

	INVESTMENT POLICY	Doc No. 1	
		Version	Date
		2	October 2021
Controller	Approved by:	Review Date	
	Council		
Finance Manager	Minute Number 2021/ 175	October 2023	

POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Provide a framework for investing Council's funds at the most favourable rate, whilst
- Ensuring consideration is given to the preservation of capital, liquidity, level of risk and security

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council investments.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy is to ensure Council:

1. Protects Council/rate payers' capital whilst earning an acceptable income from investments.
2. Have appropriate working capital funds available to carry out its strategic objectives as outlined in the Delivery Program and Resourcing Strategies.
3. Holds a reasonable level of funds that are immediately accessible in the event of a disaster or unexpected failure of infrastructure.
4. Meets its liability commitments as they fall due.
5. Legally restricted funds are appropriately accounted for and invested to earn reasonable income towards their purposes. Legally restricted funds include unexpended grants, etc.
6. Resolves to set aside investments for particular purposes and these funds earn interest towards those purposes and are readily available when called upon (it should be recognised that these funds are by policy of Council only and have no enduring legal status that would bind a future Council).

Prudent Person Standard

The investment portfolio will be managed with the care, diligence, and skill that a prudent person would exercise. As trustees of public monies, officers are to manage Council's investment portfolio to safeguard the portfolio in accordance with the spirit of this Investment Policy, and not for speculative purposes.

Risk Management Guidelines

Investments are expected to achieve a market average rate of return in line with the Council's risk tolerance and are to be considered in the light of the following considerations:

- Preservation of Capital - the requirement for preventing losses in an investment portfolio's total value (the time value of money)
- Diversification - the requirement to place investments in a broad range of products so as not to be over exposed to an entity or sector of the market
- Credit Risk - the risk that a council has invested in fails to pay interest and/ or principal on maturity
- Market Risk - the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of an investment will fluctuate due to changes in market prices
- Liquidity Risk - the risk an investor is unable to redeem the investment at a fair price within a timely period
- Maturity Risk - the risk relating to the length of term to maturity of the investment, the larger the term, the greater the length of exposure and risk to market volatilities
- Leveraging Risk - the magnification of an investor's risk and return that occurs when the investor takes on financial leverage through an investment product

Approved Investments

Investments are limited to those allowed by the Ministerial Investment Order (2011) issued by the NSW Minister of Local Government. This policy limits the types of investments to:

- Interest-bearing deposits or senior bonds issued by an authorised deposit taking institution (ADI)
- Securities issued by the Commonwealth Government, any State of the Commonwealth, or a Territory
- Any debentures or securities issued by a Council (within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1993)
- A bill of exchange where the maturity date is not greater than 200 days' duration and is issued by an authorised deposit taking institution (ADI)
- A deposit with NSW Treasury Corporation or investments in an hour-glass investment facility of the NSW Treasury Corporation

Authorised investments allowed under this policy include the following examples:

- Bonds and Debentures
- Term Deposits
- On-Call/ Cash Accounts
- Bills of exchange
- Negotiable Certificate of Deposit

All examples above must only be issued by ADIs (such as banks, credit unions and building societies) or by the Commonwealth, State, or Territory Governments.

Credit and Maturity Guidelines

Investments are to comply with four key criteria.

Criteria 1: Overall Portfolio and Institutional Credit Framework

To control the credit quality on the entire portfolio, the following credit framework limits the percentage of the portfolio exposed to any particular credit rating category. Further, exposure to an individual institution will be restricted by their credit rating so that single entity exposure is limited, as detailed in the table below:

S & P Rating* (or equivalent)		Overall Portfolio - Maximum %	Individual portfolio - Maximum %
Long Term Rating	Short Term Rating		
Securities issued by the commonwealth of Australia or any state of the Commonwealth or Territory		100%	100%
TCorpIM Funds		100%	60%
AAA/AA+/AA/AA-	A-1+	100%	40%
A+/A	A-1	90%	30%
A- / BBB+	A-2	50%	20%
BBB/BBB/Unrated*	A-3 – Unrated^	30%	10%

* Only Applies to Approved ADI institutions. The Trustee Act provides for investments with building societies and credit unions; however, they are not rated. The maximum amount of funds allowed to be invested in total with building societies/ credit unions is 30 per cent.

