



Hertfordshire County Council Pension Fund Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 2020/21

	Page
➤ Introduction	
1. Foreword	2
2. Financial Summary	2
➤ Scheme Administration	
1. Background to the Scheme	3
2. Funding	4
3. Benefits	5
➤ Administering Authority Report	
1. Management	7
2. Governance and Compliance Statement	8
3. Risk Management	14
4. Administration	14
5. Communication	17
6. Actuarial Valuation Report	19
7. Membership	21
➤ Financial Statements	
1. Statement of Responsibilities	22
2. Independent Auditor's Report	23
3. Fund Account	26
4. Net Assets Statement	27
5. Statement of Accounting Policies	28
6. Notes to the Accounts	32
➤ Investment Report	
1. Investment Management	56
2. Investment Strategy Statement	58
3. Investment Policy	66
4. Review of World Markets	68
5. Investment Performance	70
➤ Appendices	
1. List of Employing Bodies	73
2. Funding Strategy Statement	78
3. ACCESS Annual Report	109
➤ Glossary to the Annual Report and Accounts	110

1. Foreword

This report provides information for employers and other interested parties on how the Hertfordshire Pension Fund ("Pension Fund") has been managed during the year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

This report summarises the main features of the Pension Fund, providing:

- a brief outline of the Local Government Pension Scheme ("Scheme")
- the Administering Authority Report which outlines the management and administrative arrangements for the Pension Fund
- the financial statements comprising of the Fund Account and Net Assets Statement for the year 2020/21 with comparative information for the previous year. The Fund Account shows the change in net assets available for benefits during the year. The Net Assets Statement discloses the net assets of the Pension Fund at 31 March 2021
- an Investment Report which sets out the Pension Fund's Investment Policy and the level of performance achieved.

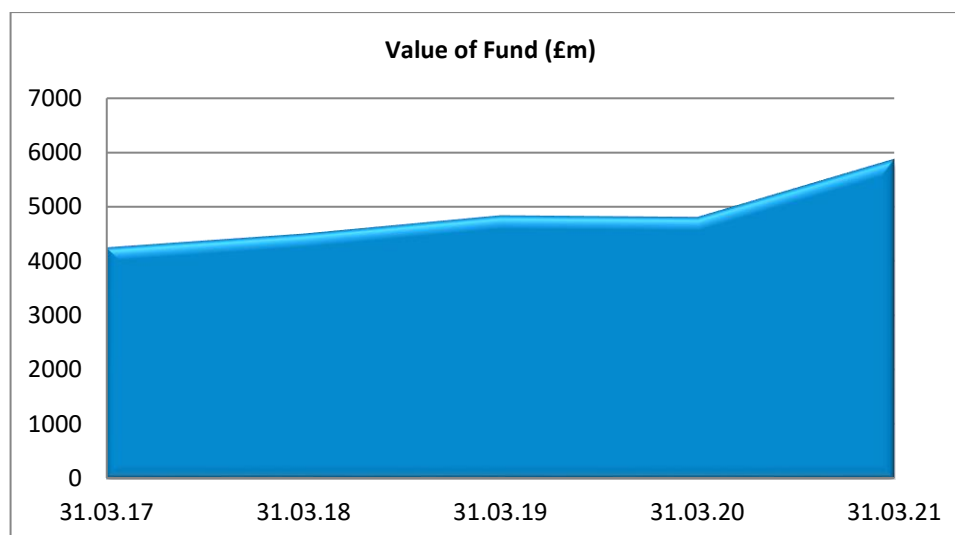
Over the year, the value of the Pension Fund increased from £4,806m at 31 March 2020 to £5,876m at 31 March 2021. The return achieved on the Pension Fund's investments is attributable to the market rebound from Covid-19, the strategic allocation of investments and market reactions to positive global news (Brexit deal, US election, Covid-19 vaccine). The overall investment return for the year was 21.8% (net of fees) which was in excess of the benchmark of 14.1% for the year. A review of world markets is provided as part of the Investment report on page 68.

Over 2020/21 the number of contributing members has decreased from 38,383 at 31 March 2020, to 37,550 at 31 March 2021, while the number of scheme employers increased from 361 at 31 March 2020 to 378 at 31 March 2021. The increase in the scheme employers is a result of schools converting to academy status and new employers seeking admission to the Pension Fund following the outsourcing of service contracts from scheme employers.

2. Financial Summary

The table below provides a five year summary of the Pension Fund accounts and a graph showing the movement in the value of the Pension Fund over this period. This shows the net assets available to fund benefits at 31 March each year.

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20		2020/21
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s		£000s
3,584,250	4,243,371	4,499,017	4,835,004	Value of the Pension Fund at 1 April	4,805,909
23,978	27,532	30,474	44,822	Net additions / (withdrawals) from dealing with those directly involved in the scheme	25,905
(14,786)	(14,629)	(12,882)	(16,378)	Management expenses	(18,711)
649,930	242,744	318,394	(57,539)	Net returns on investments	1,062,950
659,121	255,646	335,987	(29,095)	Increase / (Decrease) in the Pension Fund during the year	1,070,144
4,243,371	4,499,017	4,835,004	4,805,909	Value of the Pension Fund at 31 March	5,876,053



1. Background to the Scheme

Legal Framework

The Scheme is a statutory scheme, established by Act of Parliament, the Superannuation Act 1972. The Scheme is governed by the Public Services Pensions Act 2013 and is administered in accordance with the following secondary legislation:

- Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended)
- Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings & Amendment) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016

The Scheme is run by administering authorities in accordance with these regulations. In Hertfordshire the Administering Authority is Hertfordshire County Council.

Eligibility

The Scheme is available to all employees of local authorities other than teachers, fire personnel and a number of Public Health staff for whom separate pension arrangements apply. Employees are able to join the Scheme if they have a contract of employment of three months or more duration.

Other specified bodies providing public services are included by statute or may apply for admission.

Employers

At 31 March 2021 there were 378 employers in the Pension Fund. Participating employers can be scheduled bodies or admitted bodies, as defined below:

- **Scheduled bodies.** Employers such as the County Council (including maintained schools), Academies and District and Borough Councils, whose employees are automatically entitled to be members of the Fund.
- **Designated bodies.** Organisations such as Parish and Town Councils whose employees are able to join the Scheme if the employer designates that they can.
- **Admitted bodies.** These are voluntary, charitable and, in certain circumstances, private sector organisations carrying out scheduled bodies' contracts, where staff can become members of the Scheme by virtue of an Admission Agreement between the Pension Fund and the relevant body. At 31 March 2021 there were 145 admitted bodies participating in the Pension Fund.

A full list of employing bodies in the Pension Fund is shown in Appendix 1 at page 73.

The table below provides an analysis of scheduled and admitted bodies at 31 March 2021 and an analysis of active employers and employers that have ceased (these are employers with no active members but with outstanding liabilities). Admitted bodies may have more than one Admission Agreement in the Pension Fund relative to the service contracts they hold with scheduled bodies.

Type of Body	Active	Ceased	Total
Admitted bodies	54	91	145
Designated bodies	42	3	45
Scheduled bodies	174	14	188
Total	270	108	378

2. Funding

The Scheme is a funded scheme, financed by contributions from employees and employers and by earnings from investments. The Pension Fund has published a Funding Strategy Statement (shown in Appendix 2 at page 78), which sets out the Pension Fund's strategy for meeting employers' pension liabilities. The aim of the funding strategy is to ensure the long-term solvency of the Pension Fund and to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet all benefits as they fall due for payment.

Employees' Contributions

During 2020/21, employees paid contributions at a rate based on their earnings, including contractual and non-contractual overtime and additional hours. From 1 April 2014, the Scheme moved from a final salary scheme to a career average revalued earnings (CARE) scheme. As part of the CARE scheme, employees can elect to move to the 50/50 option which allows employees to pay half the normal contributions in return for half the normal pension benefits.

The rates and salary bandings applicable during 2020/21 are shown in the table below.

Band	Range	Contribution Rate
1	£0 - £14,600.99	5.50%
2	More than £14,601 up to £22,800.99	5.80%
3	More than £22,801 up to £37,100.99	6.50%
4	More than £37,101 up to £46,900.99	6.80%
5	More than £46,901 up to £65,600.99	8.50%
6	More than £65,601 up to £93,000.99	9.90%
7	More than £93,001 up to £109,500.99	10.50%
8	More than £109,501 up to £164,200.99	11.40%
9	More than £164,201	12.50%

Employers' Contributions

Employers' contributions are payable at rates specified by the Pension Fund Actuary and are reviewed each triennial valuation. Rates are adjusted to reflect changes in the employer's membership profile and funding level in the Pension Fund (see page 19 for further details).

Investment Income

The cash, which is not immediately required to pay pensions and other benefits, is invested and provides an additional source of income for the Pension Fund.

Fund investments during 20/21 were governed by the 2020 Investment Strategy Statement (ISS) which details investment strategy, asset allocation, risk analysis, and the fund's approach to Environmental, Social and corporate Governance (ESG) considerations. The ISS is included from page 58.

3. Benefits

The Scheme is a salary-related defined benefit scheme which guarantees to provide benefits which are a specified fraction of a Scheme member's pay. Benefits are not affected by variations in investment performance.

The following provides the main provisions of the benefit package for the Scheme.

Age of Retirement

The normal pension age in the Scheme is linked to State Pension Age, with a minimum of age 65. The Scheme also makes provisions for the early payment of benefits and members can choose to retire and draw their pension at any time from age 55. Benefits paid before normal pension age will be reduced to reflect that benefits will be paid over a longer period of time.

Retirement Benefits

From 1 April 2014, the Scheme moved from a final salary scheme to a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme details of which are accessible from the Pension Fund website at <https://www.lppapensions.co.uk/members/reports-statements/annual-benefit-statement/>

For membership after 1 April 2014, members build up a pension at a rate of 1/49th of the amount of pensionable pay they receive in each scheme year. The amount of pension built up during the scheme year is added to their pension account and revalued at the end of each year in line with inflation. Up to 25% of the capital value of benefits can be taken as a lump sum at a 12:1 commutation rate, i.e. £12 lump sum for every £1 of annual pension given up.

Benefits built up before 1 April 2014 are protected and are calculated using membership in the Scheme prior to 1 April 2015 and the member's final pay when they leave the Scheme.

For membership built up between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2014, the annual pension is based on final pensionable pay multiplied by 1/60th for each year of Scheme membership. The final pensionable pay is the wage or salary on which contributions were paid over the last 12 months of service. Up to 25% of the capital value of benefits can be taken as a lump sum at a 12:1 commutation rate, i.e. £12 lump sum for every £1 of annual pension given up.

For membership accrued to 31 March 2008, members will receive an annual pension based on final pensionable pay multiplied by 1/80th for each year of Scheme membership and a lump sum of three times annual pension. Up to 25% of the capital value of benefits can be taken as a lump sum at a 12:1 commutation rate, i.e. £12 lump sum for every £1 of annual pension given up.

Additional Benefits

The Scheme offers several ways for members to increase their benefits:

- Additional Pension Contributions to purchase additional Scheme pension benefits.
- Contributions to a money purchase Additional Voluntary Contribution scheme ("AVC"), provided by the Standard Life Assurance Company or the Utmost Life and Pensions Company (originally called the Equitable Life Assurance Society).

Ill Health Retirement

A three tier ill health retirement provision is available which is dependent on the likelihood of a member being capable of undertaking any gainful employment in the future. Benefits are calculated in the same way as for normal retirements, with an enhancement for members in tiers 1 and 2 to compensate for premature retirement. Members in tier 3 who are likely to be capable of undertaking gainful employment within three years of retiring must undergo a medical review after 18 months. At the end of the three year period the member will either have their pension benefits deferred to age 65 or move to tier 2 following a medical assessment.

Death in Service

A lump sum death grant of three year's assumed pensionable pay is payable. Pensions are also payable to surviving spouses, civil partners, or to eligible nominated co-habiting partners (subject to qualifying conditions) and dependent children.

Death after Retirement

Spouses', civil partners', eligible co-habiting partners' and dependent children's pensions are payable based on the former employee's pensionable pay or pension. In addition, if death occurred before the pension has been paid for ten years; the balance will be paid as a lump sum.

The benefits detailed above are guidelines only and members should apply to the Local Pensions Partnership, the Scheme Administrator, for individual estimates of benefits payable.

1. Management

Hertfordshire County Council (the "County Council") is the Administering Authority of the Pension Fund and administers the Scheme on behalf of the participating employers and members.

The Local Authority (Functions & Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended), state that functions relating to the Scheme are the responsibility of the full Council. The County Council has delegated these functions to the Pensions Committee and to the County Council's Chief Finance Officer, the Director of Resources.

The membership of the Pensions Committee is made up of ten County Council members and two District Council representatives. All employers and a staff representative, nominated by UNISON, are invited to attend meetings as observers.

The Administering Authority has established a Pension Board in accordance with Section 5 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013. The Board assists the Pension Fund in securing compliance with the Scheme regulations and other legal and regulatory requirements. The membership of the Pensions Board is made up of four employer representatives and four member representatives.

The Pension Fund's Governance Compliance Statement that was in force during 2020/21 is included on pages 8 - 13. This sets out the delegation of functions, terms of reference for the Pensions Committee and Pensions Board, and has been updated to reflect the impact of Asset Pooling within ACCESS. It also outlines the Pension Fund's compliance with statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Pensions Committee Membership during 2020/21

County Council Members		
R Sangster (Chairman)	S Quilty	M A Eames-Petersen
AJS Mitchell (Vice-Chairman)	S Drury	SJ Boulton
JM Graham	R Parker	R H Smith
R C Deering		

District Council Representatives (non-voting)		
P Mason	S Markiewicz	J Lloyd

Pensions Board Membership during 2020/21

Employer Representatives	Member Representatives
Board Members	
D Ashley	K O'Daly
G Clay	M Collier
S Ansell	M Patel
Vacant	G Johnson
Substitute Members	
T Hone	D Gooden
R McCarthy	T Perkins
J Kidd	
Vacant	

2. Governance and Compliance Statement

This statement is prepared in accordance with regulation 55 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, which require administering authorities to maintain and publish a governance compliance statement. It has been prepared by the Administering Authority in consultation with appropriate interested persons.

