

Date: 12 March 2014

Item 8: Group Treasury Activities – Part 1

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**This paper will be considered in public**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on Group Treasury's activities from 1 April 2013 to date, as required by the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices 2013/14, approved by the Board in March 2013.
- 1.2 A paper is included on Part 2 of the agenda, which contains exempt supplemental information and documentation. The information is exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 in that it contains information relating to the financial affairs of TfL. Any discussion of that exempt information must take place after the press and public have been excluded from this meeting.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 **The Committee is asked to note the paper and the related paper on Part 2 of the agenda.**

**3 Background**

- 3.1 On 27 March 2013, the Board approved the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) 2013/14 (which includes an Investment Strategy 2013/14, a Borrowing Strategy 2013/14 and a Risk Management Strategy 2013/14) and established the following strategic objectives for Group Treasury:
  - (a) to undertake treasury management operations with primary regard for the security and liquidity of capital invested;
  - (b) to maximise the yield from investments consistent with the security and liquidity objectives identified above;
  - (c) to ensure that sufficient cash is available to enable TfL to discharge its financial obligations when they become due, in accordance with approved spending plans;
  - (d) to undertake treasury management activities having regard to Prudential Indicators;

- (e) to secure TfL's funding requirements by accessing the most cost efficient source of finance, while ensuring TfL has flexibility and sufficient alternatives not to be dependent on any particular source; and
- (f) to exercise TfL's statutory power relating to risk management to achieve greater value for money through reducing costs or protecting revenues, reducing volatility / increasing certainty in the Business Plan and to holistically manage financial risks across the whole of TfL.

3.2 This paper provides an update on TfL's investment, borrowing and risk management activity from 1 April 2013 to date. By doing so, the paper fulfils the requirement under the TfL Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices 2013/14 to provide the Committee with a monitoring report on treasury management activities and risks, and the performance of the treasury management function.

3.3 The requirement in the TfL Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices 2013/14 to update the Committee on the strategy to be pursued in the coming months is dealt with in papers elsewhere on the agenda.

## **4 Compliance with the TMS 2013/14**

4.1 The TMS 2013/14 sets out the parameters under which the Group Treasury function is permitted to operate.

4.2 There have been no breaches of the TMS 2013/14 (comprising the Investment Strategy 2013/14, Borrowing Strategy 2013/14 and Risk Management Strategy 2013/14) in the year to date.

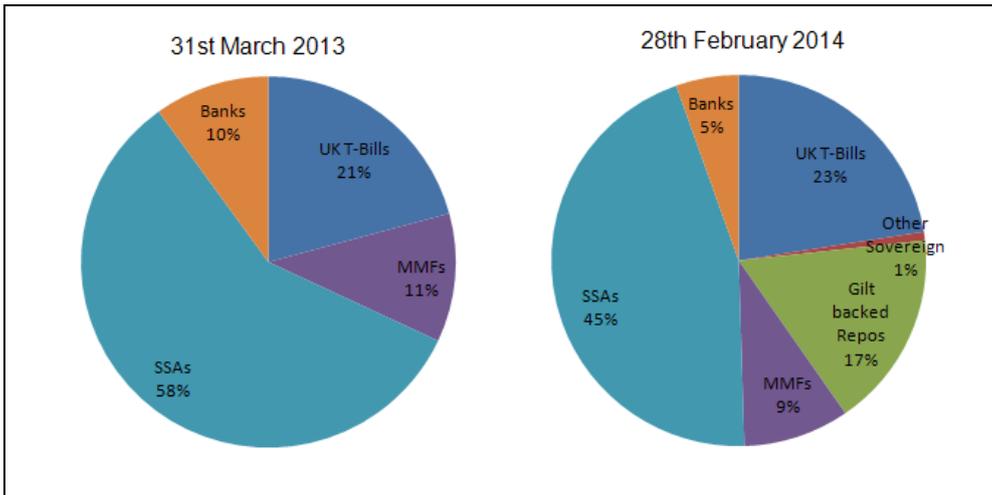
## **5 Investments Update**

5.1 As at 28 February 2014, TfL had £4.9bn of cash under management (including £2.2bn of cash ring-fenced to fund the construction of the Crossrail project). TfL's cash balance (up to a prudent minimum) is committed to delivering the improvements outlined in TfL's latest Business Plan, updated in the TfL Budget 2014/15, including:

