

**Providing Council with Written Responses to Questions asked at Council
28 January 2021**

1	<p>Councillor P M Black</p> <p>In relation to Minute 52 - Treasury Management – Interim Year Review Report 2020/21.</p> <p>Why is there a £40m difference between the authorised limit for external debt and the operational boundary for external debt.</p> <p>Response of the Section 151 Officer</p> <p>Authorised Limit</p> <p>The authorised limit must be set to establish the outer boundary of the local authority's borrowing based on a realistic assessment of risks. The authorised limit is not a limit that a Council will expect to borrow up to on a regular basis. It is crucial that it is not treated as an upper limit for borrowing for capital expenditure alone since it must also encompass borrowing for temporary purposes. It is the expected maximum borrowing need, with some headroom for unexpected requirements.</p> <p>Covid has in my view resulted in increased risk of unexpected requirements and short term cash flow and hence the two measures are widened rather than kept the same for forthcoming year.</p> <p>Operational Boundary</p> <p>This is based on expectations of the maximum external debt of the authority according to probable not simply possible – events and being consistent with the maximum level of external debt projected by the estimates. It is not a limit and actual borrowing could vary around this boundary for short periods.</p> <p>The operational boundary/ authorised limit is the same in the 19/20 because that is the outturn position i.e the actual debt outstanding at 554.023m – you can see in the table it is the total of fixed term debt £456.023m plus 'variable' rate debt of £98.000m. As reported this was below the operational boundary and authorised limit approved in 19/20.</p> <p>For 20/21 we are just restating the operational boundaries and authorised limits approved back in Mar 2020.</p>
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<p>2</p>	<p>Councillor C L Philpott</p> <p>In relation to Minute 55 - Councillors Questions - Question 3</p> <p>An Ecologist Report on the Olchfa link was commissioned by Swansea Council in December 2020 and carried out in January 2021. Why was this carried out so late in the process and what actions will be taken in respect of the report.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>An Ecologist has been appointed to provide a watching brief during the construction phase of the project. This is standard practice for such works. The report referenced above was undertaken to define the ecological parameters for consideration prior to the commencement of works. This is typically undertaken at the outset of the scheme to ensure that there is a current record of condition. We have confirmed that a formal Environmental Impact Assessment is not required for the scheme, but through due diligence and good practice, we will be working alongside a specialist to ensure that the works do not compromise the surrounding environment. This is standard practice for all such works.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Councillor E W Fitzgerald</p> <p>In relation to Minute 55 - Councillors Questions - Question 3</p> <p>A cycle route is planned for Gorseinon Road in my Ward. It appears that I'm the only person that has been consulted. The Community Council and local residents have not been consulted. This is contrary to the Active Travel guidance set out by Welsh Government. Can you explain.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>The initial feasibility design for the scheme has been undertaken as part of a large portfolio of projects originally identified within the approved Integrated Network Map. Initial consultation was undertaken with yourself and Councillor Roberts towards the end of last year (Cllrs Curtice and Stevens were unavailable) to illustrate progress and reference the future development programme for the scheme. This highlighted that we would seek to expand consultation in early 2021 once the main Active Travel projects for delivery were up and running and there was resource availability within the team. We are still on track to expand consultation in the coming months to ensure that the community have opportunity to comment on our proposals.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Councillor C A Holley</p> <p>In relation to Minute 55 - Councillors Questions - Question 6</p> <p>I understand that there is a live legal process underway in relation to the former Oceana building. However, could the Leader of the Council provide an outline of timescale.</p>

	<p>Response of the Leader</p> <p>Our Legal Team continue to deal with this matter and are still in correspondence with Santia's solicitors. In terms of timescales, if an amicable resolution cannot be secured by the end of March 2021, specialist Counsel will be instructed to provide an advice on the merits of commencing litigation and the prospects of success.</p>
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