This Statement was approved by the Pensions Committee on 3rd March 2020.

Delegation of Functions

The Administering Authority for the Local Government Pension Scheme in Hertfordshire is Hertfordshire County Council (the "County Council"). Management of the Local Government Pension Scheme is a non-executive function.

The Local Authority (Functions & Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended), state that the functions relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme are the responsibility of the full Council. The County Council has delegated these functions to the Pensions Committee, whose members can make decisions without reference to the full Council.

The Pensions Committee are responsible for the functions set out in the following regulations:

- Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013
- Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings & Amendment) Regulations 2014
- Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016.

In parallel to this, the County Council has delegated functions relating to the Pension Fund to the County Council's Chief Finance Officer, the Director for Resources, as specified in Annex 3 of the County Council's Constitution.

The Pension Committee is supported by a cross-party working group consisting of four members (in proportion to the political representation of the full Council) from the Pension Committee, supported by officers and external advisors – such as the investment consultant. The remit of this group going forwards will be to support Officers with decisions required when transitioning to the new Investment Strategy, as well as support with other pension related matters where appropriate.

The County Council has established a Pension Board in accordance with Section 5 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013. In accordance with Sections 5(1) and (2) of the Act and section 106 of the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations 2013, the role of the Board is to:

- Secure compliance with:
 - The Local Government Pensions Scheme regulations;
 - Other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme; and
 - The requirements imposed by the Pension Regulator in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme;

and to

- Ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Terms of Reference

The functions relating to the management and governance of the Pension Fund have been delegated as follows.

The Pensions Committee is responsible for policy matters including:

- Setting and monitoring performance objectives for the Pension Fund
- Approval and review of the overall investment strategy of the Pension Fund
- Approval and review of asset allocation decisions
- Performance monitoring Investment Managers and investments
- Appointing (and, when necessary, dismissing) Investment Managers*
- Appointing (and, when necessary, dismissing) Investment Consultants
- Appointing (and, when necessary, dismissing) the Pension Fund Actuary
- Appointing (and, when necessary, dismissing) the Pension Fund Custodian
- Setting and approving Administering Authority discretions for the Local Government Pension Scheme
- Approval of key policies and statements:
 - Investment Strategy Statement
 - Funding Strategy Statement
 - Governance Compliance Statement
 - Communications Strategy Statement
- Agreeing and monitoring actions to address findings from any review of Pension Fund activities

* Following the requirement of LGPS to pool investments announced in the 2015 Summer Budget, the UK Equity and Global Equity mandates with Baillie Gifford and the Core Plus Bond mandate with Royal London have transferred to the operator of the ACCESS pool (A Collaboration of Central, Eastern and Southern Shires) - of which Hertfordshire is a member. The responsibility for appointing (and, when necessary, dismissing) Investment Managers within ACCESS sits with the Operator. For all other assets held outside of the pool, this responsibility remains with the Pension Committee

The primary governance function of the ACCESS pool is the Joint Governance Committee (JGC), which is made up of the chairs of each of the eleven funds within the ACCESS pool.

The ACCESS Joint Governance Committee is responsible for:

- Specifying the Operator services to be procured;
- Procuring the Operator;
- Appointing the Operator;
- Reviewing the performance of the Operator;
- Managing the Operator;
- Appointment of advisers;
- Functions in relation to management of pool assets;
- Functions concerning pool aligned assets; and
- Functions concerning business planning and budget.

The Pension Board is responsible for:

- Scrutinising the progress of actions to meet the performance objectives of the Pension Fund
- Reviewing and monitoring the training plan of the Pensions Board and elected members and officers with delegated responsibilities for the management and administration of the Pension Fund
- Reviewing and monitoring the performance of external business partners, including the pensions administration service, the actuary, the custodian and the investment consultant
- Reviewing and monitoring the Risk Register and risk monitoring of scheme employers
- Reviewing the implementation of revised policies and procedures, including the Administering Authority discretions
- Reviewing the compliance of projects commissioned by the Pensions Committee, including the Triennial Valuation of the Pension Fund
- Ensuring pension rules and regulations are being complied with, when officers are making decisions on pension matters
- Scrutinising data quality
- Reviewing internal audit reports
- Assisting in the development of improved customer services
- Reviewing compliance of Investment Managers with Investment Management Agreements
- Reviewing progress of agreed actions to address findings from any review of the Pension Fund activities.

Administering Authority Report

All other operational decisions in the administration and management of the Pension Fund including exercising the Administering Authority's Discretions are delegated to the County Council's Chief Finance Officer, the Director of Resources.

Membership, Voting and Meetings

The membership, voting rights and frequency of meetings of the Pensions Committee and Pensions Board are set out in the table below:

	Pensions Committee	Pensions Board
Membership	Ten County Council members (in proportion to the political representation of the full Council) and three (non-voting) District Council representatives elected by the Hertfordshire Leaders' Group as outlined in Annex 3 (section 2.4) of the Hertfordshire County Council Constitution.	Four employer representatives and four member representatives
Chairman	Elected by full Council	Elected by the Pension Board and rotated every two years between member and employer representatives
Observers	Staff representative, nominated by UNISON	
Voting	County Council Members, as elected Members of the Administering Authority, have voting rights in accordance with the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 SI No 1553 5 (1)(d).	All employer and member representatives have voting rights
Meetings per annum	Six	Four

Further information on the constitution of the Pension Board, including the appointment of employer and member representatives, standards and conflicts of interest can be found in Annex 23 of the County Council's Constitution.

Training

Members of the Pensions Committee and Board receive regular training in line with CIPFA and national guidance. The training policy and training requirements are reviewed as part of the annual business plan reviews for the Committee and Board.

Compliance with Statutory Guidance

The following table provides a summary of how the Pension Fund complies with the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Pension Fund Compliance Statement	
Principle	Compliance and Comments
A. Structure	
a) The management of the administration of benefits and strategic management of fund assets clearly rests with the main committee established by the appointment Council.	Full
b) That representatives of participating LGPS employers, admitted bodies and scheme members (including pensioner and deferred members) are members of either the main or secondary committee established to underpin the work of the main committee.	Full
c) That where a secondary committee or panel has been established, the structure ensures effective communication across both levels.	Not applicable
d) That where a secondary committee or panel has been established, at least one seat on the main committee is allocated for a member from the secondary committee or panel.	Not applicable
B. Representation	
a) That all key stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to be represented within the main or secondary committee structure. These include:	
i) employing authorities (including non-scheme employers, e.g. admitted bodies):	Full The County and District Councils, whose employees make up 63% of the active membership, are represented on the Pensions Committee. The Pensions Board is made up of four employer representatives and four scheme member representatives
ii) scheme members (including deferred and pensioner scheme members);	Full UNISON has an observer place on the Pensions Committee to represent all Scheme members.
iii) independent professional observers, and	No – the Committee takes regular input from external professional advisors (see below). It is considered that an additional independent professional advisor would come at a cost, but not add significant value.
iv) expert advisors (on an ad-hoc basis)	Full

Pension Fund Compliance Statement	
Principle	Compliance and Comments
	The Pension Fund's Investment Adviser, Actuary and Administrator attend the Pensions Committee when appropriate.
b) That where lay members sit on a main or secondary committee, they are treated equally in terms of access to papers and meetings, training and are given full opportunity to contribute to the decision making process, with or without voting rights	Full
C. Selection and Role of Lay Members	
a) That committee or panel members are made fully aware of the status, role and function they are required to perform on either a main or secondary committee.	Full
b) That at the start of any meeting, committee members are invited to declare any financial or pecuniary interest related to specific matters on the agenda.	Full
D. Voting	Full
a) The policy of individual administering authorities on voting rights is clear and transparent, including the justification for not extending voting rights to each body or group represented on main LGPS committees.	The policy is clear that only County Council members can vote. The Pensions Committee believes that the voting arrangements are justified, because in practice the vast majority of decisions are reached by consensus.
E. Training/Facility Time/Expenses	Full
a) That in relation to the way in which statutory and related decisions are taken by the administering authority, there is a clear policy on training, facility time and reimbursement of expenses in respect of members involved in the decision-making process.	Training is provided internally and externally and offered to all Pensions Committee and Board members. Reimbursement of expenses is covered by the members' allowance schemes in their authority.
b) That where such a policy exists, it applies equally to all members of committees, sub-committees, advisory panels or any other form of secondary forum.	Full
c) That the administering authority considers the adoption of annual training plans for committee members and maintains a log of all such training undertaken.	Full
F. Meetings (frequency/quorum)	
a) That an administering authority's main committee or committees meet at least quarterly.	Full
b) That an administering authority's secondary committee or panel meet at least twice a year and is synchronised with the dates when the main committee sits.	Not applicable
c) That administering authorities who do not include lay members in their formal governance arrangements, provide a forum outside of those arrangements by which the interests of key stakeholders can be represented.	Full An annual employers' forum is held to update employers on Pension Fund matters.
G. Access	

Pension Fund Compliance Statement	
Principle	Compliance and Comments
a) That subject to any rules in the council's constitution, all members of main and secondary committees or panels have equal access to committee papers, documents and advice that falls to be considered at meetings of the main committee.	Full
H. Scope a) That administering authorities have taken steps to bring wider scheme issues within the scope of their governance arrangements.	Full
I. Publicity a) That administering authorities have published details of their governance arrangements in such a way that stakeholders with an interest in the way in which the scheme is governed, can express an interest in wanting to be part of those arrangements.	Full

3. Risk Management

Responsibility for the risk management of the Pension Fund rests with the Pensions Committee and is assisted by the Pensions Board in the monitoring of risks.

Key risks are incorporated in the Pension Fund's Risk Register, which was approved by the Pensions Committee on 3 March 2020 as part of the Funding Strategy Statement.

Four key risks to the Pension Fund have been identified:

- The Pension Fund's Investment Strategy does not deliver the long term projected investment returns and/or does not comply with legislation.
- The funding level of the Pension Fund deteriorates.
- Employers default on meeting their obligations to the Pension Fund and the Scheme.
- The Pension Fund and its third party providers do not comply with regulations, statute or procedure.

A number of underlying risk control mechanisms are in place that aim to manage these risks and these are detailed in the Funding Strategy Statement on page 78. Risks are monitored on a regular basis and quarterly reports are presented to the Pensions Committee and Board, providing an update on the status of these risks. The quarterly reports and minutes of the Pensions Committee and Board meetings are accessible from <https://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings.aspx>.

Investment risk and return objectives for the Pension Fund are set out in the Investment Strategy which is reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that it will achieve the objectives. Note 6.14 of the Financial Statements provides details on the nature and extent of risks arising from financial instruments and how these are managed.

Employers are monitored against a risk monitoring framework that aims to identify employers at an early stage who are at risk of defaulting on their obligations to the Pension Fund. A quarterly update is provided to the Pensions Committee and Board.

4. Administration

Hertfordshire County Council is the Administering Authority of the Pension Fund and administers the Scheme in conjunction with the contracted business services listed below.

Scheme Administrator providing scheme administration services for members in conjunction with the County Council:

- Local Pensions Partnership (LPP)

Investment Managers during 2020/21 investing funds on behalf of the Pension Fund:

- Allianz Global Investors Europe GmbH
- Baillie Gifford & Co.
- CBRE Global Collective Investors (UK) Limited
- HarbourVest Partners, LLC
- Insight Investment Management Limited
- Legal & General Assurance (Pension Management) Limited
- LGT Capital Partners (Ireland) Limited
- Longview Partners LPP
- Macquarie Group Limited
- Municipal & General Securities Company Limited
- Pantheon Ventures UK LLP
- Permira Advisers, LLP
- Royal London Asset Management Limited
- Standard Life Investments Limited
- UBS Group AG

ACCESS Operator

- Link Fund Solutions Ltd

Custodian maintaining and managing investment records and safeguarding the Pension Fund's assets:

- BNY Mellon Asset Servicing B.V. (for assets outside of the ACCESS pool)
- Northern Trust Corporation (through the ACCESS operator for assets within the ACCESS pool)

Consulting Actuary providing actuarial services:

- C McFadyen, Fellow of the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries, for and on behalf of Hymans Robertson LLP
- B Dodds, Fellow of the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries, for and on behalf of Hymans Robertson LLP

Investment Consultant providing investment advice:

- Mercer Limited

Performance Measurement Consultants providing independent reporting on investment performance:

- BNY Mellon Asset Servicing B.V. (for assets outside of the ACCESS pool)
- Northern Trust Corporation (through the ACCESS operator for assets within the ACCESS pool)

Additional Voluntary Contributions providers for members wishing to increase benefits:

- Utmost Life and Pensions Company
- Standard Life Assurance Company

External Auditor:

- Elizabeth Jackson, for and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP

Banker:

- Barclays Bank plc

Legal advisor:

- Squire Patton Boggs (UK) LLP

The Pension Fund is a member or subscriber of the following bodies:

- Local Authority Pension Fund Forum
- Local Government Pension Committee
- Pension and Lifetime Savings Association

Key contacts

Administering Authority

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Administration Strategy

The Pension Fund has published an Administration Strategy ("Strategy") that sets out the responsibilities of the Pension Fund and employers and defines the required performance standards expected of the Pension Fund and its employers and also provides details of the charges that will be levied for non-compliance.

The Strategy has been prepared in accordance with regulation 59 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended). This enables a Local Government Pension Scheme Fund to prepare an administration strategy to support the delivery of a high quality administration service.