- (a) almost £1.5bn on the Sub-Surface Rail upgrade, delivering new rolling stock, increased train frequency, greater capacity and automated train control;
- (b) over £1bn on new Crossrail trains, with the contract now awarded to Bombardier;
- (c) over £900m for key cycling programmes; and
- (d) £150m for a further 400 New Buses for London by the end of 2015/16

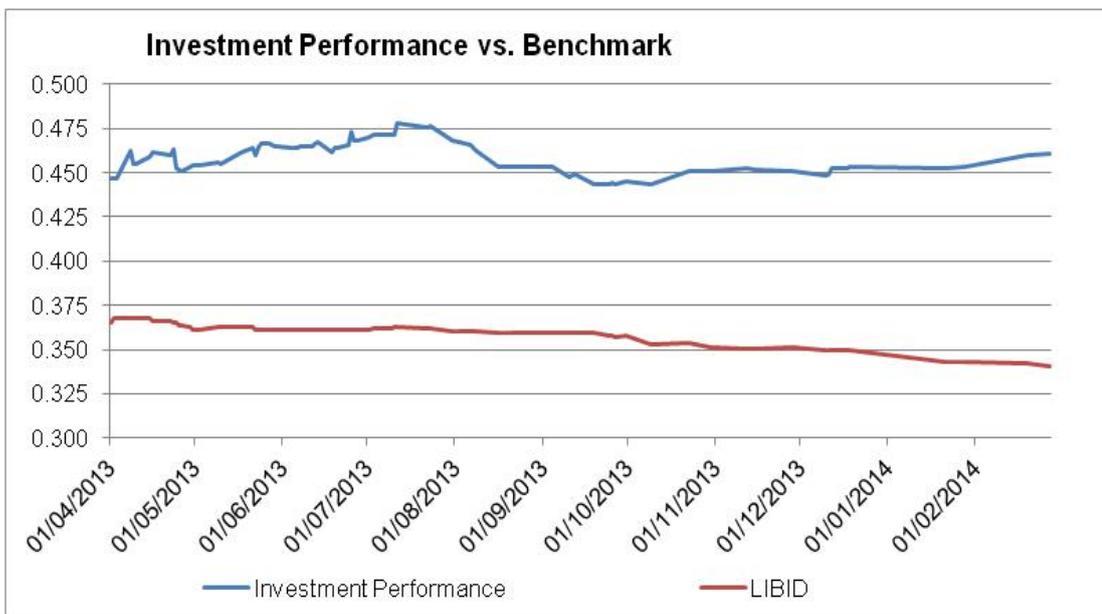
5.2 The allocation of these funds is summarised in Chart 1.

**Chart 1**



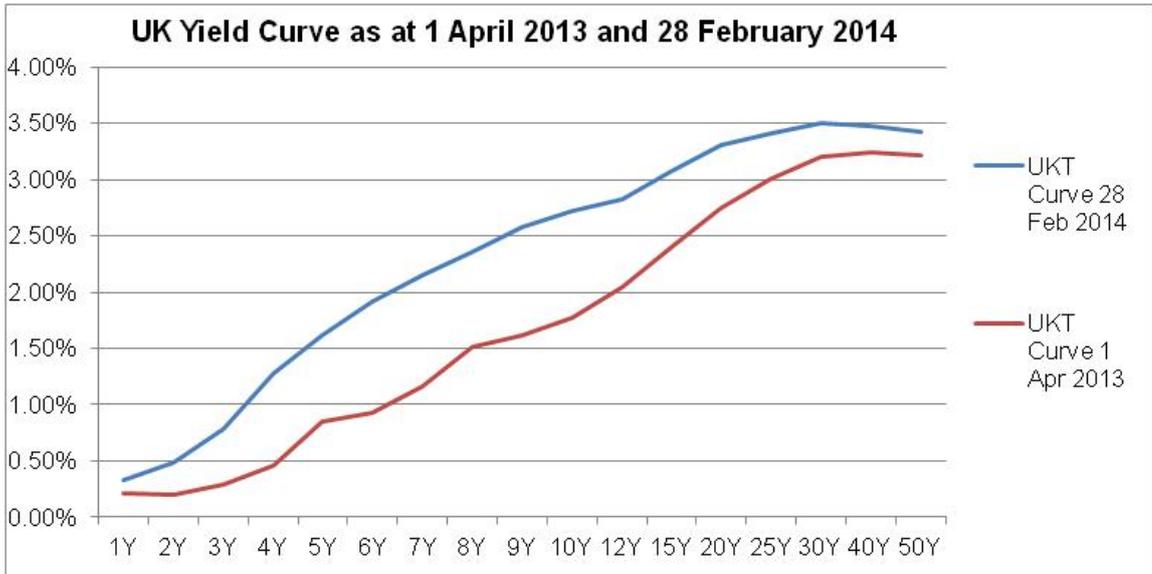
- 5.3 The share of cash in securities with UK Government exposure has been increased over the year, due to increased investment in repurchase agreements (repos). Repos have been placed for tenors of up to three months, but also increasingly for overnight liquidity as a substitute for Money Market Funds (MMFs). The yield on repos has generally been in line with the yields on both Sub-Sovereign Agencies and MMFs, while still being fully collateralised by UK Government securities.
- 5.4 The return on TfL’s cash investments has remained relatively flat over the course of the year. The seven-day London Interbank Bid Rate (LIBID) has decreased since 2 April 2013, from 0.37 per cent to 0.34 per cent, while TfL’s investment returns have increased from 0.45 per cent to 0.46 per cent over the same time. Chart 2 shows the movements in the return on cash and LIBID over the year to 28 February 2014.

