

GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

Policy Number
34.POL1

INVESTMENT AND CASH MANAGEMENT POLICY

Version
2.0

Adopted: xxxx
Last Reviewed 7 July 2020

Business Unit:	Finance and Rates
Responsible Officer:	Manager Finance and Rates
Approved By:	Greater Shepparton City Council
Next Review:	July 2023

PURPOSE

Council is committed to ensuring that its investments and cash are managed in an appropriate, open and transparent manner.

This policy provides guidance on the effective and responsible utilisation of Council's surplus cash funds in accordance with the legislative framework.

Particular emphasis is placed on investment decisions that manage exposure to risk and optimise return on investment whilst ensuring sufficient liquidity for Council's operational needs.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that:

- All funds are invested in accordance with legislative requirements and Council policy.
- Effective internal controls are in place to minimise investment risk and unauthorised appropriation of Council funds.
- All investment transactions are appropriately authorised and documented.
- The primary objective of investment decisions is the security of funds by managing exposure to risk.
- Return on investment is to be achieved whilst ensuring sufficient liquidity for Council's day to day operational commitments.
- Consideration is given to non-fossil fuel aligned Authorised Deposit-taking Institutions subject to credit risk, investment parameters and returns.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all funds invested on behalf of Greater Shepparton City Council.

The Council also manages investments on behalf of the following entities:

- Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation
- Goulburn Valley Waste and Resource Recovery Group
- Pine Lodge Cemetery
- Kialla West Cemetery

It is acknowledged that investments on behalf of these entities are not likely to be of similar magnitude to Council funds. Whilst the general principals of this policy will apply, it is recognised that individual entity's investments cannot be managed under the same investment parameters specified in this Policy.

DEFINITIONS

Credit Risk:	The risk that the financial institution will not fulfil their obligations under the financial instrument resulting in financial loss.
Interest Rate Risk:	The variability in return caused by movements in interest rates – Council would be susceptible to this risk if the funds are invested at a fixed rate for a long period and investment rates moved upwards.
Liquidity Risk:	The risk that Council does not have sufficient funds to settle financial obligations as they fall due.

POLICY

1. Investment Objectives

Council's overall objective is to preserve its cash assets whilst investing its surplus funds at the best interest rate available giving due consideration to risk and cash flow, whilst working within the parameters of this policy.

In regard to priority, the order of investment activities shall be

- Preservation of capital;
- Liquidity of cash flow;
- Investment return; and
- Sustainable investments.

1.1. Preservation of Capital

Preservation of capital shall be the principal objective of the investment portfolio. Investments are to be made in a manner that seeks to ensure security of principal. This includes managing credit risk.

1.2. Maintenance of Liquidity

a) The investment portfolio will maintain sufficient liquidity to meet all reasonably anticipated operating cash flow requirements of Council, as and when they fall due, without incurring significant transaction costs or loss of interest earnings due to the need to redeem an investment before maturity.

b) The term to maturity of any Council investment may range from "at call" to one year, taking into account anticipated cash requirements and prevailing market conditions at the time of the investment.

1.3. Return on Investments

Investment returns are to be maximised within the parameters of this Policy. Not less than three quotations shall be obtained from authorised deposit taking institutions whenever an investment or renewal of an investment is proposed.

1.4. Sustainable Investments

A positive screening approach will be applied to investing by taking opportunities to increase dealings with Authorised Deposit-taking Institutions (ADI's) that commit to fossil fuel free investments.

- a) Preference will be given to ADI's that do not fund fossil fuel projects where:
 - The investment is compliant with the credit risk and institutional parameters specified in this policy; and
 - The rate of investment is greater than, equal to or within 10 basis points of other investments available at the time.

- b) An amount of \$2 million may be invested in Green Term Deposits that align with the International Capital Market Association (ICMA) Green Bond Principles where:
 - The investment is compliant with the credit risk and institutional parameters specified in this policy;
 - The rate of investment is greater than, equal to or within 10 basis points of other investments available at the time; and
 - The investment period does not exceed six months should the term deposit not be convertible to cash at any time with a maximum of 31 days notice.

Divestment from fossil fuels will be further investigated in the development of the Council's 2030 Zero Carbon Emission Target Plan.

2. Authorised Investments

Only the following direct investments denominated in Australian currency are acceptable for surplus Council funds:

- Cash/At-Call with Council's main banking institution
- Term deposits with authorised deposit-taking institutions such as licensed banks and Standard & Poor's rated credit unions
- Term deposits with the Goulburn Murray Credit Union

3. Portfolio Investment Parameters and Credit Requirements

A credit rating is a forward-looking opinion about the creditworthiness of an obligor with respect to a specific financial obligation, a specific class of financial obligations, or a specific financial program taking into consideration the creditworthiness of guarantors, insurers, or other forms of credit enhancement on the obligation and takes into account the currency in which the obligation is denominated.

Issue credit ratings can be either long-term or short-term. Short-term ratings are generally assigned to those obligations considered short-term in the relevant market i.e. obligations with an original maturity of no more than 365 days.

The following details the Standard and Poor's and Moody's Short Term Issue credit ratings:

S&P	Moody's	
A1+	P-1	Highest available short term rating, indicating that the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on these obligations is extremely strong.
A1		Indicates the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is strong.
A2	P-2	Indicates the obligor may be somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligations in higher rating categories, however the capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is satisfactory.

- a) In order to minimise risk by maintaining a diverse portfolio, the following credit rating and institutional limits apply:

Short Term Rating	Individual Institution Limit ¹	Maximum Investment Proportion
A1+/A1/P-1	40%	100%
A2/P-2	15%	40%

- b) In addition to the data contained in the above table, an upper limit of \$2 million can be invested with the Goulburn Murray Credit Union (unrated).
- c) If redemption of funds causes a shift in percentage of funds held with any single investment body to the counterparty limit, investments will be returned to correct the imbalance at either the next available maturity date or a period of six months, whichever is the earlier of the two.
- d) If an existing Council investment falls below the minimum rating level, Council will take action to withdraw funds immediately.

4. Internal Controls

- a) Internal controls and processes are to be maintained to ensure investment objectives are met and that the investment portfolios are protected from fraud including loss, theft or inappropriate use.
- b) Annual performance is to be reported to the Executive Leadership Team, including investment returns, portfolio characteristics and sustainable investment achievements.

¹ This includes non-investment amounts, e.g. cash at bank.

5. Delegations

a) Authority for implementation of the Policy is delegated by the Council to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989.

b) Authority for the day-to-day management of the Council's investment portfolio may be delegated by the Chief Executive Officer to Council Officers.

RELATED POLICIES AND DIRECTIVES

- Nil

RELATED LEGISLATION

- All investments shall comply with the Local Government Act 1989 in particular Sections 136 and 143. All investments shall comply with relevant regulations and guidelines or directions issued by the Victorian Local Government Minister or Local Government Victoria.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by the Manager Finance and Rates within four years from date of adoption.

This policy replaces the Investment and Cash Management Policy 34.POL1 (previously policy number 34.610.01.02) adopted by Council in April 2017.

Peter Harriott
Chief Executive Officer

Date