The Strategy was produced in consultation with employers and subsequent revisions are made in consultation with employers and approved by the Pensions Committee. The latest version was approved by the Pensions Committee on 27 February 2015 and implemented on 1 April 2015 and is accessible from the Pension Fund website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

Annual Performance Report

A set of key performance indicators has been agreed and approved by the Pensions Committee and these are used to measure and report on the performance of the Administering Authority, the outsourced pensions administration service provider LPP and employers. Performance is reported to the Pensions Committee and Board on a quarterly basis and the reports and minutes from these meetings are accessible from:

<http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/CabinetandCommittees.aspx>.

Performance of the Administering Authority

The following table provides details of the Pension Fund's management costs shown as a unit cost per member (contributors, deferred and pensioner) and as a percentage of Net Assets, with comparative data for 2019/20.

	2019/20	2020/21	Trend
Total management costs per member	£148.40	£171.59	▲
Administrative expenses per member	£19.24	£17.62	▼
Total management costs as a percentage of Net Assets	0.34%	0.32%	▼

The Administering Authority is measured against performance and compliance with statutory requirements placed on administering authorities for the administration of pension funds. Performance of the Administering Authority is reviewed by periodic Internal Audit review and by the volume of complaints or internal disputes raised against the Administering Authority. The following provides details of performance for 2020/21:

- The annual external audit was carried out between March and November 2020 by Ernst & Young LLP. This reviewed the 2019/20 Annual Report and Accounts to provide a true and fair opinion on the financial statements. Ernst & Young LLP issued a positive Audit Results Report with no recommendations for improvements.
- An assurance audit was carried out between February 2021 and March 2021 by the Shared Internal Audit Service. The audit reviewed controls and procedures for pensions administration. The audit report was issued in August 2021 with satisfactory assurance that effective controls are in operation.
- As part of the annual external review of the 2020/21 Annual Report and Accounts, during February 2021, Ernst & Young LLP carried out an assessment of internal controls. Ernst & Young LLP's findings from the assessment will be published in September 2021 as part of the 2020/21 Audit Results Report for the Pension Fund.
- During 2020/21 there were sixteen Internal Disputes against the Administering Authority; two of these were upheld and five were outstanding at year end. A copy of the internal disputes resolution procedure is accessible from the Pension Fund website, <https://www.lppapensions.co.uk/customer-care/>
- The Pension Fund achieved the statutory deadline of 31 August 2020 for the issue of the 2020 Annual Benefit Statements for 99.99% of members. Those members who did not receive their statements by the deadline were supplied with an interim statement.

Performance of the Pensions Administration Service

Performance of the pensions administration service delivered by the LPP is measured against targets set out in the Service Level Agreement and against the number of complaints raised about service delivery. The following provides details of performance for 2020/21:

- During 2020/21, 92 complaints were received; 68 of these were upheld and resolved, 23 were not upheld and 1 was outstanding at year end.
- Efficiency of the pensions administration service is measured against Service Level Agreement performance targets which are monitored and reported on a monthly basis. The following chart sets out results for 2020/21 for key service tasks.

Pensions Administration Task	Annual Total	Standard ¹	Within Standard
Joiners to the LGPS	7,050	6 working days	100.00%
Pensions transfers in and out	4,188	6 working days	99.85%
Processing pensions benefits for retirements and deaths	5,552	5 working days	98.97%
Providing deferred members with a benefit statement	5,348	30 working days	99.60%
Processing refunds of pensions contributions	4,168	5 working days	99.50%
Providing estimates of retirement benefits	2,786	5 working days	99.54%

¹ From receipt of accurate information

Performance of Employers

Employers' performance in administering the Scheme is measured against targets set out in the Administration Strategy and compliance with performance standards. The following provides details of performance for 2020/21:

- A total of 67 charges were levied against 42 employers (15.56% of active employers) for late submission of contribution returns or late payment of monthly contributions. Interest was levied on employers for late payment of contributions in accordance with regulation 70 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended).
- 94.81% of active employers paid contributions by the due date each month.
- 88.15% of active employers submitted monthly contribution returns by the due date.

To ensure compliance with the statutory deadline for the issue of the 2020/21 Annual Benefit Statements to LGPS members, the Pension Fund worked with scheme employers to ensure they understood their responsibilities under the Scheme and the sanctions that may apply if requirements were not met and implemented a communication plan for advising scheme employers of the requirements, timescales and support available.

5. Communication

The Pension Fund has published a Communication Policy Statement which sets out how it communicates with employers and representatives of employers, Scheme members and prospective Scheme members. It was approved by the Pensions Committee on 4 September 2017.

Communication Policy Statement

This Statement is prepared in accordance with Regulation 61 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, which requires an Administering Authority to prepare, maintain and publish a statement on its policy for communicating with members and employing authorities.

Employers

The following methods are used to communicate with employers in the Pension Fund:

- **Annual General Meeting/Employer Forum**
All employers are invited to attend, to listen to presentations on topical issues and to raise questions about the Pension Fund.
- **Quarterly Employer Newsletters and Ad Hoc Bulletins**
All employers receive quarterly newsletters which provide information, advice and guidance about administering the Scheme. Ad hoc bulletins are also published to advise employers about specific issues that require attention or action e.g. changes to Scheme regulations.
- **Annual Report and Accounts**
A copy of this publication is sent to all employers and is available from the Pension Fund's website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>
- **Hertfordshire Chief Finance Officers' Meeting**
The Assistant Director (Finance) for the County Council keeps in contact with the District and Borough Councils through these meetings and keeps them up to date with pension matters.
- **Pension Committee Reports and Minutes**
These are available to employers and members who wish to review them, from the Hertfordshire County Council website: <http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/CabinetandCommittees.aspx>
- **Pension Board Reports and Minutes**
These are available to employers and members who wish to review them, from the Hertfordshire County Council website: <http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/CabinetandCommittees.aspx>
- **Guidance and Help**
Hertfordshire County Council staff and the Local Pensions Partnership (LPP), the Pension Fund's outsourced scheme administrator, are available to give advice on the telephone, by letter or by email. Comprehensive information and guidance is also accessible from the Pension Fund website: <https://www.lppapensions.co.uk/>

Scheme Members*

The following methods are used to communicate with Scheme members:

- **Telephone Helpline**
The LPP provide a telephone helpline for all enquiries from Scheme members on any aspect of their pension arrangements.
- **Annual Benefit Statements**
All active and deferred Scheme members receive an Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) setting out the level of benefits that have been built-up, along with a forecast of benefits at retirement.
- **Internet**
The Pension Fund's website provides information about Scheme benefits. Scheme members may also have access to information about their pension benefits by subscribing to an online service.
- **Information Letters**
Information about changes in regulations is provided to employees via their employers in a range of media, including e-mail and letter.
- **Payslips**
All pensioners receive at least three payslips each year and messages are included whenever there is new information to be communicated.
- **Newsletter for Pensioners**
An annual newsletter is mailed to pensioners and two in-year newsletters are published and are accessible from the Pension Fund website.

*The scheme has largely moved to electronic means of communication (including ABS Statements, Payslips and Pensioner Newsletters) with members, as opposed to paper copies, where possible. This includes online self-service, as well as e-mail communications, notifications and alerts. The Fund provided members with two written notices to this effect, allowing members the opportunity to opt-out of electronic communication, and continue to receive paper copies.

Prospective Scheme Members

The methods used to ensure that prospective members are aware of the Scheme and its benefits are:

- **Job Advertisements**
Many employers advertise the benefits of the Scheme in their job advertisements.
- **Scheme Booklet**
All new starters in the employing organisations in the Pension Fund are provided with a Scheme booklet which summarises the benefits available from the Pension Fund.
- **Induction Sessions**
Employers in the Pension Fund are encouraged to include pensions in their induction sessions for new starters.

6. Actuarial Valuation Report

The Pension Fund is financed by contributions from employees and employers and by investment income earned on accumulated funds not immediately required for the payment of benefits and expenses. The Pension Fund Actuary reports periodically to the County Council on the Pension Fund's solvency and to identify the contributions payable by employers to the Pension Fund in the future to meet the funding objectives of the Pension Fund.

The Pension Fund has published a Funding Strategy Statement (see page 78), which sets out the Pension Fund's strategy for meeting employers' pension liabilities. The aim of the funding strategy is to ensure the long-term solvency of the Pension Fund and to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet all benefits as they fall due for payment. The Pension Fund Actuary takes account of the Funding Strategy Statement when advising on the level of employer contributions to be paid.

Actuarial Statement for 2020/21 Provided by Hymans Robertson LLP

This statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 57(1)(d) of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013. It has been prepared at the request of the Administering Authority of the Fund for the purpose of complying with the aforementioned regulation.

Description of Funding Policy

The funding policy is set out in the Administering Authority's Funding Strategy Statement (FSS). In summary, the key funding principles are as follows:

- to ensure the long-term solvency of the Fund using a prudent long-term view. This will ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet all members'/dependants' benefits as they fall due for payment;
- to ensure that employer contribution rates are reasonably stable where appropriate;
- to minimise the long-term cash contributions which employers need to pay to the Fund, by recognising the link between assets and liabilities and adopting an investment strategy which balances risk and return (this will also minimise the costs to be borne by Council Taxpayers);
- to reflect the different characteristics of different employers in determining contribution rates. This involves the Fund having a clear and transparent funding strategy to demonstrate how each employer can best meet its own liabilities over future years; and
- to use reasonable measures to reduce the risk to other employers and ultimately to the Council Taxpayer from an employer defaulting on its pension obligations.

The FSS sets out how the Administering Authority seeks to balance the conflicting aims of securing the solvency of the Fund and keeping employer contributions stable. For employers whose covenant was considered by the Administering Authority to be sufficiently strong, contributions have been stabilised to have a sufficiently high likelihood of achieving the funding target over 20 years. Asset-liability modelling has been carried out which demonstrate that if these contribution rates are paid and future contribution changes are constrained as set out in the FSS, there is at least a 71% likelihood that the Fund will achieve the funding target over 20 years.

Funding Position as at the last formal funding valuation

The most recent actuarial valuation carried out under Regulation 62 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 was as at 31 March 2019. This valuation revealed that the Fund's assets, which at 31 March 2019 were valued at £4,835 million, were sufficient to meet 98% of the liabilities (i.e. the present value of promised retirement benefits) accrued up to that date. The resulting deficit at the 2019 valuation was £87 million. Each employer had contribution requirements set at the valuation, with the aim of achieving full funding within a time horizon and probability measure as per the FSS. Individual employers' contributions for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023 were set in accordance with the Fund's funding policy as set out in its FSS.

Principal Actuarial Assumptions and Method used to value the liabilities

Full details of the methods and assumptions used are described in the 2019 valuation report.

Method

The liabilities were assessed using an accrued benefits method which takes into account pensionable membership up to the valuation date; and makes an allowance for expected future salary growth to retirement or expected earlier date of leaving pensionable membership.

Assumptions

A market-related approach was taken to valuing the liabilities, for consistency with the valuation of the Fund assets at their market value.

The key financial assumptions adopted for the 2019 valuation were as follows:

Financial Assumptions

Financial assumptions	31 March 2019
Discount rate	3.4%
Salary increase assumption	2.7%
Benefit increase assumption (CPI)	2.3%

The key demographic assumption was the allowance made for longevity. The life expectancy assumptions are based on the Fund's VitaCurves with improvements in line with the CMI 2018 model, an allowance for smoothing of recent mortality experience and a long term rate of 1.25% p.a. Based on these assumptions, the average future life expectancies at age 65 are as follows:

Males/Females

	Males	Females
Current Pensioners	21.9 years	24.1 years
Future Pensioners*	22.8 years	25.5 years

*Aged 45 at the 2019 Valuation.

Copies of the 2019 valuation report and Funding Strategy Statement are available on request from the Administering Authority to the Fund.

Experience over the period since 31 March 2019

Markets were severely disrupted by COVID 19 in March 2020, but in the year 2020/21 they recovered strongly. As a result, the funding level of the Fund as at 31 March 2021 is likely to be an improvement to that reported at the previous formal valuation.

The next actuarial valuation will be carried out as at 31 March 2022. The Funding Strategy Statement will also be reviewed at that time.

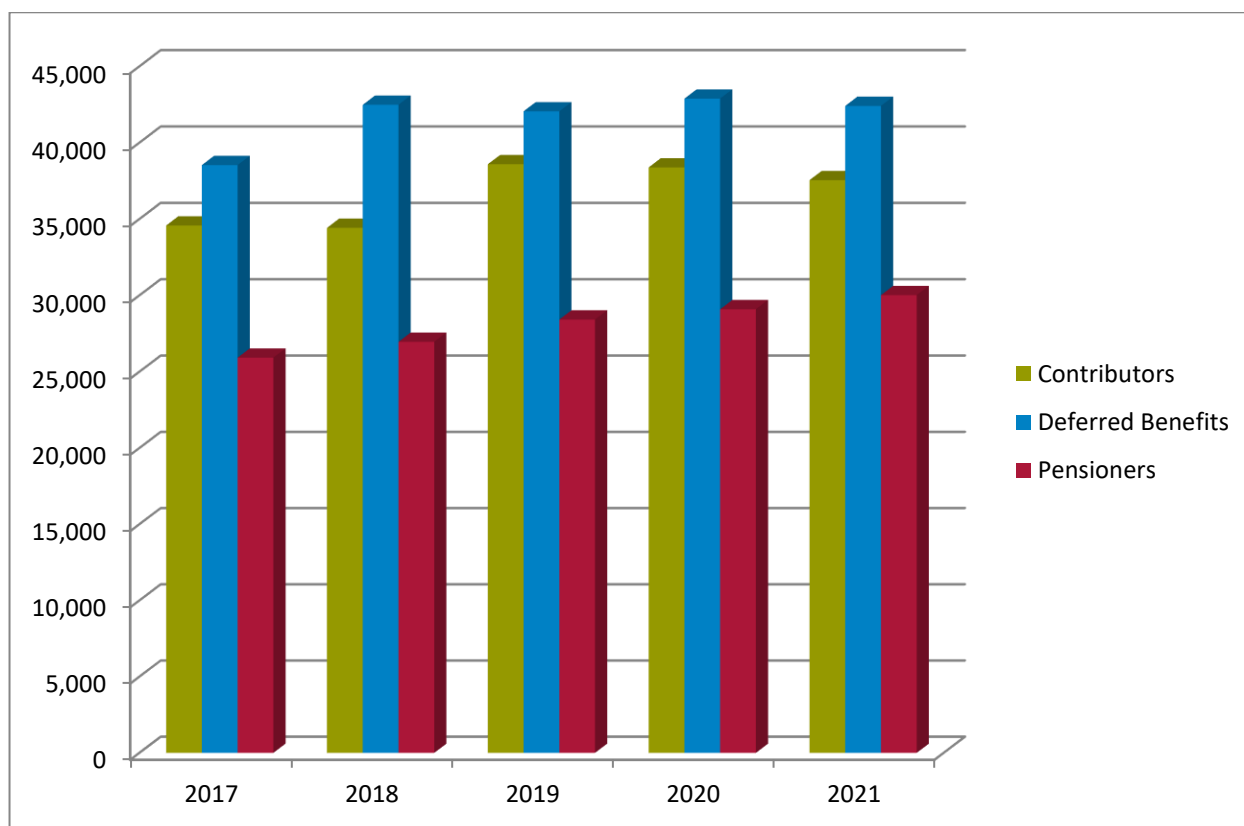
Barry Dodds FFA

12 May 2021

For and on behalf of Hymans Robertson LLP

7. Membership

The following graph shows the changes in membership over the last five years and the following table analyses the membership between member groups along with comparative figures for 2021.



