

ANNEX 2 - TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (TMP1) – CREDIT AND COUNTERPARTY RISK MANAGEMENT

The MHCLG issued Investment Guidance in 2018, and this forms the structure of the council's policy below. These guidelines do not apply to either trust funds or pension funds which operate under a different regulatory regime.

The key intention of the Guidance is to maintain the current requirement for councils to invest prudently, and that priority is given to security and liquidity before yield. In order to facilitate this objective the guidance requires this council to have regard to the CIPFA publication Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes. This council adopts the Code and will apply its principles to all investment activity. In accordance with the Code, the Section 151 Officer has produced its treasury management practices (TMPs). This part, TMP 1(1), covering investment counterparty policy requires approval each year.

Annual investment strategy

The key requirements of both the Code and the investment guidance are to set an annual investment strategy, as part of the annual treasury strategy for the following year, covering the identification and approval of the following:

- The strategy guidelines for choosing and placing investments, particularly non-specified investments.
- The principles to be used to determine the maximum periods for which funds can be committed.
- Specified investments that the council will use. These are high security (i.e. high credit rating, although this is defined by the council, and no guidelines are given), and high liquidity investments in sterling and with a maturity of no more than a year.
- Non-specified investments, clarifying the greater risk implications, identifying the general types of investment that may be used and a limit to the overall amount of various categories that can be held at any time.

The investment policy proposed for the council is:

Strategy guidelines – The main strategy guidelines are contained in the body of the treasury strategy statement.

Specified investments - These investments are sterling investments of not more than one-year maturity, or those which could be for a longer period but where the council has the right to be repaid within 12 months if it wishes. These are considered low risk assets where the possibility of loss of principal or investment income is small. These would include sterling investments which would not be defined as capital expenditure with:

1. The UK Government (such as the Debt Management Account deposit facility, UK treasury bills or a gilt with less than one year to maturity).
2. Supranational bonds of less than one year's duration.

3. Local authorities, housing associations, parish councils, community councils, companies controlled by the council (either alone or with other public sector organisations).
4. Money market funds, enhanced money market funds and bond funds that have been awarded a high credit rating by a credit rating agency. This covers pooled investment vehicles rated AAA by Standard and Poor's, Moody's and/or Fitch rating agencies (where rated).
5. A body that is considered of a high credit quality (such as a bank or building society). This covers bodies with a minimum short term rating of F1 (or the equivalent) and minimum long term rating of A (or the equivalent) as rated by at least one of Standard and Poor's, Moody's and/or Fitch rating agencies (where rated).
6. Any part nationalised UK bank or building society.
7. Any subsidiary and treasury operations that meet the above criteria or, if not separately rated, where the parent bank or building society has the necessary ratings outlined above.
8. The council's own banker for transactional purposes if the bank falls below the above criteria, although in this case balances will be minimised in both monetary size and time invested.

Within these bodies, and in accordance with the Code, the council has set additional criteria to set the time and amount of monies which will be invested in these bodies, as set out in the council's annual investment strategy.

Non-specified investments

Non-specified investments are any other type of investment (i.e. not defined as specified above). The council may only use the following non-specified investments:

1. Those with a maturity of no more than 5 years and which otherwise meet the above criteria for specified investments.
2. Multi-asset funds.

The council has applied a limit of £5m for non-specified investments.

The monitoring of investment counterparties

The credit rating of counterparties will be monitored regularly. The Council receives credit rating information (changes, rating watches and rating outlooks) from Link Asset Services as and when ratings change, and counterparties are checked promptly. On occasion ratings may be downgraded when an investment has already been made. The criteria used are such that a minor downgrading should not affect the full receipt of the principal and interest. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria will be removed from the list immediately by the Section 151 Officer, and if required new counterparties which meet the criteria will be added to the list.

Use of external fund managers: It is the council's policy not to use external fund managers on a discretionary basis for any part of its investment portfolio.

The council may use pooled investment vehicles and fully appreciates the importance of monitoring the activity and resultant performance of such investments. In order to aid this assessment, the council is provided with a suite of regular reporting from its providers.