



Horley Town Council

Investment Strategy and Policy

INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy sets out the treasury management procedures for the monitoring of the cash flow and banking arrangements of Horley Town Council.

1.2 Authority reference is to the Council's Financial Regulations.

1.3 The Local Government Act 2003 Section 12 provides the power to invest:
(a) for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment or
(b) for the purpose of the prudent management of its financial affairs.

Section 15(1) of the Act requires a local authority to have regard:

- (a) to such guidance as the Secretary of State may issue, and
- (b) to such other guidance as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify for the purposes of this provision.

1.4 The Council acknowledges its duty of care to the community and the prudent investment of funds.

OBJECTIVES

2.1 The Council's priorities are, in the following ranking order:

- The security of capital to minimise the risk of losses.
- The liquidity of investments to meet the cash flow needs of the Council.
- Maximising income within the framework of the national economic situation.

2.2 The Council will aim to achieve a high rate of return on investments commensurate with adequate safeguards of security and liquidity.

2.3 The Department for Communities and Local Government maintains the borrowing of money purely to invest or to lend and make a return is unlawful and the Council will not engage in such activity.

2.4 The Council will monitor the risk of loss on investments by review of credit ratings on a regular basis. The Council will only invest in institutions of high credit quality – based on information from credit rating agencies (as defined).

- 2.5 Investments will be spread over different providers where appropriate to minimise risk.

INVESTMENTS

Definition of an Investment

- 3.1 The definition of an investment covers all the financial assets of a local authority as well as other non-financial assets that the organisation holds primarily or partially to generate a profit, for example, investment property portfolios. This may therefore include investments that are not managed as part of normal treasury management processes or under treasury management delegations.

Investment Objectives

- 3.2 This Investment Strategy has the following objectives in priority order:
- Security – protecting the capital sum invested from loss
 - Liquidity – ensuring the funds invested are available for expenditure when needed
 - Yield – income return on the investment

Specified Investments

- 3.3 Specified investments are those offering high security and high liquidity, made in sterling and with a maturity of no more than a year. Such short-term investments made with the UK Government or a Local Authority (as defined) or a Town/Parish Council will automatically be Specified Investments.
- 3.4 The Council, for prudent management of its treasury balances may use - Treasury Deposits with UK clearing banks - Local Authorities or other Public Authorities approved public sector investment funds.
- 3.5 The choice of institution and length of deposit will be at the approval of the full Council.
- 3.6 The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity.

Non-Specified Investments

- 3.7 A non-specified investment are non-financial assets that the organisation holds primarily or partially to generate a profit. Where a local authority holds a non-financial investment, it will normally be a physical asset that can be realised to recoup the capital invested.
- 3.8 These investments have greater potential risk – examples include investment in the money market, stocks and shares. Given the unpredictability and uncertainty surrounding such investments the Council will not use this type of investment.

Liquidity of Investments

- 3.9 The Council in consultation with the Responsible Financial Officer will determine the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed so as not to compromise liquidity.
- 3.10 Investments will be regarded as commencing on the date the commitment to invest is entered into rather than the date on which the funds are paid over to the counterparty.

Long Term Investments

- 3.11 Long Term Investments are defined in the Guidance is greater than 36 months.
- 3.12 The Council does not currently hold any funds in long term investments.

REPORTING

- 4.1 The management of this policy will be by the Chief Executive Officer / RFO and reported regularly to Full Council of the Finance and General Purposes meeting.

CAPACITY, SKILLS AND CULTURE

- 5.1 The Council is committed to continuous professional development and supports its Chief Executive Officer/RFO and staff training and development through attendance at the SSALC Legal and Finance Day and any other relevant training to keep up to date with corporate governance.

REVIEW

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed by the Council on an annual basis prior to the start of the new financial year. Any variation to the policy will be submitted to the Council for approval.

PUBLICATION

- 7.1 A copy of this policy will be made available on the Council's website.

October 2020.
Policy Review Date: October 2024.