31 March 2020		31 March 2021
38,383	Contributors	37,550
29,094	Pensioners	30,016
42,887	Deferred benefits (former contributors)	42,408
110,364	Total Members	109,974

The table below shows an analysis of the membership of the Pension Fund between the Administering Authority, admitted bodies and other employers at 31 March 2021.

	Contributors	Pensioners	Deferred Benefits
Administering Authority	19,934	15,744	26,667
Admitted Bodies	1,359	2,395	1,885
Other scheduled bodies	16,257	11,877	13,856
Total	37,550	30,016	42,408

1. Statement of Responsibilities

Hertfordshire County Council's Responsibilities

Hertfordshire County Council is the Administering Authority of the Pension Fund. The Administering Authority is required to:

- make arrangements for the proper administration of the financial affairs of the Pension Fund and to secure that one of its officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Administering Authority that officer is the Director of Resources;
- manage the affairs of the Pension Fund to secure economic, efficient and effective use of the Pension Fund's resources and safeguard its assets; and
- approve the Statement of Accounts.

The Director of Resources' Responsibilities

The Director of Resources is responsible for the preparation of the Pension Fund's statement of accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and Local Authority (Scotland) Accounts Advisory Committee (LASAAC) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.

In preparing this statement of accounts, the Director of Resources has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent; and
- complied with the Code of Practice.

The Director of Resources has also:

- kept proper accounting records which were up to date; and
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

2. Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Hertfordshire County Council on the Pension Fund's financial statements

Opinion

We have audited the pension fund financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The pension fund financial statements comprise the Fund Account, the Net Assets Statement and the related notes 1 to 22. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21.

In our opinion the pension fund financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial transactions of the pension fund during the year ended 31 March 2021 and the amount and disposition of the fund's assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2021; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report below. We are independent of the pension fund in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and the Comptroller and Auditor General's (C&AG) AGN01, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Director of Resources' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the authority's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of 12 months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Director of Resources with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report. However, because not all future events or conditions can be predicted, this statement is not a guarantee as to the authority's ability to continue as a going concern.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Director of Resources is responsible for the other information contained within the Local Government Pension Fund Accounts, included within the Statement of Accounts 2020/21.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in this report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of the other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we report by exception

We report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make written recommendations to the audited body under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;

- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

Responsibility of the Director of Resources

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Director of Resources Responsibilities set out on page 27, the Director of Resources is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts, which includes the pension fund financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Director of Resources is responsible for assessing the Pension Fund's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Pension Fund either intends to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect irregularities, including fraud. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both those charged with governance of the entity and management.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Pension Fund and determined that the most significant are the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended), and The Public Service Pensions Act 2013.

We understood how Hertfordshire Pension Fund is complying with those frameworks by understanding the incentive, opportunities and motives for non-compliance, including inquiring of management/head of internal audit/those charged with governance and obtaining and reading documentation relating to the procedures in place to identify, evaluate and comply with laws and regulations, and whether they are aware of instances of non-compliance. We corroborated this through our reading of the Pension Board minutes, through enquiry of employees to confirm Pension policies, and through the inspection of employee handbooks and other information. Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Our procedures had a focus on compliance with the accounting framework through obtaining sufficient audit evidence in line with the level of risk identified and with relevant legislation.

We assessed the susceptibility of the Pension Fund's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur by understanding the potential incentives and opportunities for management to manipulate the financial statements, and performed procedures to understand the areas in which this would most likely arise. Based on our risk assessment procedures we identified the manipulation of journal entries of the investment asset valuations to be our fraud risk.

To address our fraud risk we tested the consistency of the investment asset valuation from the independent sources of the custodian and the fund managers to the financial statements.

In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override. In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting

Financial Statements

estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluated the business rationale of any identified significant transactions that were unusual or outside the normal course of business.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of Hertfordshire Pension Fund, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Hertfordshire Pension Fund and the Hertfordshire County Council members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Elizabeth Jackson (Key Audit Partner)
Ernst & Young LLP (Local Auditor)
Luton
Date: 08 October 2021

3. Fund Account

2019/20		Note	2020/21	
£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s
39,148	Contributions receivable from members	6.1	41,186	
146,551	Contributions receivable from employers	6.1	156,994	
38,519	Transfers in from other schemes or funds	6.2	15,568	
1	Other income		5	
	224,220 Additions from dealings with those directly involved in the Scheme			213,753
(137,246)	Pensions Payable		(142,196)	
(22,990)	Commutation of pensions and lump sum retirement benefits		(23,945)	
(4,236)	Lump sum death benefits		(3,846)	
	(164,472) Benefits payable to members	6.3		(169,987)
(670)	Refunds of contributions		(647)	
6	State scheme premiums		20	
(14,004)	Transfers out to other schemes	6.4	(17,216)	
	(14,668) Payments to and on account of leavers			(17,843)
	(258) Refund to employers upon cessation			(17)
	44,822 Net additions / (withdrawals) from dealings with those directly involved in the Scheme			25,905
(2,124)	Administrative costs		(1,938)	
(1,576)	Oversight and governance costs		(1,669)	
(12,679)	Investment management expenses	6.5	(15,103)	
	(16,378) Management expenses			(18,711)
42,980	Investment Income	6.6	48,173	
(284)	Taxes on income		(229)	
(100,236)	Profits and losses on disposals of investments and changes in value of investments	6.7	1,015,006	
	(57,539) Net return on investments			1,062,950
	(29,095) Net increase / (decrease) in the net assets available for benefits during the year			1,070,144
	4,835,004 Opening net assets of the Fund			4,805,909
	4,805,909 Closing net assets of the Fund			5,876,053

4. Net Assets Statement

31 March 2020		Note	31 March 2021	
£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s
451,306			298,145	
	Equities			
	<u>Pooled investment vehicles</u>			
432,234	Pooled property investments		595,457	
1,693,377	Unitised insurance policies		1,651,925	
1,322,055	Unit trusts		2,242,437	
185,037	Private Equity		271,707	
115,991	Infrastructure Debt		119,739	
496,126	Other managed funds		570,791	
9,657	Derivative contracts	6.9	1,498	
41,998	Cash deposits		79,876	
5,061	Other investment balances		4,423	
	4,752,842 Total investment assets	6.8a	5,835,997	
-	Derivative contracts	6.9	-	
-	Other investment balances		-	
	- Total investment liabilities		-	
	4,752,842 Total investment assets and liabilities	6.8a	5,835,997	
-	Long term assets		-	
	- Total non-current assets and liabilities		-	
56,451	Current assets	6.10	44,351	
(3,385)	Current liabilities	6.11	(4,295)	
	53,066 Total current assets and liabilities		40,056	
	4,805,909 Net assets of the Scheme available to fund benefits as at 31 March		5,876,053	



Scott Crudginton
Director of Resources

5. Statement of Accounting Policies

Basis of Preparation

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21 which is based upon International Financial Reporting Standards, as amended for the UK public sector.

The accounts summarise the transactions for the 2020/21 financial year and net assets of the Pension Fund as at 31 March 2021. The accounts do not take account of obligations to pay pensions and benefits which fall due after the end of the financial year. The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits at the Net Assets Statement date is detailed in section 6.15.

Valuation of Assets

Financial assets are included in the Net Asset Statement on a fair value basis as at the reporting date. A financial asset or liability is recognised in the Net Asset Statement on the date the Pension Fund becomes party to the contractual acquisition of the asset or to the liability. From this date, any gains or losses arising from changes in the fair value of the asset or liability are recognised in the Fund Account. The values of investments as shown in the Net Asset Statement have been determined at fair value in accordance with the regulation of the Code, IFRS13 and IFRS9. The values on investments as shown in the net assets statement have been determined as follows:

- Market-quoted securities, for which there is a readily available market price, are valued at bid price at the close of business on the net asset date.
- Fixed interest securities are recorded at net market value based on their current yields.
- Pooled investment vehicles are valued at the closing bid price if both bid and offer prices are quoted by the respective Investment Managers. If only a single price is quoted, investments are valued at the closing single price. In the case of pooled investment vehicles that are accumulation funds, the change in market value also includes income, which is reinvested in the fund net of applicable withholding tax.
- Unquoted investments for which market quotations are not readily available are valued having regard to the latest dealings, professional valuations, asset values and other appropriate financial information.
- Indirect private equity investments are interests in limited partnerships and are stated at the partnership's estimate of fair value. Investments are valued based on the Pension Fund's share of the net assets of the private equity fund. For private equity limited partnerships there is usually a time delay in receiving information from the private equity Investment Managers. The valuations shown in the Net Assets Statement for these investments are the latest valuations provided to the Pension Fund, adjusted for cash movements between the valuation date and the net asset date.
- Forward foreign exchange contracts are stated at fair value which is determined as the gain or loss that would arise from closing out the contract at the balance sheet date by entering into an equal and opposite contract.
- Investment assets and liabilities include cash balances held by the Investment Managers and debtor and creditor balances in respect of investment activities as these form part of the net assets available for investment.
- Rights issues are processed on ex-date. If the value of the rights on ex-date is 15% or more of the value of the underlying security, cost is allocated from the parent to the rights. If the value is less than 15%, the rights are allocated at zero cost.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash is cash in hand and deposits with any financial institution, repayable without penalty and on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents comprise investments that are held to meet short-term liabilities rather than for investment or other purposes. These are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and that are subject to minimal risk of changes in value. Bank overdrafts, repayable on demand and which form an integral part of the County Council's treasury management function, are also included as a component of cash and cash equivalents.

Foreign Currency Translation

All investments are shown in Sterling. Dividends, interest, purchases and sales of investments in foreign currencies have been accounted for at the spot market rate at the date of transaction. End of year spot market exchange rates are used to value foreign currency cash balances, market values of overseas investments and purchases and sales outstanding at the net asset date.

Gains and losses on exchange arising from foreign currency investment and cash balances are included within the Fund Account for the year.

Management Expenses

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016, allows the Administering Authority to charge directly to the Pension Fund any costs or expenses incurred in administering it. Management expenses are accounted for on an accruals basis and disclosed in accordance with the 2016 CIPFA guidance 'Accounting for Local Government Pension Scheme Management expenses' and analysed between administrative costs, oversight and governance costs and investment management expenses.

Fees of the external Investment Managers are agreed in the respective mandates governing their appointment. Fees are based on the market value of the portfolio under management. Where an Investment Manager's fee note has not been received for the final period, an estimate based on the market value of their mandate as at the end of the year is used for inclusion in the Fund Account. In 2020/21, £181,958 was based on such estimates.

Investment management expenses include transaction costs relating to the purchase and sale of investments.

VAT

The Pension Fund is exempt from VAT and is therefore able to recover such deductions. Investment management and administrative expenses are therefore recognised net of any recoverable VAT.

Benefits Payable

Pension and lump sum benefits payable include all amounts known to be due as 31 March 2021. Any amounts due but unpaid are disclosed in the Net Assets Statement as current liabilities.

Contributions

Normal contributions, both from members and employers, are accounted for on an accruals basis, at the percentage rate certified by the Pension Fund Actuary in the payroll period to which they relate. Employer deficit funding contributions are accounted for on an accruals basis in accordance with the period to which they relate or are due, or on a cash basis if the payment is an additional contribution in excess of the minimum required by the Pension Fund Actuary and set out in the Rates and Adjustments Certificate.

Pension strain contributions and employers' augmentation contributions are accounted for in the period in which the liability arises. Any amount due in year but unpaid is classed as a current financial asset.

Transfers to and from other schemes

Transfer values represent the amounts received and paid during the year for members who have joined or left the Pension Fund during the financial year and are calculated in accordance with Scheme regulations. Transfer values are treated on a cash basis when they are paid or received, which is normally when the member liability is accepted or discharged. Transfers in from members wishing to use the proceeds of their additional voluntary contributions to purchase Scheme benefits are accounted for on a receipts basis and are included in transfers in. Bulk transfers are accounted for on an accrual's basis in accordance with the terms of the transfer agreement.