^ Only Applies to Approved ADI institutions. The Trustee Act provides for investments with building societies and credit unions; however, they are not rated. The maximum amount of funds allowed to be invested with an individual building society/ credit union is 10 per cent.

Criteria 2: Maturity Terms Framework

Terms of maturity shall be limited to the following maximums:

Types of Investments	Terms of Maturity
On - Call / Cash Accounts	No Limit if on-call
Term Deposits	See criteria in the table below:
Bills of Exchange	Not more than 200 days
Negotiable Certificate of Deposits	Not more than 185 days or six months

Criteria 3: Portfolio Maturity Constraints Framework

With regards to term deposits, the investment portfolio is to be invested within the following maturity constraints:

Overall Portfolio Term to Maturity Limits	Min Term	Maximum
Portfolio Under 1 year	50%	100%
Portfolio Under between 1 to 2 years	0%	40%
Portfolio Under between 3 to 5 years	0%	10%

Criteria 4: Quotation Framework

A minimum of three (3) quotations must be obtained prior to placing any new or renewal investment.

Prohibited Investments

In accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order, this investment policy prohibits, but is not limited to, the following investments:

- Derivative based instruments

- Principal only investments or securities that provide potentially nil or negative cash flow
- Stand-alone securities issued that have underlying futures, options, forwards contracts and swaps of any kind

This policy also prohibits the use of leveraging (borrowing to invest) of an investment.

Investment Advisor

Another option council may pursue is the appointment of an Investment Advisor who is licensed by the Australian Securities and Investment Commission. Council may also engage NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) to provide financial advice about investment strategies.

The advisor must be an independent person who has no actual or potential conflict of interest in relation to investment products being recommended and is free to choose the most appropriate product within the terms and conditions of the investment policy.

The independent advisor is required to provide written confirmation that they do not have any actual or potential conflicts of interest in relation to the investments they are recommending or reviewing, including that they are not receiving any commissions or other benefits in relation to the investments being recommended or reviewed, unless such remuneration is rebated 100% to Council.

Measurement and Performance Benchmarking

It is expected that the performance of each investment will be greater than or equal to the applicable benchmark in the table below:

Investment	Performance Benchmark	Time Horizon
At Call, Short Term Deposits	Official RBA Cash Rate	3 months or less
Term Deposits & Bank Bills	S&P/ASX Bank Bill Index - 1 Year	3 months to 12 months
Term Deposits & Bank Bills	S&P/ASX Bank Bill Index - 3 Year	12 months to 3 years

Reporting and Reviewing of Investments

Documentary evidence must be held for each investment including:

- Details maintained in the investment register
- Provide legal title to the investment
- Certificates must confirm the amounts of the investment held on Council's behalf as at 30 June each year and must be reconciled to the investment register
- This investment Policy is to be reviewed every two years or as required in the event of legislative changes or change of Council
- All investments must be recorded in Council's financial records
- Reconciled monthly with a monthly report provided to Council

The General Manager or their delegated representative is authorised to approve variations to this Policy if the investment is to Council's advantage and/or due to revised legislation or statutory guidance.

Definitions

Nil

Exceptions

Nil

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

All investments are to comply with the following

- Local Government Act 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
- Ministerial Investment Order (2011)
- The Trustee Amendment (Discretionary Investments) Act (1997) – Section 14
- Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting
- Australian Accounting Standards
- Office of Local Government Investment Policy Guidelines
- Office of Local Government Circulars

Related Documents

- Balranald Shire Council’s Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework
- Investment Checklist

POLICY HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL

Policy Title	Investment Policy
Directorate	Corporate and Community Services
Department	Finance
Policy Group	Finance
Responsible Officer	Finance Manager
History	2.0
Relevant Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Act 1993 • Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 • Ministerial Investment Order (2011) • The Trustee Amendment (Discretionary Investments) Act (1997) – Section 14 • Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting • Australian Accounting Standards • Office of Local Government Investment Policy Guidelines • Office of Local Government Circulars