**Chart 2**



- 5.5 TfL's year-to-date average yield is 0.46 per cent, 10 basis points above benchmark, with an average of 110 days-to-maturity.
- 5.6 The UK economy has shown signs of recovery over the year. Central bank policy appears to be the main market driver with significant developments and announcements within the Federal Reserve and the Bank of England.
- 5.7 The Federal Reserve started tapering their quantitative easing programme; it was reduced by \$10bn in both the December and January meetings. It also announced that short term rates would only increase once the economic data warranted it. In February 2014, Janet Yellen was appointed the new chair of the Federal Reserve. It is thought her policies will continue on the same path.
- 5.8 In July 2013, the Bank of England appointed a new governor, Mark Carney. The following month, forward guidance was introduced to the effect that an increase in the overnight rate of 0.5 per cent would only be considered by the Bank of England when the UK unemployment rate dropped to 7.0 per cent or below. This guidance was accompanied by three potential 'knockouts' that if triggered would lead to the unemployment threshold no longer applying (if in the Bank of England's view it is likely that CPI inflation 18 to 24 months ahead will be 0.5 percentage points or more above the two per cent target; if medium term inflation expectations 'no longer remain sufficiently well anchored'; and if the Bank of England judges that the stance of monetary policy poses a significant threat to financial stability).
- 5.9 At the time the forward guidance was issued the unemployment rate was 7.8 per cent and the fall to 7.0 per cent was not projected to happen until the second half of 2016. However, the unemployment rate then fell to 7.1 per cent (before subsequently rising to slightly back up to 7.2 per cent in February) and the economy generally has outperformed market expectations with 2013 GDP growth of 1.9 per cent in the UK being the strongest since 2007.
- 5.10 In its February Inflation Report, the Bank of England replaced the threshold for the unemployment rate and the related 'knockouts' with a broader form of guidance consisting of five elements (that it will seek to use policy to absorb the economy's spare capacity; that there is scope to use up spare capacity further before raising rates; that when it raises rates, it will do so only gradually; that any rises in rates will be limited; and that the stock of asset purchases will remain unchanged until rates rise). The new guidance is less definitive than the previous guidance and also shifts the focus back from the employment rate to the outlook for inflation.
- 5.11 The Bank of England has held the total level of quantitative easing stable at £375bn throughout the year.
- 5.12 The UK Government yield curve has shown increases across all tenors since 1 April 2013. This is shown in Chart 3.

**Chart 3**



5.13 The majority of TfL’s investments have been under 12 months in the year to date, largely due to uncertainty regarding future budget and borrowing capabilities, but also due to lack of reward in the yield for the increased tenor risk. Recent upbeat economic data has put pressure on long term rates, with little effect on short term rates to date, although they are expected to increase significantly during 2015. SONIA (Sterling Overnight Index Average) rates have been a better indicator than LIBOR rates regarding yields available on TfL’s investments. Table 1 shows the forward rates for three month SONIA, it shows little change for the next six months and then pronounced increases are expected by the middle of 2015:

**Table 1**

Current	Forward Rates for 3 Month SONIA						
	3 months	6 months	9 months	1 year	18 months	2 years	3 years
0.421	0.436	0.484	0.585	0.762	1.117	1.496	2.085

5.14 The implication of the above data is that while medium and long-term interest rates have risen in recent months, short-term rates, and therefore TfL’s return on cash invested, have not risen. The forward SONIA rates indicate that an increase in returns on short-term cash is expected in the near future.