Investment Income

Investment income earned by the Pension Fund on its investments is recognised as follows:

- Interest income is recognised in the Fund Account as it accrues, using the effective interest rate of the financial instrument as at the date of acquisition or origination. Income includes the amortisation of any discount or premium, transaction costs or other differences between the initial carrying amount of the instrument and its amount at maturity calculated on an effective interest rate basis.
- Dividend income is recognised on the date the shares are quoted ex-dividend. Any amount not received by the end of the reporting period is disclosed in the Net Assets Statement under other investment balances.
- Investment income earned on pooled investment vehicles that are accumulation funds, where income is retained and automatically reinvested, are shown as changes in the value of investments in the Fund Account.
- Income from private equity investments are reported on the quarterly valuations provided by the private equity Investment Managers. Income is recognised in the period in which the valuation is received.
- Distributions from other pooled investment vehicles are recognised at the date of issue. Any amount not received by the end of the reporting period is disclosed in the Net Asset Statement under other investment balances.
- Changes in the value of investment income are accounted for as income and comprise all realised and unrealised profits and losses during the year.

Taxation

The Pension Fund is a registered public service scheme under section 1(1) of Schedule 36 of the Finance Act 2004 and as such, is exempt from UK income tax on interest received and from capital gains tax on the proceeds of investments sold. Tax is deducted from dividends paid on UK equities, which is not recoverable. Income from overseas investments suffers a withholding tax in the country of origin, unless exemption is permitted. Provision is made for the estimated sums to be recovered and income grossed up accordingly. Irrecoverable tax is accounted for as a Pension Fund expense as it arises.

Security Lending

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2009 (as amended) permit the Pension Fund to lend up to 35% of its securities from its portfolio of stocks to third parties in return for collateral. The Pension Fund has set a limit of 20% of the total Fund value. The securities on loan are included in the Net Assets Statement to reflect the Pension Fund's continuing economic interest of a proprietorial nature in these securities.

Additional Voluntary Contribution Investments

The County Council has arrangements with the Standard Life Assurance Company and the Utmost Life and Pensions Company to enable employees to make Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) to enhance their pension benefits. AVCs are invested separately from the Pension Fund's main assets and the assets purchased are specifically allocated to provide additional benefits for members making AVCs. As these contributions do not form part of the Pension Fund's investments, the value of AVC investments are excluded from the Pension Fund's Net Assets Statement in accordance with regulation 4(2)(c) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2009 (as amended).

Actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits

The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefit is assessed on an annual basis by the Scheme actuary in accordance with the requirements of IAS 19 and relevant actuarial Standards. As permitted under the Code, the Fund has opted to disclose the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits by way of a note to the accounts.

Prior period adjustments

There were no material prior period adjustments in 2020/21 that require disclosure.

Going Concern

Following the lessening of restrictions as the Covid-19 vaccination programme was rolled out, markets have started to rebound, increasing the Pension Funds funding level to 113%¹ as of 31 March 2021, an increase from the 98.2% at the recent 2019 triennial valuation. Markets continue to recover after the initial effect of the pandemic but are likely to continue to fluctuate in the near future. The Pension Fund recorded a 4.3% investment return in Q1 2021/22 which is an increase from the 0% investment return in the previous quarter. At June 2020, the funding level has continued to increase slightly to 114%¹, taking into account the large asset returns and increased liabilities of the fund. The Pension Fund's equity protection strategy will minimise the impact of any future market falls if the winter brings a surge in Covid-19 cases and market conditions deteriorate.

The Pension Fund has sufficient liquidity to meet fund benefits as they fall due without the need to liquidate investments. The fund has been cashflow positive for a number of years, with the current forecast projection of £16.4m increased cash in the next 12 months. If cashflow issues arose, the fund has the ability to liquidate £4.740b of investments (81.2%) in under 3 months, with assets such as equities (£298.1m) and index linked gilts (£163.5) available in a number of days.

As the Covid-19 situation has unfolded, the Pension Fund has been proactive in reviewing all employers to ensure there was no material risk to the Fund with employers defaulting on their contributions. Since April 2021, all employers are paying their contributions as per the rates and adjustment certificate.

¹The figures are approximate, based on a rollforward approach from the 31 March 2019 valuation position rather than based on a full valuation at the effective date and therefore are not as accurate as a full valuation. They are on a consistent basis with those presented in the 31 March 2019 valuation report, updated for market conditions at the effective date.

Events after the Net Asset Date

There were no material post balance sheet events after 31 March 2021 that require disclosure.

Critical judgements in applying accounting policies

In applying the accounting policies set out above, the Pension Fund has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgements made in the accounts are:

- **Valuation of private equity investments:** Unquoted private equities are valued by the Investment Managers using the International Private Equity and Venture Capital Valuation Guidelines. These are inherently based on forward looking estimates and judgements involving many factors.
- **Pension fund liability:** The Pension Fund liability is calculated every three years by the Pension Fund Actuary, with annual updates in the intervening years. The methodology used is in line with accepted guidelines and in accordance with IAS19. Assumptions underpinning the valuations are agreed with the Actuary and are summarised in Note 16. This estimate is subject to significant variances based on changes to the underlying assumptions.

Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty

Preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the net asset date and the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year. Estimates and assumptions are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those assumptions and estimates. The key judgements and estimation uncertainty that have a significant risk of causing material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are:

- **Valuation of private equity, pooled property and alternative investments:** The valuations for private equity, pooled property, infrastructure and alternative investments shown in the Net Assets Statement are based on the latest valuations provided to the Pension Fund, adjusted for cash movements between the valuation date and the net asset date. This may result in a variance between the valuation included in the Financial Statements and the actual value of the Pension Fund's investments as at 31 March 2021 issued by each of the Investment Managers. At 31 March 2021 private equity investments totalled £335.6m (including private equity investments held within the Global Alternatives Fund), pooled property investments totalled £606.5m (including property investments held within the Global Alternatives Fund), infrastructure investments totalled £122.2m (including infrastructure investments held within the Global Alternatives Fund) and alternative investments totalled £476.1m (excluding the investments from the prior asset classes).
- **Contractual commitments:** Commitments to the private equity, infrastructure debt and private rental sector funds are made in local currency (Sterling, Euros and US Dollars). The total remaining commitment to each fund at 31 March 2021 has been converted to base currency, based on exchange rates applicable at the net asset date. The exact timing and amounts of when the Pension Fund's commitment will be drawn down is uncertain and therefore the actual payments made by the Pension Fund may be different from the estimates.
- **Actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits:** Estimation of the liability to pay retirement benefits depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used to value the liabilities, the rate at which salaries increase, and changes in retirement ages and mortality rates. The consulting actuary to the Pension Fund, Hymans Robertson, is engaged to provide the Pension Fund with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied. Further information about the key assumptions used to calculate the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits and the effect on the pension's liability of changes in individual assumptions are shown in section 6.15.

NOTE: values throughout these accounts are presented rounded to the nearest thousand. Totals in supporting tables and notes may not appear to cast, cross-cast, or exactly match to the core statements or other tables due to rounding differences.

6.3 Benefits Payable

2019/20		2020/21
£000s		£000s
71,322	Administering Authority	73,170
76,419	Other Scheduled Bodies	79,989
16,732	Admitted Bodies	16,827
164,472	Total benefits payable	169,987

6.4 Transfers to other Schemes or Funds

2019/20		2020/21
£000s		£000s
14,004	Individual transfers	17,216
-	Bulk transfers	-
14,004	Total Transfers out to other schemes	17,216

Transfers are shown on a cash basis, in accordance with the accounting policy.

6.5 Management Expenses

The Pension Fund's Investment Managers are remunerated on the basis of fees calculated as a percentage of assets under management or as a fixed annual fee and are reviewed on an annual basis by the Pensions Committee. Investment management expenses include transaction costs associated with the acquisition, issue or disposal of Pension Fund assets and associated financial instruments. In addition to these costs, indirect costs are incurred through the bid-offer spread on investments sales and purchases. These are reflected in the cost of investment acquisitions and in the proceeds from the sales of investments set out in note 6.7.

The Pension Fund's assets are held in custody by an independent custodian. The custodian is responsible for the safekeeping of the Pension Fund's financial assets, the settlement of transactions, income collection, tax reclamation and other administrative actions in relation to the Pension Fund's investments.

The Pension Fund's performance measurement service is provided by BNY Mellon. An analysis of the Pension Fund's performance is shown in the Investment Performance section on pages 70 – 72.

2019/20		2020/21
£000s		£000s
12,302	Management fees	14,414
180	Transaction costs	508
197	Custody fees	182
12,679	Total investment management expenses	15,103

An analysis of transaction costs by asset class is shown in the following table;

	2020/21	£000s		
	Total	Management Fees	Performance Related Fees	Transaction Costs
Equities	1,219	853	-	366
Pooled Property Investments	1,399	1,398	-	1
Unitised Insurance Policies	295	295	-	-
Unit Trusts	5,064	4,928	-	135
Private Equity	4,874	4,874	-	-
Infrastructure Debt	475	475	-	-
Other Managed Funds	1,596	1,590	-	5
	14,922	14,414	-	508
Custody Fee	182			
Total	15,103			

	2019/20				£000s			
	Total	Management Fees	Performance Related Fees	Transaction Costs				
Equities	1,365	1,321	-	44				
Pooled Property Investments	488	484	-	5				
Unitised Insurance Policies	240	240	-	-				
Unit Trusts	3,038	2,981	-	57				
Private Equity	5,125	5,125	-	-				
Infrastructure Debt	652	587	-	65				
Other Managed Funds	1,572	1,564	-	9				
	12,482	12,302	-	180				
Custody Fee	197							
Total	12,679							

6.6 Investment Income

a) Analysis of investment income

2019/20		2020/21	
£000s		£000s	
9,115	Dividends from equities	13,092	
	Income from pooled investment vehicles:		
8,366	- Pooled property investments	12,473	
22,903	- Other pooled investments	19,452	
2,565	Interest on cash deposits	3,108	
31	Other investment income	48	
42,980	Total investment income	48,173	

An analysis of investment income accrued during 2019/20 and 2020/21 is shown in the following table.

2019/20					2020/21			
UK	Overseas	Global	Total		UK	Overseas	Global	Total
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
1,116	7,998	-	9,114	Equities	164	4,762	-	4,926
23,378	-	-	23,378	Unit trusts	26,500	-	1,016	27,515
-	3	-	3	Private equity	-	6	-	6
7,888	-	-	7,888	Pooled property investments	8,354	-	4,215	12,569
1,202	1,363	-	2,565	Cash and cash equivalents	2,611	496	-	3,108
-	31	-	31	Other	14	34	-	48
33,584	9,396	-	42,980	Total investment income	37,643	5,299	5,231	48,173

Assets are classified in different areas of the world:

- UK are assets held within the UK.
- Overseas are assets held within one country outside of the UK.
- Global are assets held within two or more countries outside of the UK (global assets can only be through pooled investments).

b) Securities lending

The Pension Fund has an arrangement with its Custodian to lend securities from within its portfolio of stocks to third parties in return for collateral. Collateralised lending generated income of £19,355 for 2020/21 (£31,298 for 2019/20). This is included within investment income in the Fund Account.

Financial Statements

The Pension Fund obtains collateral at 102% of the market value of securities loaned for collateral denominated in the same currency as that of the loans, or 105% in the case of cross-currency collateral. The market value of securities on loan and collateral held at 31 March 2019 and 2020 is shown in the following table, analysed by collateral type.

As of August 2020, the Pension Fund stopped securities lending through its custodian Bank of New York Mellon as the value of equities held by our custodian reduced with the transfer of assets into the ACCESS pool. Securities lending is completed by the ACCESS pool custodian Northern Trust, however this is held in trust by Link and therefore is not identified in these accounts.

2019/20		2020/21	
Market value of securities on loan	Collateral held	Market value of securities on loan	Collateral held
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
21,975	22,957	-	-
13,064	14,103	-	-
35,040	37,060	-	-
	Total		

6.7 Profit and Losses on the Disposal of Investments and Changes in the Value of Investments

An analysis of investment transactions in 2020/21 is shown in the following table.

Value at 31 March 2020		Purchases at cost and derivative payments	Sale proceeds and derivative receipts	Profits and losses on disposals and change in value of investments	Transfer to Other Categories ³	Value at 31 March 2021
£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
<u>Equities</u>						
22,933	UK	26,219	(46,089)	482	(10,000)	3,544
428,373	Overseas	626,421	(894,063)	133,870	(290,000)	294,601
<u>Pooled investment vehicles</u>						
432,234	Pooled property investments	205,869	(17,680)	(24,967)	197,550	595,457
1,693,377	Unitised insurance policies	180,474	(719,297)	497,372	(537,550)	1,651,925
1,322,055	Unit trusts	828,211	(164,861)	257,032	640,000	2,242,437
185,037	Private equity	54,314	(31,340)	63,696	-	271,707
115,991	Infrastructure Debt	6,795	(1,793)	(1,255)	-	119,739
496,126	Other managed funds	-	(1,596)	76,260	-	570,791
9,657	Derivative contracts (net) ¹	5,435	(28,331)	14,737	-	1,498
41,998	Cash deposits	-	40,099	(2,221)	-	79,876
4,747,781	Subtotal	1,933,737	(1,864,951)	1,015,006	-	5,831,574
5,061	Net other investment balances ²	-	(1,082)	-	-	4,423
4,752,842	Total investments assets / (liabilities)	1,933,737	(1,866,033)	1,015,006	-	5,835,997

¹ Net forward foreign exchange assets/liabilities (see note 6.8a).

² Net other investment balances assets/liabilities (see note 6.8a). Accrued income shown within closing balance.

³ A number of transitions occurred in 2020/21 including:

- £300m from Allianz (Equities) to Longview (Unit Trusts)
- £500m from UBS (Unitised insurance policies) to Insight (Unit Trusts)
- £160m from Baillie Gifford Global Growth (Unit Trusts) to UBS (Unitised insurance policies).
- £197.55m from UBS (Unitised insurance policies) to M&G, LGIM PRS and LGIM HLV collectively (Pooled property investments).

All of these transfers have been included in the purchases or sales columns and therefore won't add into the value at 31 March 2021 column.

