign currencies to fund pending investment transactions thus limiting the exposure of treasury management activities to fluctuations in exchange rates so as to minimise any detrimental impact.

**SCHEDULE 2:
PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

- 2.1 The performance of the Fund’s investments is independently measured by Northern Trust. The performance of cash is included as part of this process and is benchmarked against an appropriate measure. This performance measurement is subject to scrutiny by Pensions Committee and IMWP.
- 2.2 The costs of investment management generally including treasury management expenses are separately accounted for in the Annual Statement of Accounts. Comparisons are made between internal and external fund management costs.

SCHEDULE 3: DECISION MAKING AND ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Decision-making is delegated as indicated in the management arrangements set out in schedule 5. Day to day decisions are constrained by the risk controls set out in the other schedules such as approved instruments and counterparties etc.
- 3.2 Tactical decision making by officers will seek to use information from brokers to meet cash flows whilst gaining a maximum return within risk constraints. Officers will have access to up to date market information.
- 3.3 Strategic decision making by officers and members will seek to set in place a plan that meets the needs of the Pension Fund in relation to its overall investment plan. The external advisers to the Fund (actuary and independent advisers) will help to ensure that decisions are well informed.
- 3.4 A risk assessment form will be completed for each treasury management transaction (excluding cash at bank), detailing the circumstances at the time the decision is made and providing evidence of the issues considered.

SCHEDULE 4: APPROVED INSTRUMENTS, METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

- 4.1 The Fund will use the following instruments for its internally managed treasury management activities. The Fund does not use derivatives for risk control associated with the treasury management function but may hold derivatives for risk control within the overall portfolio and as investments (these may be held by internal and external managers)
 - AAA rated money market funds
 - Call funds (instant access deposits)
 - Fixed term deposits with counterparties
 - Forward Fixed term deposits with counterparties
 - Structured Fixed term deposits with counterparties (See Note 1)
 - Cash at bank (Lloyds and Northern Trust)

Note 1: these are effectively deposits which give MPF or deposit taker the option to cancel agreement or renegotiate duration/interest rate of the deposit at fixed periods agreed at commencement of the deposit. These products allow the internal team the opportunity to gain additional yield if their view on interest rates is correct, as the counterparty will have a contrarian view on either the direction or speed of interest rate changes.

- 4.2 The Fund will permit external fund managers to use all instruments permitted under the Investment Manager Agreement.

SCHEDULE 5: ORGANISATION, CLARITY AND SEGREGATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES, AND DEALING ARRANGEMENTS

- 5.1 The structure for the treasury management functions is as follows:

Pensions Committee

Oversees all aspects of Merseyside Pension Fund on behalf of Wirral Council and the other admitted bodies. Reviews investment strategy and overall administration of the Fund.

Investment Monitoring Working Party (IMWP)

Makes recommendations to Pensions Committee following consultation with in-house managers and external advisers.

Director of Pensions

Responsibilities as set out in twelve Treasury Management Practices.

Fund Operating Group (FOG)

Includes reviewing the day to day operation of the investments and accountancy function.

Head of Finance & Risk

Responsible for team that undertakes treasury management activities.

- 5.2 The day to day transactions for treasury management are executed by the treasury management team overseen by the Fund Accountant(s).
- 5.3 The transmission of funds is carried out by the settlements team through electronic banking system and the recording of transactions is monitored by the Senior Fund Accountant ensuring an adequate separation of duties in the system.
- 5.4 The physical authorisation of the release of payments from the bank account is made by the Fund's authorised signatories as approved by Pensions Committee.
- 5.5 There are sufficient staff employed in the process to cover absences and maintain a separation of duties; the duties of staff are outlined in their job descriptions.
- 5.6 Staff currently involved in the system have an adequate level of relevant qualifications. Further training, as required, is made available as part of ongoing staff development:

Director of Pensions FCSI, ACIB

Head of Finance & Risk CPFA

Senior Fund Accountant ACCA, MAAT

Senior Fund Accountant ACCA

Fund Accountant (Compliance) AAT

Settlements Officer AAT

Valuations Officer AAT

Investment Officer (this post is currently vacant)

- 5.7 Dealing arrangements will be detailed within application forms (where applicable) and approved by an authorised signatory.

- 5.8 The Fund's policy is not to tape treasury management conversations, although faxed or emailed confirmation is required of the deal from the broker or directly from the counterparty (if non-standard) before the payment is released.
- 5.9 Treasury management facilities are set up with the approval of at least one of the Fund's authorised signatories.
- 5.10 Treasury management facilities provided on the internet will be agreed with the Director of Pensions and will be scrutinised by the Compliance Section to ensure all necessary controls are in place.

SCHEDULE 6: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1 The Fund will ensure that regular reports are prepared and considered on the implementation of its treasury management policies; on the effects of decisions taken and transactions executed in pursuit of these policies; on the implications of changes, including budgetary, resulting from regulatory, economic, market or other factors affecting its treasury management activities; and on the performance of the treasury management function.
- 6.2 Pensions Committee will receive an annual report on the strategy and plan to be pursued in the coming year.
- 6.3 An annual report on the performance of the treasury management function, on the effects of the decisions taken and the transactions executed in the past year, and on any circumstances of non-compliance with the Fund's treasury management policy statement and TMPs, will be received by the Pensions Committee.
- 6.4 The Fund Operating Group will receive interim reports on treasury management, with significant issues reported to IMWP.

SCHEDULE 7: BUDGETING, ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS

- 7.1 The Fund will ensure that its auditors and those charged with regulatory review have access to all information and papers supporting the activities of the treasury management function as are necessary for the proper fulfillment of their roles, and that such information and papers demonstrate compliance with external and internal policies and approved practices. The information made available under present arrangements is detailed in the schedule (10.1) to this document.

SCHEDULE 8: CASH FLOW

- 8.1 Given the unpredictable nature of cash flows in investment management and in the payment of lump sum benefits, the Fund is not able to forecast cash flows precisely. The Fund has designed its cash portfolio to meet the principal material predictable cash flows i.e. pension pay days and retains a sufficient level of liquidity to cover other calls on cash.

- 8.2 The Settlements officer maintains cash flow statements on a monthly basis updated daily for predictable cash flows and uses this as a tool to assist the treasury management function.

**SCHEDULE 9:
USE OF EXTERNAL PROVIDERS**

- 9.1 The main providers of services to the Fund are money market brokers. As the Fund does not borrow funds it does not pay commission to the brokers. The performance of brokers is under regular review by staff.
- 9.2 The Fund's main clearing bank contract is the subject of regular tendering exercises.
- 9.3 The Fund's Custodian contract is subject of regular tendering exercises.

**SCHEDULE 10:
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE**

- 10.1 The Fund is administered by Wirral Council and is subject to its corporate governance arrangements including regular internal audit and annual external audit. The treasury management function is examined by both of these audits regularly as a high priority area. Officers shall ensure that all documentation listed below is made available to auditors:

- Internal policies
- Internal records of deals
- Counterparty confirmations