## 6 Borrowing Update

### Transactions Update

6.1 Since 1 April 2013, TfL has undertaken £850m of long-term borrowing. This includes £700m of bonds and £150m from the European Investment Bank (EIB) under the Crossrail Loan Facility. Of the £850m of new borrowing, £345m represented TfL’s incremental Prudential Borrowing for 2013/14 (being

the additional borrowing agreed with Government as part of the 2010 Funding Settlement), £410m represented the replacement of short-term commercial paper with long term funding and £95m represented borrowing headroom created by the buyback of the Tube Lines B Notes on 28 June 2013. These transactions are in line with TfL's Borrowing Strategy for 2013/14 and are outlined in further detail in Table 2.

**Table 2**

<b>£m</b>	<b>Borrowing Strategy 2013/14</b>
2013/14 Prudential Borrowing agreed with DfT	345
Commercial Paper carried forward from 31 March 2013:	1,098
Tube Lines B Notes (buy-back)	95
<b>Total 2013/14 funding (including buy-back) expected at 31 March 2014</b>	<b>1,538</b>
<i>Financed by:</i>	
EIB Crossrail Loan drawdown (completed)	150
1 <sup>st</sup> Bond – 32 Year (completed)	400
2 <sup>nd</sup> Bond – 20 Year (completed)	300
Commercial Paper as at 31 March 2014 (prospective)	688
PWLB	nil
<b>Total 2013/14 borrowing</b>	<b>1,538</b>

#### European Investment Bank

- 6.2 In April 2013, TfL completed the scheduled drawdown of £150m under the existing £1bn Crossrail loan facility with the EIB at a pre-agreed fixed rate, set in October 2009. The final drawdown of £100m under the overall £1bn facility is scheduled for April 2014.
- 6.3 In December 2013, TfL entered into a £500m EIB corporate facility for the Crossrail Rolling Stock and Depot project. The tenor, interest rates and draw-down profile of the facility will be agreed by the authorised TfL Officers as agreed by the Committee on 17 October 2013.
- 6.4 Group Treasury and EIB are also exploring the feasibility of setting up a corporate programme facility to fund a portfolio of projects which might be too small for EIB to fund on an individual basis. To this end, Group Treasury is engaging with other groups in TfL (Planning, Surface, Rail and Underground) to identify projects which might be suitable for funding through this initiative.

## Capital Markets

6.5 Since the beginning of the financial year, TfL has also successfully issued two bonds:

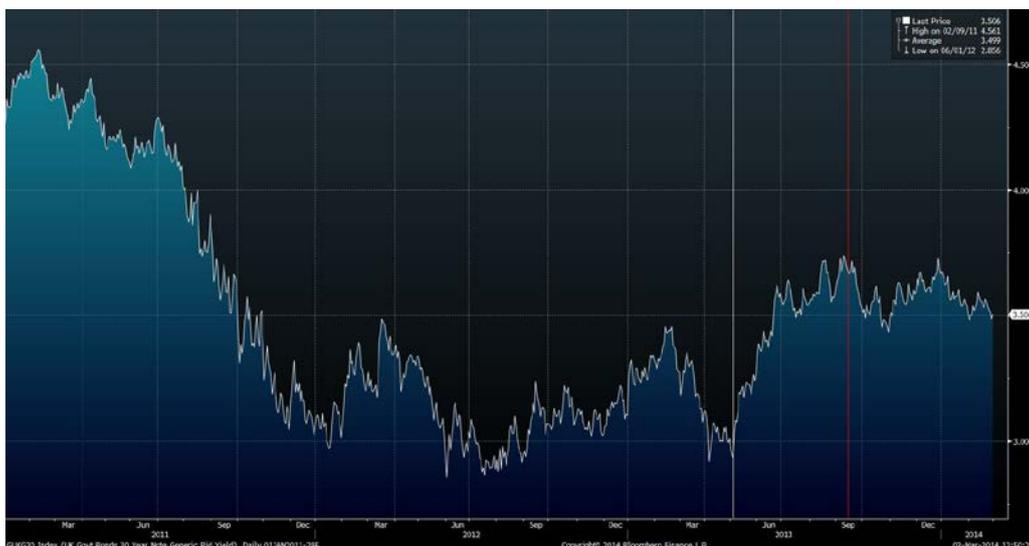
- (a) A £400m bond for 32 years at a fixed rate coupon of 3.625 per cent (with a semi-annual yield of 3.638 per cent) issued at an all-in-price including bank fees of 98.891 per cent in May 2013 (the “May 2045s”); and
- (b) A further £300m bond for 20 years at a fixed rate coupon of 4.000 per cent (with a semi-annual yield of 3.974 per cent), issued at an all-in-price including bank fees of 99.592 per cent in September 2013 (the “September 2033s”).