Financial Statements

The value of unit trusts has increased in 2020/21 due to both strong investment growth and the transfer of assets into the ACCESS pool (e.g. equities). All investment manager investments are held in the ACCESS pool as unit trusts and will be reported under this asset class.

An analysis of investment transactions in 2019/20 is shown in the following table.

Value at 31 March 2019		Purchases at cost and derivative payments	Sale proceeds and derivative receipts	Profits and losses on disposals and change in value of investments	Transfer to Other Categories ³	Value at 31 March 2020
£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
<u>Equities</u>						
38,827	UK	2,857	(10,086)	(8,665)	-	22,933
433,642	Overseas	50,951	(37,176)	(19,044)	-	428,373
<u>Pooled investment vehicles</u>						
332,065	Pooled property investments	108,279	(24,203)	16,093	-	432,234
1,898,841	Unitised insurance policies	459,068	(569,605)	(94,926)	-	1,693,377
1,298,690	Unit trusts	44,635	(8,312)	(12,958)	-	1,322,055
143,294	Private equity	43,104	(30,334)	28,973	-	185,037
59,798	Infrastructure Debt	50,890	(1,422)	6,725	-	115,991
507,774	Other managed funds	-	(1,572)	(10,076)	-	496,126
(555)	Derivative contracts (net) ¹	31,467	(14,551)	(6,704)	-	9,657
83,796	Cash deposits	-	(42,145)	347	-	41,998
4,796,172	Subtotal	791,252	(739,407)	(100,236)	-	4,747,781
2,094	Net other investment balances ²	-	2,578	-	-	5,061
4,798,267	Total investments assets / (liabilities)	791,252	(736,829)	(100,236)	-	4,752,842

¹ Net forward foreign exchange assets/liabilities (see note 6.8a).

² Net other investment balances assets/liabilities (see note 6.8a). Accrued income shown within closing balance.

The change in market value of investments during the year comprises all increases and decreases in the market value of investments held at year end and profits and losses realised on the sale of investments during the year. Derivative receipts and payments correspond to the Sterling equivalent amount of forward foreign exchange settled during the year. The sale proceeds for cash deposits represent the net movement in cash held by the Investment Managers during the year. The change in market value of cash results from gains and losses on foreign currency cash transactions.

6.8 Investment Analysis

a) Analysis of investment assets at market value

2019/20		2020/21	
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
	Investment assets		
22,933	UK quoted equities	3,544	
428,373	Overseas quoted equities	294,601	
	451,306 Total equities		298,145
145,353	UK property	324,893	
-	Overseas property	-	
286,882	Global property	270,564	
	432,234 Pooled property investments		595,457
123,348	UK equity funds	366,906	
739,655	Overseas equity funds	1,121,483	
830,374	UK Index Linked Gilts Fund	163,536	
	1,693,377 Total unitised insurance policies		1,651,925
302,222	UK equity unit trusts	415,427	
330,258	Overseas Equity Unit trusts	797,126	
-	Equity Protection Fund	300,820	
689,575	Global Core Plus Bond Fund	729,064	
	1,322,055 Total unit trusts		2,242,437
185,037	UK private equity	271,707	
	185,037 Total private equity		271,707
115,991	UK Infrastructure debt	119,739	
	115,991 Total infrastructure debt		119,739
-	UK equity	-	
19	Overseas equity	17	
496,107	Global Alternatives Fund	570,774	
	496,126 Other managed funds		570,791
9,657	Forward foreign exchange	1,498	
	9,657 Total derivatives		1,498
41,998	Cash deposits	79,876	
	41,998 Total Cash		79,876
5,061	Amounts receivable from the sale of investments	4,423	
-	Investment income due	-	
	5,061 Total other investment balances		4,423
	4,752,842 Total investment assets		5,835,997

Table continues overleaf

2019/20		2020/21	
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
	Investment liabilities		
-	Forward foreign exchange contracts	-	
	- Total derivatives contracts		-
-	Amounts payable for the purchase of investments	-	
-	Non recoverable tax payable	-	
	- Total other investment balances		-
	- Total investment liabilities		-
	Total investment assets and liabilities at market value		5,835,997
	4,752,842		

Eight holdings exceeded 5% of the total investment assets and liabilities available to fund benefits at 31 March 2021, these are: UBS Climate Aware; UBS North America Equity Index Fund; The Royal London Core Plus Bond Fund; Longview ACCESS Global Equity; LGT Crown HCC Segregated Portfolio; Insight LDI Solution Plus Active 52 B; ACCESS Baillie Gifford UK Equity and ACCESS Baillie Gifford LTGG.

There are nine Pooled Funds which exceed 5% of their asset class at 31 March 2021, these being: UBS Climate Aware; UBS North America Equity Index Fund; The Royal London Core Plus Bond Fund; Longview ACCESS Global Equity; LGT Crown HCC Segregated Portfolio; Insight LDI Solution Plus Active 52 B; CBRE Global Alpha Fund; ACCESS Baillie Gifford UK Equity and ACCESS Baillie Gifford LTGG.

Cash deposits (including cash and cash instruments) and other investment balances (including accrued dividend entitlements) are accounted for as investment assets as these form part of the net assets available for investment within the investment portfolio.

Investment assets and liabilities at the Net Asset date are further analysed by asset class in the following table:

2019/20					2020/21			
UK	Overseas	Global	Total		UK	Overseas	Global	Total
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
22,933	428,373	-	451,306	Equities	3,544	294,601	-	298,145
145,353	-	286,882	432,234	Pooled property investments	324,893	-	270,564	595,457
953,722	739,655	-	1,693,377	Unitised insurance policies	530,442	1,121,483	-	1,651,925
991,797	-	330,258	1,322,055	Unit trusts	1,144,491	300,820	797,126	2,242,437
-	185,037	-	185,037	Private equity	-	271,707	-	271,707
115,991	-	-	115,991	Infrastructure debt	119,739	-	-	119,739
-	19	496,107	496,126	Other managed funds	-	17	570,774	570,791
37,857	4,141	-	41,998	Cash and cash equivalents	73,851	6,025	-	79,876
154	4,907	9,657	14,718	Other	2,531	1,892	1,498	5,921
2,267,807	1,362,133	1,122,903	4,752,842	Total assets and liabilities	2,199,491	1,996,545	1,639,962	5,835,997

b) Analysis by Investment Manager

The value of investments held by each Investment Manager on 31 March were:

31 March 2020			31 March 2021	
£000s	%		£000s	%
Investments managed by ACCESS asset pool:				
632,493	13.3	Baillie Gifford & Co.	860,181	14.7
-	0.0	Longview Partners LLP	352,386	6.0
689,759	14.5	Royal London Asset Management Ltd.	729,247	12.5
1,693,394	35.6	UBS Group AG	1,651,942	28.3
3,015,647	63.4		3,593,756	61.6
Investments managed outside ACCESS asset pool:				
522,424	11.0	Allianz Global Investors Europe GmbH	360,232	6.2
446,386	9.4	CBRE Global Collective Investors (UK) Ltd.	449,867	7.7
112,064	2.4	HarbourVest Partners, LLC.	160,187	2.7
496,107	10.4	LGT Capital Partners (Ireland) Ltd.	570,774	9.8
-	0.0	Legal & General Assurance (Pensions Management) Limited	157,007	2.7
-	0.0	Insight Investment Management Limited	300,820	5.2
63,172	1.3	Macquarie Group Limited	66,874	1.1
-	0.0	Municipal & General Securities Company Limited	58,873	1.0
57,161	1.2	Pantheon Ventures	100,474	1.7
678	0.0	Permira Advisers LLP	674	0.0
38,846	0.8	Standard Life Investments Ltd.	16,058	0.3
356	0.0	Residual funds from previous portfolios	400	0.0
1,737,196	36.6		2,242,241	38.4
53,066		Funds held at Hertfordshire County Council and non-investment balances	40,056	
4,805,909		Net Assets of the Scheme	5,876,053	

The market values in table note 6.8(b) include the value of investments, cash and net current assets held by each Investment Manager at 31 March. The funds held by Hertfordshire County Council include net current assets, long term assets and cash required to manage the cash flow associated with the payment of benefits and collection of contributions.

Residual funds from previous portfolios represent residual cash and investment income still due to the portfolios previously run by outgoing Investment Managers following the review of the Pension Fund's Investment Strategy.

c) Encumbrance of Assets

The Custodian has a lien over the Pension Fund's assets in order to recover any outstanding debts. This is held for the protection of the Custodian and has never been invoked.

6.9 Derivatives

The Pension Fund uses derivative financial instruments to manage its exposure to specific risks arising from its investment activities. The Pension Fund does not hold derivatives for speculative purposes.

Forward foreign exchange contracts

Forward foreign exchange contracts are over the counter contracts with non-exchange counterparties and are used to hedge against foreign currency movements. Forward foreign exchange contracts are disclosed in the accounts at fair value, which is the gain or loss that would arise from closing out the contract at the balance sheet date by entering into an equal and opposite contract at that date.

Financial Statements

The counterparties at 31 March 2020 and 31 March 2021 were UK and overseas investment banks and the contracts held with these investment banks are analysed in the following table by duration.

2019/20				Duration	2020/21			
Currency Payable £000s	Currency Receivable £000s	Fair Value Asset £000s	Fair Value Liability £000s		Currency Payable £'000	Currency Receivable £000s	Fair Value Asset £000s	Fair Value Liability £000s
-	-	-	-	Within 1 month	(85)	85	-	-
-	-	-	-	0-3 months	-	-	-	-
(255,737)	265,394	9,657	-	3-6 months	(236,648)	238,146	1,498	-
(255,737)	265,394	9,657	-	Total	(236,733)	238,231	1,498	-

6.10 Current Assets

2019/20		2020/21
£000s		£000s
14,895	Contributions due from employers	15,556
40,986	Cash and cash equivalents	27,368
268	VAT due from HMRC	0
302	Other debtors and prepayments	1,427
56,451	Total current assets	44,351

Cash and cash equivalents represent investments in money market funds and call accounts where funds are repayable without penalty and on notice of not more than 24 hours.

Current assets are further analysed by type of debtor organisation.

2019/20		2020/21	
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
3,851	Central government bodies	3,240	
10,327	Other local authorities	11,234	
5	NHS bodies	2	
1,283	Other entities and individuals	2,508	
	15,465		16,983
	Total debtors		
40,986	Cash and cash equivalents	27,368	
	40,986		27,368
	Total cash balances		
	56,451		44,351
	Total current assets		

6.11 Current Liabilities

2019/20		2020/21
£000s		£000s
(1,313)	Tax payable to HMRC	(1,457)
(509)	Investment management fees	(625)
(539)	Other creditors	(816)
(1,024)	Unpaid benefits	(1,397)
-	Cash and cash equivalents	-
(3,385)	Total current liabilities	(4,295)

Cash balances in the table above include cash balances less cash in transit in the form of unpresented cheques and payments committed by BACs at the net asset date.

Current liabilities are further analysed by type of creditor organisation.

2019/20		2020/21
£000s		£000s
(1,313)	Central government bodies	(1,457)
-	Other local authorities	-
(2,072)	Other entities and individuals	(2,838)
-	Cash and cash equivalents	-
(3,385)	Total Current Liabilities	(4,295)

6.12 Fair Value – Basis of Valuation

The basis of the valuation of each classes of investment asset is set out below. There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year. All assets have been valued using fair value techniques which represent the highest and best price available at the reporting date.

Description of asset	Valuation Hierarchy	Basis of valuation	Observable and unobservable inputs	Key sensitivities affecting the valuations provided
Equities quoted	Level 1	Published bid market price ruling on the final day of accounting period	N/A	N/A
Other managed funds – equities	Level 2	Closing single price	NAV based pricing set on a forward pricing basis	N/A
Unitised insurance contracts – equities	Level 2	Price of a recent transaction for an identical asset	Inputs other than quoted prices that are observable, either directly or indirectly	N/A
Unitised insurance contracts – bonds	Level 2	Price of a recent transaction for an identical asset	Inputs other than quoted prices that are observable, either directly or indirectly	N/A
Unit trusts – equities	Level 2	Average of broker prices	Evaluated price feeds	N/A
Unit trusts – bonds	Level 2	Closing bid, mid and offer prices are published	NAV based pricing set on a forward pricing basis	N/A
Global Alternatives fund	Level 3	Closing single price	NAV based pricing set on a forward pricing basis	Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the pension fund's own reporting date, by changes to expected cashflows, and by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts
Private equity	Level 3	At fair value as determined by the General Partner in accordance with the terms of the Partnership Agreement and GAAP	Manager's cash flow projections, estimates of growth expectations and profitability, profit margin expectations, adjustments to current prices for similar properties, valuation techniques	Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the pension fund's own reporting date by changes to expected cash flows, earning multiples and discount rates used in the discounted cash flow analysis
Infrastructure Debt	Level 3	At fair value as determined by the General Partner in accordance with the terms of the Partnership Agreement and GAAP	Manager's cash flow projections, estimates of growth expectations and profitability, profit margin expectations, adjustments to current prices for similar properties, valuation techniques	Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the pension fund's own reporting date by changes to expected cash flows, earning multiples and discount rates used in the discounted cash flow analysis
Pooled property investments	Level 3	Closing bid price where bid and offer prices are published. Closing single price where single price is published.	NAV based pricing set on a forward pricing basis	Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the pension fund's own reporting date, by changes to expected cashflows, and by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts

6.13 Financial Instruments

a) Classification of financial instruments

Accounting policies describe how different asset classes of financial instruments are measured and how income and expenses, including fair value gains and losses, are recognised. The following table analyses the carrying amounts of financial assets and liabilities by category and Net Assets Statement heading.

All financial instruments are carried in the balance sheet at their fair value. The Pension Fund has not entered into any financial guarantees that are required to be accounted for as financial instruments.

