

MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STATEMENT 2019/20

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Where the Council finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there has been no statutory minimum since 2003, Councils, are expected to make a prudent provision. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to have regard to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision (the MHCLG Guidance) most recently issued in 2018.
- 1.2 The broad aim of the MHCLG Guidance is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant.
- 1.3 The MHCLG Guidance requires the Council to approve an Annual MRP Statement, and recommends a number of options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP.
- 1.4 The Council has a number of MRP policies reflecting the range of capital financing options required for different service scenarios.

2.0 MRP Policy - General

- 2.1 This Policy was originally approved by Cabinet on the 17th September 2009 and was subsequently amended for 2017/18 (a slight change to clarify when the incidence of MRP will be chargeable in iii). The following statement incorporates options recommended in the Guidance;
- 2.2 The actual Policy is:
- i. For capital expenditure incurred after 31st March 2008, MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant assets as the principal repayment on an annuity with an annual interest rate based on long-term borrowing rates, starting in the year after the asset becomes operational. MRP on purchases of freehold land will be charged over 50 years. MRP on expenditure not related to fixed assets but which has been capitalised by regulation or direction will be charged over 20 years.
 - ii. For assets acquired by finance leases or the Private Finance Initiative, MRP will be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability.
 - iii. In respect of:
 - capital assets; MRP will be chargeable in the year following the agreement of any final account.
 - other capital investments; MRP will be chargeable in the following

financial year.

3.0 MRP Policy - Loans to Organisations

3.1 This Policy was originally approved in 22nd February 2015. The aim of the policy is to facilitate the provision of finance (for asset creation purposes) to organisations, with the Council sourcing the finance from third parties, but to ensure that the incidence of debt finance is directly neutralized within the Councils balance sheet.

3.2 The actual policy is:

Where loans are made to other bodies for their capital expenditure, and the principal repayments are received at least on an annual basis, no MRP will be charged, because the loan repayments will be applied to the CAA, so reducing the CFR in the same manner as MRP.

If principal repayments are not being made then MRP will be charged.

4.0 MRP Policy – Financing Expenditure with Annuity Loans

4.1 This Policy was originally approved on 22nd February 2016 and has been amended for 2018/19. The aim of this policy is to determine the neutralization of MRP when Annuity Loans are used to finance CIS asset, and investments.

4.2 The actual policy is:

For each capital investment undertaken under the requirements of the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy, where it has been decided that an Annuity Loan is advantageous, MRP will be made that is equal to the principal repayment for any loan finance supporting the investment.

5.0 MRP Policy – Financing Expenditure with Maturity Loans

5.1 Maturity Loans are similar to interest only mortgages, in that only interest is paid during the life of the loan with the loan principal being repaid at the end of the term (by either the Council taking out a further loan or selling the asset and repaying the loan from the capital receipt; with a possible net capital gain). To undertake such financing, a new MRP Policy would be required that included some specific safeguards to ensure that the use of capital finance remained prudent.

5.2 However, the advantage of Maturity Loans for the Council is that over the life of the loan, the net benefit from the ongoing income stream would be greater as the Council would only have to repay interest on an annual basis and not meet annual principal repayments. The following example clearly demonstrates the revenue advantage of financing by Maturity Loan compared to an Annuity Loan; in that the additional revenue stream over the life of the asset is £7.0m.

- If a CIS Asset of £10m was acquired with an annual income stream of £625k (pessimistic, giving a yield of 6.2%) and held for 20 years, the net revenue stream for a:
 - Maturity Loan would be £7.2m (£359k per annum).
 - Annuity Loan would be £140k (£7k per annum).

There the benefit for a Maturity Loan is £7.0m (£352k per annum).

5.3 Any new MRP Policy to support this activity must ensure that the principles of prudence are adhered to. The principles, are noted in “i to ii” below:

- i. The CIS or housing asset would be required to be directly linked to the loan finance; this could be agreed retrospectively by Cabinet following acquisition. However, the link could only be broken by a specific decision of Full Council. The Councils Constitution would be required to be changed to reflect this.
- ii. The CIS or housing asset is valued on an annual basis, in line with the Councils Accounting Policy for Investment Assets. If it is established that the value of the asset is less than the loan, then an MRP payment will be required, based on an Annuity Loan, and the MRP payment will continue to be charged until the Asset Value is greater than the loan.

5.4 The actual policy is:

For each capital investment undertaken under the requirements of the Councils Commercial Investment Strategy, where it has been decided that a Maturity Loan is advantageous, no Minimum Revenue Provision shall be made providing that:

- i. The capital investment is directly linked to the Maturity Loan, with the stated intention that at loan maturity the asset is sold or replacement finance is provided.
- ii. Cabinet will record the decision in (i) above (this may be done retrospectively i.e. after an acquisition). The link between Asset and Loan can only be broken by a decision of Full Council.
- iii. There is annual revaluation of the CIS or housing investment in line with the Councils Accounting Policy in respect of Investment Assets. If it is established that an asset has a value less than the loan then an annual MRP amount will be calculated, based on Annuity basis and continue to be charged until the value of the asset is greater than the loan.
- iv. Even where the asset value exceeds the loan value the Council may decide to make a voluntary MRP.

6.0 Capital Financing Requirement and MRP Summary

Based on the Council's latest estimate of its Capital Financing Requirement on 31st March 2019, the budget for MRP has been set as follows:

| | 31.03.2019 Estimated CFR £m | 2019/20 Estimated MRP £m |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Capital Expenditure | 44.6 | 2.4 |
| Commercial Investment Strategy | 30.0 | 2.0 |
| Total | 74.6 | 4.4 |