6.6 The May 2045s were issued at a spread of 60 basis points over Gilts, while the September 2033s achieved a tighter spread than any of TfL’s recent issues, with a spread of 58 basis points over the UK Gilt. The bonds compare very favourably with the alternative of borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), with:

- (a) the May 2045s saving 23.2 basis points against the PWLB rate (or £29.7m in interest over the 32 year term); (white line on Graph 1); and
- (b) the September 2033s saving 32.6 basis points (or £19.6m over the 20 year term) (red line on Graph 1).

6.7 Both bonds have allowed TfL to take advantage of historically low interest rates and to lock-in a low cost of funding. The May 2045s were issued at an underlying rate which is very close to the low in the eight months preceding the transaction (as shown in Chart 4). This is approximately 50 basis points lower than the high in that period.

**Chart 4: UK 30 year Gilt Yield: 1 December 2012 to 28 February 2014**



Source: Bloomberg

- 6.8 The headroom for the September 2033 bond has largely been created by reducing Commercial Paper balances. By doing this, TfL has effectively brought forward an element of next financial year's long-term borrowing requirement, as this has allowed it to lock in rates before any further increases in rates. TfL evaluated the use of derivative investments to hedge the underlying element of the borrowing rate as opposed to bringing forward future borrowing, and found that for reasons of cost and cashflow certainty these were not preferable to a new bond issue.
- 6.9 The choice of a 20 year tenor for the bond was partially driven by reverse enquiry interest in a private placement from a large Japanese investor. This interest was successfully converted to a lead order for the public benchmark issue, with 21 per cent of the final book. This represents a significant achievement for TfL in terms of diversifying its investor base, and the order proved critical in allowing TfL to drive down the issuance spread.
- 6.10 The 20 year issue also fills a significant gap in TfL's benchmark curve between the 10 and 30 year bonds issued in 2012. Investors have advised TfL that they prefer to invest with issuers who have a well established curve of varying tenor debt and this should help TfL to achieve the best possible pricing in future.
- 6.11 The TMS 2013/14 provides that, where existing debt is being refinanced, new borrowing may be undertaken in advance of repayment of the existing debt and that this may lead to a temporary increase in aggregate debt levels to above the Operational Boundary, provided TfL remains within the legal limit on its liabilities at all times (the Authorised Limit).