31 March 2020			31 March 2021		
Fair value through profit and loss	Financial Assets at amortised cost	Financial liabilities at amortised cost	Fair value through profit and loss	Financial Assets at amortised cost	Financial liabilities at amortised cost
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
451,325	-	-	Equities	298,145	-
432,234	-	-	Pooled property investments	595,457	-
1,693,377	-	-	Unitised insurance policies	1,651,925	-
1,322,055	-	-	Unit trusts	2,242,437	-
185,037	-	-	Private equity	271,707	-
496,107	-	-	Other managed funds	570,791	-
115,991	-	-	Infrastructure Debt	119,739	-
9,657	-	-	Derivative contracts	1,498	-
-	41,998	-	Cash deposits	-	79,876
5,061	-	-	Other investment balances	4,423	-
-	-	-	Long term assets	-	-
-	56,451	-	Current assets	-	44,351
4,710,845	98,449	-	Total financial assets	5,756,122	124,227
-	-	-	Derivative contracts	-	-
-	-	-	Other investment balances	-	-
-	-	(3,385)	Current liabilities	-	(4,295)
-	-	(3,385)	Total financial liabilities	-	(4,295)
4,710,845	98,449	(3,385)	Total	5,756,122	124,227

b) Net gains and losses on financial instruments

2019/20	2020/21
£000s	£000s
(100,583)	Fair value through profit and loss
347	Financial Assets at amortised cost
(100,236)	Total gains and losses
	1,015,007

c) Valuation of financial instruments carried at fair value

The valuation of financial instruments has been classified into three levels, according to the quality and reliability of information used to determine fair values.

Level 1: Financial instruments where the fair values are derived from unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities. Products classified as level 1 comprise quoted equities, quoted fixed interest securities, quoted index linked securities and unit trusts. Listed securities are shown at bid prices. The bid value of the investment is based on the bid market quotation of the relevant stock exchange.

Level 2: Financial instruments where quoted market prices are not available; for example, where an instrument is traded in a market that is not considered to be active or where valuation techniques are used to determine fair value and where these techniques use inputs that are based significantly on observable market data.

Level 3: Financial instruments where at least one input that could have a significant effect on the instrument's valuation is not based on observable market data.

The following tables provide an analysis of the financial assets and liabilities of the Pension Fund analysed across levels 1 to 3, based on the level at which the fair value is observable, along with comparative figures for 2020.

	Quoted market price	Using observable inputs	With significant unobservable inputs	
Values as at 31 March 2021	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Financial Assets at fair value through profit and loss				
Equities	298,145	-	-	298,145
Pooled property investments	-	-	595,457	595,457
Unitised insurance policies	-	1,651,925	-	1,651,925
Unit trusts	-	1,941,617	300,820	2,242,437
Private equity	-	44	271,663	271,707
Other managed funds	17	-	570,774	570,791
Infrastructure debt	-	-	119,739	119,739
Derivatives	-	1,498	-	1,498
Other investment balances	4,423	-	-	4,423
Total	302,585	3,595,084	1,858,452	5,756,122
Financial Assets at amortised cost				
Cash deposits	79,876	-	-	79,876
Current assets	44,351	-	-	44,351
Total	124,227	-	-	124,227
Financial Liabilities at fair value through profit and loss				
Derivatives	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-
Financial Liabilities at amortised cost				
Current liabilities	(4,295)	-	-	(4,295)
Total	(4,295)	-	-	(4,295)
Net financial assets	422,517	3,595,084	1,858,452	5,876,053

	Quoted market price	Using observable inputs	With significant unobservable inputs	
Values as at 31 March 2020	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Financial Assets at fair value through profit and loss				
Equities	451,325	-	-	451,325
Pooled property investments	-	-	432,234	432,234
Unitised insurance policies	-	1,693,377	-	1,693,377
Unit trusts	-	1,322,055	-	1,322,055
Private equity	-	48	184,989	185,037
Other managed funds	-	-	496,107	496,107
Infrastructure debt	-	-	115,991	115,991
Derivatives	-	9,657	-	9,657
Other investment balances	5,061	-	-	5,061
Total	456,386	3,025,137	1,229,321	4,710,845
Financial Assets at amortised cost				
Cash deposits	41,998	-	-	41,998
Current assets	56,451	-	-	56,451
Total	98,449	-	-	98,449
Financial Liabilities at fair value through profit and loss				
Derivatives	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-
Financial Liabilities at amortised cost				
Current liabilities	(3,385)	-	-	(3,385)
Total	(3,385)	-	-	(3,385)
Net financial assets	551,450	3,025,137	1,229,321	4,805,909

d) Transfers between Levels 1 and 2

There were no transfers between levels in 2020/21.

e) Reconciliation of fair value measurements within level 3

Value at 31-Mar-20		Transfer s into Level 3	Transfers out of Level 3	Purchases at cost and derivative payments	Sale proceeds and derivative receipts	Unrealised gains/(losses)	Realised gains/(losses)	Value at 31-Mar- 21
£000s				£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
-	Unit Trusts	-	-	500,000	-	(199,180)	-	300,820
184,989	Private Equity	-	-	54,314	(31,339)	53,666	10,033	271,663
115,991	Infrastructure Debt	-	-	6,795	(1,793)	(1,255)	-	119,739
432,234	Property	-	-	205,352	(16,139)	(30,208)	4,218	595,457
496,107	Global Alternatives Fund - LGT	-	-	-	-	74,667	-	570,774
1,229,321		-	-	766,462	(49,271)	(102,310)	14,251	1,858,452

f) Sensitivity of assets valued at level 3

Having analysed historical data and current market trends, and consulted with independent investment advisors, the fund has determined that the valuation method described above is likely to be accurate to within the following ranges, and has set out below the consequent potential impact on the closing value of investments held at 31 March 2021.

Asset Class	Value as at 31 March 2021	Assessed valuation range (+/-)	Value on Increase	Value on Decrease
	£000s	%	£000s	£000s
Unit Trusts	300,820	15%	345,943	255,697
Private Equity	271,663	15%	312,413	230,914
Infrastructure Debt	119,739	15%	137,700	101,778
Property	595,457	10%	655,002	535,911
Global Alternatives Fund (LGT)	570,774	15%	656,390	485,158
	1,858,452		2,107,447	1,609,457

6.14 Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

The Pension Fund maintains positions in a variety of financial instruments including bank deposits, equity instruments, fixed interest securities and derivatives. This exposes it to a variety of financial risks including credit and counterparty risk, liquidity risk, market risk and exchange rate risk.

a) Overall procedures for managing risk

The principal powers to invest are contained in the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 and require an administering authority to invest any pension fund money that is not needed immediately to make payments from the pension fund. These regulations require the Pension Fund to formulate a policy for the investment of its Fund money.

The Administering Authority's overall risk management procedures focus on the unpredictability of financial markets and implementing restrictions to minimise these risks.

The Pension Fund has prepared an Investment Strategy Statement which is provided at page 58 and sets out the Pension Fund's policy on matters such as the type of investments to be held, balance between types of investments, investment restrictions and the way risk is managed.

Pension Fund cash held by the Administering Authority is invested in accordance with the Pension Fund's treasury management strategy and lending policy ("Treasury Management Strategy"), prepared in accordance with the CIPFA

Prudential Code, CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and the legal framework and investment guidance set out and issued through the Local Government Act 2003. The Treasury Management Strategy sets out the criteria for investing and selecting investment counterparties and details the approach to managing risk for the Pension Fund's financial instrument exposure.

Investment performance by external Investment Managers and the Administering Authority is reported to the Pensions Committee and Board quarterly. Performance of Pension Fund investments managed by external Investment Managers is compared to benchmark returns. For Pension Fund cash held by the Administering Authority, performance of the treasury function is assessed against treasury management performance measures modelled on the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice which has been adopted by the County Council.

b) Credit risk and counterparty risk

Credit risk is the risk that a counterparty to a financial instrument will fail to discharge an obligation or commitment that it has entered into with the Pension Fund. The market value of investments generally reflects an assessment of credit in their pricing and consequently the risk of loss is implicitly provided for in the carrying value of the Pension Fund's financial assets and liabilities. Therefore credit risk on investments is reflected in the market risk, in the other price risk figures given in section d) Market Risk.

In addition, the Pension Fund reviews its exposure to credit and counterparty risk on its investments through its external Investment Managers by the review of the Investment Managers' annual internal control reports. This is to ensure that Investment Managers exercise reasonable care and due diligence in their activities for the Pension Fund, such as in the selection and use of brokers. The Investment Management Agreements for the Pension Fund's bond managers prescribes the investment restrictions on the securities they can invest in, including the minimum acceptance criteria for investments.

Credit risk also arises through the Pension Fund's deposits with banks and financial instruments. For cash managed by the Administering Authority, the Pension Fund's Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 sets out the type and minimum acceptable criteria for investments by reference to credit ratings from Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's and outlines the process to be followed for credit rating downgrades.

The credit ratings and amounts held in money market funds, call accounts and cash/current accounts at 31 March 2020 and 2021 are shown in the table below.

2019/20			2020/21		
£000s	Credit rating		£000s	Credit rating	
Cash managed by Administering Authority					
(14) ¹	A	Bank current account	(565) ¹	A	
16,600	A	Call accounts	5,663	A	
24,400	AAA	Money market funds	22,268	AAA	
Cash managed by Custodian and Investment Managers					
38,282	AA-	Bank current account (Custodian)	78,008	AA-	
2,453	A+/AA-	Bank current accounts (Alternatives Manager) ²	32,822	A+/A+	
3,716	AAA	Money Market Funds	1,868	AAA	
85,437		Total cash and cash equivalents	140,064		

¹ Cash balances include cash balances less cash in transit in the form of unpresented cheques and payments committed by BACs at the Net Asset date.

² In 2019/20 and 2020/21, cash held by our alternatives manager was across two bank accounts, both ratings have been provided.

c) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Pension Fund will not be able to meet its financial obligations when they fall due. The main risk for the Pension Fund is not having the funds available to meet its commitments to make pension payments to its members. To manage this, the Pension Fund has a cashflow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available when needed. The Pension Fund also manages its liquidity risk by having access to money market funds and call accounts where funds are repayable without penalty and on notice of not more than 24 hours. At 31 March 2021,

Financial Statements

£27,366,086 (100%) of the cash and cash equivalents held by the Administering Authority was held in money market funds, call accounts and bank current accounts.

The Pension Fund has set a cap of £48,000,000 on the amount of cash held by the Administering Authority to balance the need for the Pension Fund to be as fully invested as possible whilst maintaining liquidity to avoid the need to sell assets at inopportune times. Where there are surplus funds in excess of the cap, these funds are distributed to Investment Managers, after taking advice from the Pension Fund's Investment Consultant.

External Investment Managers have substantial discretionary powers over their individual portfolios and the management of their cash positions. The Pension Fund's investments are largely made up of listed securities on major stock exchanges and are therefore considered readily realisable. The Pension Fund defines liquid assets as assets which can be converted into Sterling cash within three months. At 31 March 2021 the value of liquid assets was £4,740,157,147 (81.2% of total fund assets) and illiquid assets was £1,095,840,143 (18.8% of total fund assets).

d) Market risk

Market risk is the risk of loss from fluctuations in equity and commodity prices, interest and foreign exchange rates and credit spreads. The Pension Fund is exposed to the risk of financial loss from a change in the value of its investments and the risk that the Pension Fund's assets fail to deliver returns in line with the anticipated returns underpinning the valuation of its liabilities over the long term. The change in the market value of its investments during the year was £974,147,409.

In order to manage market value risk, the Pension Fund has set restrictions on the type of investments it can hold, subject to investment limits, in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 (as amended). Details of these can be found in the Pension Fund's Investment Strategy Statement on pages 58 - 65.

The Pension Fund has adopted a specific benchmark and the weightings of the various asset classes within the benchmark form the basis for asset allocation within the Pension Fund. This allocation is designed to diversify the risk and minimise the impact of poor performance in a particular asset class. It seeks to achieve a spread of investments across both the main asset classes (quoted equities, bonds, private equity and property) and geographic regions within each class.

Market risk is also managed by constructing a diversified portfolio across multiple Investment Managers and regularly reviewing the Investment Strategy and performance of the Pension Fund. On a daily basis, Investment Managers will manage risk in line with policies and procedures put in place in the Investment Manager Agreement and ensure that the agreed limit on maximum exposure to any one issuer or class of asset is not breached.

For cash managed by the Administering Authority, the Pension Fund has set institution and group limits to diversify the Pension Fund's investment across a range of individual holdings, sectors and countries.

e) Other price risk

Other price risk represents the risk that the value of a financial instrument will fluctuate as a result of changes in market prices (other than those arising from interest rate risk or foreign exchange risk), whether these changes are caused by factors specific to the individual instrument or issuer or factors affecting all such instruments in the market.

The Pension Fund is exposed to changes in equity and bond prices, as the future price is uncertain. All securities investments present a risk of loss of capital. This risk is mitigated using diversification and policies on selecting investments as discussed above.

The one year expected volatility in market prices are shown in the following table, along with the changes in the value of the Pension Fund's investment assets and liabilities if the market price of investments increase or decrease in line with these movements. The total fund volatility takes into account the expected interactions between the different asset classes, based on the underlying volatilities and correlations of the assets in line with mean variance portfolio theory.

