

Quarterly Commentary – 28th June 2024

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Q2 began with a shadow of doubt over the soft-landing narrative as a reacceleration in consumer prices, particularly essential goods, caused policymakers to row back on their declarations of victory in the battle against inflation and investors to heavily discount their rate cut expectations for the year. Data in April proved strong and was received poorly as this provided confirmation in investors' minds that the turn in the rate cycle was indeed further away than was priced in and conditions would remain 'restrictive' for longer.

In reality, financial conditions remain loose and, as the quarter wore on, markets repriced higher, driven by an ever-shrinking cohort of very large companies. The more rate sensitive parts of the market struggled, namely bonds and smaller cap equities, as higher for longer took hold, but equity positioning remains extreme and the market remains squarely in the soft-landing camp at a time when data is weakening and revisions suggest that this began earlier than was initially believed or priced.

Bonds continue to struggle against stubborn price rises, monetary authorities that have been burned declaring inflation over early, and supply more akin to wartime than the end of the cycle. The assumption that duration is an investor's friend during times of slowing growth cannot be relied upon with unwavering confidence given the dramatic fiscal difference in this cycle versus previous ones; this is likely the reason that investors are more cautious in their duration positioning than in previous cycles also.

The Fund increased in value by 0.5%.

Income

The Fund is fully backed by short-dated high-grade debt. As rates have risen, so has the return available from the Fund's collateral, with the collateral yielding 5.4% as at quarter end.

Beta

The Fund's beta portfolio was a negative contributor through the quarter by virtue of its geography as European equity beta suffered its first negative quarter since mid 2023. The portfolio's beta weighting sits at the very bottom of its range currently.

Diversifier

The Fund's diversifier portfolio added to performance through the quarter driven largely by the rates volatility strategies as the higher for longer narrative continues alongside a back end of the yield curve that must have a fiscal floor given policy.

The commodity strategies posted negative returns as natural gas timespreads strengthened on warmer than normal weather meaning demand for cooling was higher than is usual for the time of year. Since the end of the quarter this has already reversed and the strategies are positioned to take advantage of the winter premium given storage levels are seasonally high.

The majority of the Fund's negative returns within the Diversifier Portfolio emanated from the FX strategies. The long Yen position, as it has for much of the past 18m, was a detractor as the Yen went to multi-year lows against USD. However, Japanese wages are rising at their fastest pace in more than 30 years at a time when inflation has woken from its slumber and the central bank are on a path of monetary tightening at the point the rest of the world by and large is looking to when it will begin to loosen. Much of that mark-to-market in Yen underperformance that the Fund has worn could be set to return, particularly if the Yen behaves in its typical safe haven way if we enter a period of economic turbulence.

The Fund's rates curve position, a steepener option on the US 10s2s, was a detractor as the yield curve remains stubbornly inverted and has now been inverted longer than any period since the 1970s.

Total Return	2024	Q2
UK 100	7.9%	3.7%
US 500	15.1%	4.2%
Europe 50	10.4%	-2.1%
Japan 225	19.1%	-1.8%
Hong Kong 50	6.2%	8.9%
US 2000	1.5%	-3.3%
Swiss 30	11.0%	4.0%
Global Equity	11.8%	2.6%
Global Bond	-3.2%	-1.1%
Commodities	2.4%	1.5%
PGF	4.0%	1.7%
AGF	0.8%	0.0%
DGF	3.4%	0.5%
USI	14.3%	3.8%
ARF	3.9%	-0.6%

Fortem Capital Dynamic Growth Fund



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Protection

The Fund makes no allocation to protection currently.

Outlook

The Fund has delivered significant positive returns with no correlation to traditional asset classes since it came under Fortem's care. That has been achieved through a combination of returns from the income, beta and diversifier portfolios and the correlation is testament to the true diversifying nature of the investments which sit within that part of the portfolio.

The Fund is currently positioned defensively with the beta allocation at the bottom of the range and defensively minded diversifiers meaning the Fund should be well positioned to weather any storm that might lie ahead.

In the meantime, the income portfolio returns are such that investors are not necessarily faced with a common conundrum when the risk-free rate sits where it currently does in the forgoing of those returns in order to add diversification to portfolios. The Fund is fully collateralised with high-grade short-dated debt, meaning that as well as being highly liquid it allows investors the opportunity to participate in the high short-dated rate environment we are currently experiencing.

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