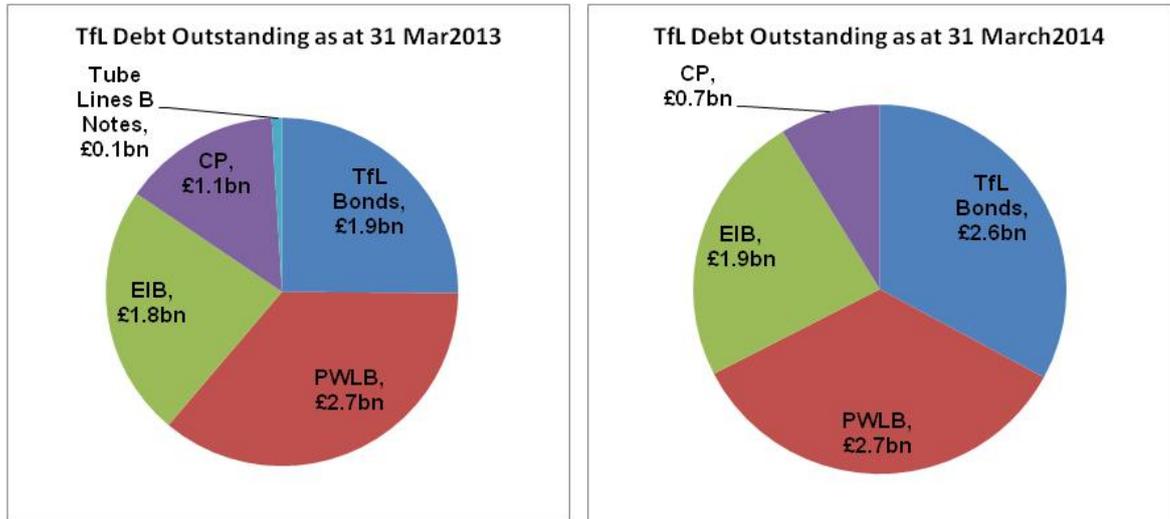
### **Debt Outstanding**

- 6.12 The Operational Boundary for Borrowing (broadly speaking, TfL's expected debt levels given the aggregate incremental borrowing agreed with the Department for Transport in any one year) and Authorised Limit for Borrowing were approved by the Board and established by the Mayor in March 2013.
- 6.13 TfL remained below the Authorised Limit for Borrowing approved by the Board and established by the Mayor in March 2013 at all times during the year.
- 6.14 Following the £150m drawdown from the EIB and the £400m and £300m bond issues, aggregate debt levels were slightly above the Operational Boundary for Borrowing. TfL's aggregate debt level returned below the Operational Boundary for Borrowing by 25 September 2013 as Commercial Paper that had fallen due for repayment was not replaced.
- 6.15 The Mayor also established an Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit for Other Long-Term Liabilities. These primarily relate to finance lease creditors and long-term provisions related to compensation for property acquired for Crossrail. Due to property claims being settled more slowly than originally anticipated TfL is forecasting that the balance of property provisions will be £87m higher than expected and is in the process of recommending that the Mayor increase the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit for Other

Long-term Liabilities to reflect this. This proposed change is the subject of a separate paper to the Committee at this meeting.

- 6.16 The combined effect of the borrowing transactions completed in the year to date are reflected in the Chart 5, which shows TfL's debt outstanding as at 31 March 2013 and 31 March 2014 (expected).

**Chart 5**



- 6.17 As at 31 March 2013, TfL had £7.565bn of debt, of which approximately £1.1bn was short-term borrowing under TfL's Commercial Paper Programme. The weighted average interest rate on TfL's debt was 3.68 per cent (with a weighted average life of 19.5 years). As at 31 March 2014, TfL is expected to have £7.9bn of debt outstanding, of which £0.7bn was short-term Commercial Paper. The weighted average interest rate on TfL's debt was 3.8 per cent (weighted average life of 20.8 years).
- 6.18 Following the Committee's approval on 18 July 2013, on 8 August 2013 TfL issued the updated documentation for its £5bn Medium Term Note Programme. The update of the Base Prospectus was required to enable TfL to retain its access to the capital markets. The Base Prospectus is publicly available on [tfl.gov.uk](http://tfl.gov.uk).
- 6.19 In April 2013, TfL followed the process required to maintain access to the PWLB at the discounted 'Certainty Rate' of Gilts plus 0.80 per cent for the year beginning 1 November 2013.

### **Secondary Performance**

- 6.20 Table 3 shows TfL's recent bond transactions and their current spreads.

**Table 3**

Bond	Size (m)	Tenor	Coupon (per cent)	Issue date	Issue Spread	Current Spread
1	500	30	3.875	13/07/2012	98	59.6
2	500	10	2.250	31/07/2012	88	65.7
3	300	5	1.250	14/11/2012	70	53.2
4	400	32	3.625	03/05/2013	60	53.5
5	300	20	4.000	12/09/2013	58	60.2

- 6.21 The secondary performance of TfL's recent transactions has been extremely encouraging. All five bonds have traded inwards and each one directly contributed to the success of the following deal. To date TfL has decreased issuance spreads from 98 basis points (£500m 30 year July 2012) to 58 basis points (£300m 20 year September 2013).

