

Institutions

- 12.1. The Council will use specific credit ratings to determine which institutions can be used for investments.
- 12.2. Investment decisions are made by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from Fitch, Moody's or Standard & Poor's. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used.
- 12.3. Not all institutions are rated by all three rating agencies. Where an institution is rated by more than one agency, the lowest ratings will be used to determine whether it qualifies for inclusion. This practice is known as the lowest common denominator approach.

Other institution types

- 12.4. The following institutions are mentioned explicitly in the guidance and associated legislation. Councils are not expected to lay down specific criteria for including these types of institution as they are either UK Government institutions or have a UK Government guarantee.
 - UK Government including gilts and the Debt Management Office
 - Local authorities as defined by the Local Government Act 2003
 - Supranational institutions, e.g., the European Investment Bank

Foreign Investments

- 12.5. Deposits with foreign banks are permitted, on the condition that they meet our minimum criteria, and that the country in which the bank is domiciled is AAA-rated with any of the three ratings agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's).

Effective counterparty limits

Type	Fitch		Moody's		S&P		Maximum Value	Maximum Term
	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term		
Bank/Building Society (Unsecured)	F1	A-	P-1	A3	A1	A-	£20m	100 days
Bank/Building Society (Unsecured)	F1	A	P-1	A	A1	A	£20m	6 months
Bank/Building Society (Unsecured)	F1+	AA-	P-1	Aa3	A1+	AA-	£20m	13 months
Corporate Bonds	A-		A3		A-		£20m	2 years
Bank/Building Society (Secured) Covered Bonds	AAA		Aaa		AAA		£20m	5 years
Money Market Funds	AAA		Aaa		AAA		£25m	n/a
Enhanced Cash / Bond Funds	AAA / v1		Aaa-bf		AAAf / s1		£20m	n/a
Debt Management Office							Unlimited	2 years
Supranational Institutions							£20m	2 years
Local Authority							£20m	2 years
Pooled Investment Property Funds							£20m	n/a

Counterparty Criteria

- 12.6. **Bank/Building Society Unsecured:** Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail.
- 12.7. **Bank/Building Society Secured (Covered Bonds):** These investments are secured on the bank's assets, which limit the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency, and means that they are exempt from bail-in. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed £20m. A minimum rating of AAA (or equivalent) from two of the three rating agencies.
- 12.8. **Corporates:** Corporate bonds issued by companies other than banks and registered providers. These investments are not subject to bail-in, but are exposed to the risk of the company going insolvent. A minimum rating of A- (or equivalent) from two of the three rating agencies.
- 12.9. **Government:** Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by UK government, local authorities and supranational banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is a minimal risk of insolvency.
- 12.10. **Money Market Funds:** An open ended fund that invests in short term debt securities, offers same-day liquidity and very low volatility. The use of Money Market Funds is restricted to funds with three AAA ratings (from two of the three rating agencies) up to a maximum of £175m (with a maximum of £25m per Money Market Fund).

- 12.11. **Enhanced Cash/Bond Funds:** Criteria for suitable funds is a fund credit quality (FCQ) rating of AAA and a fund volatility rating (FVR) of S1 (or equivalent) from one of the three main rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's or Standard & Poor's).
- 12.12. **Pooled Property Funds:** Shares in diversified property investment vehicles. Property funds offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile in the short term. The funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period.

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