### **Liability Management**

- 6.22 On 28 June 2013 TfL redeemed 100 per cent of the B Notes held by Tube Lines (Finance) PLC at a price equal to Gilts plus 68 basis points. This deal represents the final step in the long term strategy of restructuring the legacy Tube Lines PPP debt.
- 6.23 TfL reached an agreement with the holder of 80 per cent of the notes to acquire them at a price of Gilts plus 68 basis points. Following unsuccessful attempts to identify the remaining unknown 20 per cent of note holders, TfL and the majority holder agreed to vote amendments to the notes in order to purchase the majority holder's notes and to sweep up the unidentified 20 per cent. A Call option was inserted, which TfL duly exercised.
- 6.24 The redemption was at a clean price of 133.1658 per cent with accrued interest of £1,268,094.58. This represents a premium of £23,200,924.17 on the outstanding balance of £69,954,363.14. The size of this premium is driven by the high coupon of 7.4547 per cent and will be offset by future savings as TfL will pay significantly less interest on the replacement debt.
- 6.25 The headroom created by the buy back of the outstanding B Notes principal was partially utilised by the £300m September 2033 bond issue. Due to the lower ongoing interest cost, and the fact the new bond has a bullet basis for repayment rather than amortising, the transaction delivers an overall present value benefit of £5.6m, while also creating £45.7m of cashflow benefits to 2021/22. As the equivalent portion of the replacement bond issue is of

substantially longer tenor than the B Notes, the interest expense over the extended period will result in an £61.1m net increase in cashflow.

### **TfL Credit Rating**

- 6.26 At least once a year TfL holds a general update meeting with each one of the three Rating Agencies that rate TfL's short and long term debt. Following such meeting, each Rating Agency re-assesses the entity's credit rating and outlook. Table 4 sets out TfL's current credit ratings:

**Table 4**

	<b>S&amp;P</b>	<b>Moody's</b>	<b>Fitch</b>
<b>Long-term rating</b>	AA+	Aa2	AA
<b>Outlook</b>	Stable	Stable	Stable
<b>Short-term rating</b>	A-1+	P-1	F1+

- 6.27 On 24 April 2013, Fitch downgraded TfL's credit rating one notch from AA+ to AA. This was as a result of a downgrade to the UK Sovereign rating from AAA to AA+. Other entities close to the UK Government, for example Network Rail, were also downgraded at the same time. The rating downgrade has not had an adverse effect on TfL's ability to borrow at attractive interest rates as it was driven by a well understood mechanistic link between TfL's credit and that of the Government.
- 6.28 On 8 June 2013 and 15 November 2013, Standard & Poor's confirmed TfL's credit rating and its stable outlook. Fitch is expected to confirm TfL's credit rating in early March 2014.

### **Investor Relations**

- 6.29 In April 2013, Group Treasury carried out investor meetings in London and Edinburgh. The purpose of these meetings was to provide an annual update rather than being part of a deal specific roadshow.
- 6.30 Over the past twelve months, TfL has pursued a strategy of establishing closer relationships with its existing and potential investors, as well as with the broader banking community. TfL has also sought to engage with non-traditional sterling investors (such as those in the Far East) in order to diversify its investor base and thereby achieve the tightest pricing possible. The significant allocation to a Japanese investor in the 20 year bond issue was a direct result of this engagement.
- 6.31 Group Treasury will continue to engage with existing and potential new investors in the future. In addition, it is in the process of introducing improvements in the relevant TfL web-pages to ensure that investors have easy access to key information on TfL.

## **7 Regulatory Update**

### **Money Market Funds**

- 7.1 On 4 September 2013, the European Commission published its new rules for all MMFs domiciled, managed or marketed in the European Union. These rules still need to be agreed by both the European Council and European Parliament, which is unlikely to happen before May 2014. However once agreed, the transition period for the new regulation is only six months.
- 7.2 The key changes published are:
- (a) MMFs will have to hold 10 per cent of their portfolio in assets that mature within a day and a further 20 per cent that mature within one week;
  - (b) a maximum five per cent exposure will be allowed with any single issuer;
  - (c) any funds wanting to remain using Constant Net Asset Valuation (CNAV) will need to hold a capital buffer of three per cent of the fund;
  - (d) MMFs will only be able to buy Asset Backed Commercial Paper backed by short-term debt instruments that have arrived in the course of normal business activity, for example trade receivables; and
  - (e) MMFs will need to implement customer profiling policies to help anticipate any upcoming large redemptions from the fund.

### **Financial Transactions Tax**

- 7.3 Regulatory developments remain ongoing regarding the possible introduction of a Financial Transactions Tax (FTT). Due to the rising number of people expressing concern about FTT, any decision about its introduction has been delayed and the target date would become 1 January 2015. An introduction of an FTT would have an impact on some of TfL's investments as although the UK is not one of the 11 European countries making up the FTT Zone, the market will still be affected.
- 7.4 The FTT would apply to secondary market trades that are negotiable on the capital markets, money market instruments and derivative contracts. The rates to charge have been proposed at 10 basis points on all cash instruments and one basis points on notional for derivatives. The obvious impact of this would be a significant reduction in volume, and therefore liquidity, in the secondary market, which in turn would have an impact on primary issues.
- 7.5 Potential impacts for TfL include, but are not limited to: the rate on Commercial Paper may increase to cover the impact of the tax, MMFs may scale back the liquidity they can offer to clients, and on all transactions, the additional cost would likely be passed on to the clients. FTT could also mean an increased cost of funding for TfL.

## **European Market Infrastructure Regulation**

- 7.6 In August 2012, the European Markets and Infrastructure Regulation (EMIR) came into force as binding law within the European Union. Compliance with the requirements are being phased in over time. A key purpose of EMIR is to reduce systemic risk in the financial markets.
- 7.7 Under EMIR, TfL is classified as a Non-Financial Counterparty (NFC). NFCs that only enter into derivatives contracts that are objectively measurable as reducing risks directly relating to the commercial activity or treasury financing activity of the NFC, are exempt from certain requirements under EMIR.
- 7.8 However, for transparency, NFCs must comply with requirements to report to trade repositories and certain requirements for risk-management procedures in relation to non-cleared over-the-counter derivatives (which are not conducted on an exchange).
- 7.9 The risk management requirements that apply to all NFCs are timely confirmation of trades, portfolio reconciliation, dispute resolution procedures and portfolio compression. TfL complies with the risk management requirements, which came into force in September 2013. TfL is also now set up to report derivative transactions as required by the regulations from 12 February 2014 onwards.

## **8 Other Activities**

### **Collaboration with Customer Experience**

- 8.1 Working with Customer Experience, Group Treasury has provided and administered contactless Barclaycards which are being actively used for testing during the current London Underground Future Ticketing Programme pilot.
- 8.2 It has also worked with Customer Experience to provide the necessary banking protocols for London Underground Charter refunds to be paid directly to customer bank accounts and this scheme is expected to go live by the end of July 2014.

### **Collaboration with the Financial Services Centre (FSC)**

- 8.3 Group Treasury has worked with its relationship bankers, the FSC & Information Management to set-up the ability for rent payments to be collected via direct debit and this is expected to go live for new customers by the end of February 2014. The gradual on-boarding of existing customers will allow for improved cashflows and therefore improved cash forecasting.

- 8.4 The FSC currently operate in excess of 200 escrow style bank accounts in respect of section 278 receipts (payable by developers to TfL for improvement works to the road network as part of a development) and Group Treasury is working with its relationship bankers to condense these into a single umbrella bank account using specialist software to manage the balances. The umbrella bank account is now open and the specialist software is expected to be implemented by the end of March 2014. Once implemented costs will be reduced, administration will become simpler and more timely management information regarding section 278 receipts will be available.
- 8.5 Group Treasury is currently investigating with its relationship bankers the steps required to become a BACS bureau which will allow TfL to make payment file submissions on behalf of other organisations. The FSC currently already provide payment facilities to the GLA and the granting of bureau status will streamline this and allow the FSC to provide payment facilities to other organisations should the opportunity arise.

#### **Other areas**

- 8.6 TfL was one of the first organisations to be accredited onto the Barclaycard Risk Reduction Programme, which gives protection against card schemes imposing fines on TfL for failure to provide adequate security on all debit and credit card payments processed by TfL. This accreditation is reviewed annually and Group Treasury has successfully made a second presentation to Barclaycard to be accredited for a further year.
- 8.7 Group Treasury is in discussions with its relationship banker to provide a more suitable bank account pooling arrangement. This will allow all accounts within the HSBC Group to be included, thereby reducing the number of transactions required when processing investment deals, and therefore costs, and to simplify periodic funding transfers across the business.

#### **List of appendices to this report:**

A paper on Part 2 of the agenda contains exempt supplemental information.

#### **List of Background Papers:**

None

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