Asset Class	Value as at 31 March 2021	Change	Value on Increase	Value on Decrease
	£000s	%	£000s	£000s
UK Equities, Unit Trusts and Pooled Funds	785,877	16.70%	917,118	654,635
Global equities, Unit Trusts and Pooled Funds (ex UK)	2,557,327	17.40%	3,002,301	2,112,352
Property	606,514	14.20%	692,639	520,389
Corporate Bonds (medium term)	729,064	8.00%	787,389	670,739
Index-Linked Gilts (medium term)	163,536	7.50%	175,801	151,271
Private Equity	352,920	28.50%	453,502	252,338
Infrastructure equity	122,185	21.00%	147,844	96,526
High Yield Debt, Convertible Bonds, Insurance linked securities	105,763	5.90%	112,003	99,523
Private Debt	14,221	6.20%	15,103	13,340
Emerging market debt	20,335	12.00%	22,776	17,895
Absolute Return/Diversified Growth	250,473	11.90%	280,279	220,666
Cash, other investment balances and forward foreign exchange contracts	127,783	0.30%	128,166	127,399
Total Fund	5,835,997		6,734,921	4,937,073

Asset Class	Value as at 31 March 2020	Change	Value on Increase	Value on Decrease
	£000s	%	£000s	£000s
UK Equities, Unit Trusts and Pooled Funds	448,503	27.50%	571,841	325,164
Global equities, Unit Trusts and Pooled Funds (ex UK)	1,538,853	28.00%	1,969,732	1,107,974
Property	432,234	14.20%	493,612	370,857
Corporate Bonds (medium term)	689,575	9.80%	757,154	621,997
Index-Linked Gilts (medium term)	830,374	7.40%	891,821	768,926
Private Equity	257,187	28.40%	330,228	184,146
Infrastructure equity	120,419	20.10%	144,623	96,215
High Yield Debt, Convertible Bonds, Insurance linked securities	112,024	8.70%	121,770	102,278
Private Debt	8,591	8.70%	9,339	7,844
Emerging market debt	24,393	12.40%	27,418	21,369
Absolute Return/Diversified Growth	246,459	13.80%	280,470	212,447
Cash, other investment balances and forward foreign exchange contracts	44,230	0.30%	44,363	44,098
Total Fund	4,752,842		5,642,370	3,863,314

f) Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.

The Pension Fund recognises that interest rates can vary and can affect both income to the Pension Fund and the value of the net assets available to pay benefits. A 100 basis point (BPS) movement in interest rates has been advised by the Pension Fund Actuary, as a sensible level to indicate interest rate sensitivity.

The analysis in the following table assumes that all other variables, in particular exchange rates, remain constant, and shows the effect in the year on the net assets available to pay benefits, of a +/- 100 BPS change in interest rates. Movement in bond values have been calculated to include the impact of modified duration. Modified duration expresses the measurable change in the value of a security in response to a change in interest rates.

Value at 31 March 2020 £000s	Potential change +/- 100 BPS £000s	Value on Increase £000s	Value on Decrease £000s	Asset class exposed to interest rate risk	Value at 31 March 2021 £000s	Potential change +/- 100 BPS £000s	Value on Increase £000s	Value on Decrease £000s
44,450	N/A	44,450	44,450	Cash at Custodian and Investment Managers	112,698	N/A	112,698	112,698
40,986	N/A	40,986	40,986	Cash held by Administering Authority	27,368	N/A	27,368	27,368
1,576,111	269,407	1,306,704	1,845,518	Bond (pooled funds)	949,429	116,906	832,523	1,066,335
1,661,548	269,407	1,392,141	1,930,955	Total	1,089,495	116,906	972,589	1,206,401

Value at 31 March 2020 £000s	Potential change +/- 100 BPS £000s	Value on Increase £000s	Value on Decrease £000s	Income source exposed to interest rate risk	Value at 31 March 2021 £000s	Potential change +/- 100 BPS £000s	Value on Increase £000s	Value on Decrease £000s
2,395	24	2,419	2,371	Cash at Custodian and Investment Managers	3,028	30	3,058	2,997
169	2	171	168	Cash held by Administering Authority	80	1	81	79
2,565	26	2,590	2,539	Total	3,108	31	3,139	3,077

This analysis demonstrates that a 1% increase in interest rates will not affect the interest received on fixed interest assets but will reduce their fair value and vice versa. Changes in interest rates do not impact on the value of cash but they will affect the interest income received on those balances. Changes to both the fair value of assets and the income received from investments impact on the net assets available to pay benefits.

The Pension Fund's bond holdings are held in accumulation funds where income is retained and automatically reinvested rather than being distributed to the Pension Fund. Income earned from these funds is therefore excluded from the analysis above.

g) Currency risk

Currency risk represents the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in foreign exchange rates.

The Pension Fund holds a number of financial assets and liabilities in overseas financial markets and is therefore exposed to the risk of loss arising from exchange rate movements of foreign currencies. At 31 March 2021, the Pension Fund had overseas investments (excluding forward foreign exchange contracts) of £3,579,599,649 and £6,024,646 cash denominated in currencies other than Sterling.

The Pension Fund Actuary has advised that the one year expected standard deviation for an individual currency at the 31 March 2021 is 10% (10% at 31 March 2020). This assumes no diversification, in particular that interest rates remain constant. An analysis of the impact this would have on the Pension Fund is given in the following table together with the prior year comparator.

Asset Class	Value as at 31 March 2021	Potential market movement +/-10%	Value on Increase	Value on Decrease
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Overseas Equity	294,601	29,460	324,061	265,141
Overseas Property	257,577	25,758	283,334	231,819
Overseas Unitised Insurance Policies	1,121,483	112,148	1,233,631	1,009,335
Overseas Unit Trusts	1,072,020	107,202	1,179,222	964,818
Overseas Private Equity	271,707	27,171	298,878	244,536
Overseas Managed Funds	562,212	56,221	618,434	505,991
Foreign currencies	6,025	602	6,627	5,422
Total	3,585,624	358,562	3,944,187	3,227,062

Asset Class	Value as at 31 March 2020	Potential market movement +/-10%	Value on Increase	Value on Decrease
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Overseas Equity	428,373	42,837	471,211	385,536
Overseas Property	276,841	27,684	304,525	249,157
Overseas Unitised Insurance Policies	739,655	73,966	813,621	665,690
Overseas Unit Trusts	330,258	33,026	363,284	297,232
Overseas Private Equity	185,037	18,504	203,541	166,533
Overseas Managed Funds	446,496	44,650	491,146	401,847
Foreign currencies	4,141	414	4,555	3,727
Total	2,410,801	241,080	2,651,881	2,169,721

External Investment Managers manage this risk through the use of forward foreign exchange contracts and futures, to hedge currency exposures back to the base currency. See section 6.9 for further information.

The Treasury Management Strategy does not permit the Administering Authority to invest in foreign currency denominated deposits.

6.15 Actuarial Present Value of Promised Retirement Benefits

The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits of the Pension Fund at 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2020 are set out in the following table. This is the underlying commitment of the Pension Fund in the long term to pay retirement benefits to its active (employee members), deferred and pensioner members.

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£k		£k
5,778,000	Present value of promised retirement benefits	7,716,000

Liabilities have been projected using a roll forward approximation from the latest formal valuation as at 31 March 2019 and therefore do not take account of any changes in membership since the valuation date. The liability at 31 March 2021 is estimated to comprise of £3,407 million with respect to employee members, £1,970 million with respect to deferred members and £2,339 million with respect to pensioners. The principal assumptions used by the Pension Fund Actuary were:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
	Financial assumptions	
1.9% per annum	Inflation/pension increase rate	2.85% per annum
2.3% per annum	Salary increase rate	3.25% per annum
2.3% per annum	Discount rate	2.00% per annum
	Mortality assumptions	
	Longevity at 65 for current pensioners:	
21.9	• Men	22.1
24.1	• Women	24.5
	Longevity at 65 for future pensioners:	
22.8	• Men	23.2
25.5	• Women	26.2

Allowance has been made for future pensioners to elect to exchange 50% of the maximum additional tax free cash up to HMRC limits for pre-April 2008 service and 75% of the maximum tax-free cash for post April 2008 service.

The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits is sensitive to changes in actuarial assumptions. The significant changes and their impact on the value of the Pension Fund's liabilities between 31 March 2020 and 31 March 2021 were:

Sensitivity to the assumptions for the year ended 31 March 2020	£k	%
0.5% decrease in discount rate	795,000	10%
0.5% increase in salary increase rate	57,000	1%
0.5% increase in pensions increase rate	723,000	9%
Total increase in liabilities due to changes in assumptions	1,575,000	20%

The assumptions used by the Pension Fund Actuary to calculate the present value of promised retirement benefits are those required by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting 2020/21. The liability set out in the table above is used for statutory accounting purposes and should not be compared against the value of liabilities calculated on a funding basis, which is used to determine contribution rates payable by employers in the Pension Fund. Further information on the Pension Fund's policy for funding its liabilities is set out in section 6.16.

6.16 Funding Policy

The Pension Fund's approach to funding its liabilities is set out in its Funding Strategy Statement. The statement sets out how the Administering Authority has balanced the conflicting aims of affordability of contributions, transparency of processes, stability of employers' contributions and prudence in the funding basis.

The Pension Fund Actuary is required to report on the "solvency" of the Pension Fund at least every three years. The last actuarial valuation of the Pension Fund was carried out as at 31 March 2019 to determine contribution rates for the financial years 2020/21 to 2022/23, with the new rates effective from 1 April 2020.

The market value of the Pension Fund's assets at the valuation date was £4,835 million and represented 98% of the Pension Fund's accrued liabilities, allowing for future pay increases.

In accordance with the Scheme regulations, employer contribution rates were set to meet 100% of the Pension Fund's existing and prospective liabilities.

The main actuarial assumptions were as follows:

Discount rate	3.4%
Salary increases	2.7%
Price inflation/pension increases	2.3%

Further information can be found in the Funding Strategy Statement on page 78 and the Actuarial Valuation report on page 19.

6.17 Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs)

Scheme members have the option to make AVCs to enhance their pension benefits. These contributions are invested separately from the Pension Fund's assets, with either the Standard Life Assurance Company or Utmost Life and Pensions Company.

2019/20						2020/21					
Standard Life		Utmost Life		Total AVCs		Standard Life		Utmost Life		Total AVCs	
£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
4,483		1,162		5,645	Value at 1 April	4,430		1,253		5,683	
					<u>Income</u>						
761		52		813	Contributions received	1,131		5		1,137	
-		-		-	Transfer values received	2		-		2	
761		52		813	Total Income	1,133		5		1,138	
					<u>Expenditure</u>						
(563)		(73)		(636)	Retirement benefits	(398)		(110)		(508)	
(61)		-		(61)	Transfer values paid	(192)		(80)		(272)	
-		(3)		(3)	Lump sum death benefit	-		-		-	
-		(47)		(47)	Refunds	-		-		-	
(624)		(123)		(747)	Total Expenditure	(590)		(189)		(779)	
(190)		161		(28)	Change in market value	659		143		803	
4,430		1,253		5,683	Value at 31 March	5,632		1,212		6,844	

6.18 Related Parties

a) Hertfordshire County Council

The County Council incurred costs of £428,153 in relation to the management of the Pension Fund and was subsequently reimbursed by the Pension Fund for these expenses. The County Council also contributed £58,228,915 to the Pension Fund in 2020/21.

b) Pensions Committee

No members of the County Council Pensions Committee were councillor members of the Hertfordshire Local Government Pension Scheme during 2020/21. Each member of the Pensions Committee is required to declare their interests at each meeting.

c) Member Allowance

The post holder of Chair of the Pensions Committee receives a special responsibility allowance of £10,668, however as the current post holder is also a Cabinet Member for the County Council, he only receives the higher allowance of the two which is the Cabinet Member position.

d) Key Management Personnel

The Administering Authority disclosure of senior officer remuneration includes the S151 Officer who has responsibility for the proper financial administration of the Pension Fund under the Local Government Act 1972. This Officer was employed by the Administering Authority and spent a proportion of time on the financial management of the Pension Fund. Details for the remuneration for the previous two years is shown below.

Position	Year	Apportioned salary £	Apportioned pension contributions £	Total apportioned remuneration £
Director of Resources	2020/21	12,999	2,371	15,370
	2019/20	12,403	2,262	14,665

These costs comprise an element of the total remuneration from the Pension Fund to the County Council in 2020/21 of £428,153.

6.19 Contingent Liabilities and Contractual Commitments**Contractual Commitments**

Where the Pension Fund has entered into agreements with fund managers offering private equity, property (with the Fund's 'Alternatives' fund manager), infrastructure debt and private rental sector mandates, commitments held by the Fund until the relevant fund managers require funds to fulfil a purchase of an investment. The value of outstanding contractual commitments by investment asset category are outlined below;

31 March 2020 £000s		31 March 2021 £000s
243,100	Private Equity	167,420
153,661	Property	69,291
40,483	Infrastructure Debt	35,743
150,000	Private Rental Sector	20,050
587,244	Total	292,503

There were no new commitments made in 2020-21.

6.20 Contingent Assets

a) Withholding tax reclaims

The Pension Fund has entered into a process to reclaim withholding tax made by other European Union (EU) countries, based on precedent cases in some EU countries that tax has been withheld unfairly under EU law. Claims have been submitted in France and Germany.

The Pension Fund's claims are set out in the following table in both Euros and Sterling (calculated using exchange rates as at 31 March 2021). The claims are subject to legal processes but based on precedent and legal advice, the Pension Fund expects to be successful in these claims. Therefore the amounts below are contingent assets for the Pension Fund.

Country	Euro Value at 31 March 2021	Sterling Value at 31 March 2021
	€ 000s	£ 000s
Germany	148	126
France	191	162
Total	339	289

b) Bonds

28 admitted bodies in the Pension Fund held bonds as surety to guard against the possibility of being unable to meet their pension obligations. These bonds are drawn in favour of the Pension Fund and payment will only be triggered in the event of employer default.

6.21 Investment Strategy Statement

Regulation 7 of the Local Government Pension Fund Regulations 2016 (Management and Investment of Funds) set out a requirement for funds to formulate and publish a new Investment Strategy Statement (ISS) no later than 1st April 2020. The Hertfordshire Pension Fund published its ISS on 31st March 2020, and it can be found on the Fund's website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

6.22 External Audit Costs

The Pension Fund has incurred the following costs in relation to the audit of the Statement of Accounts and Annual Report by the council's external auditors:

2019/20		2020/21
£000s		£000s
28	Fees payable to Ernst & Young with regards to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year.	41

For the 2019/20 accounts, Ernst & Young invoiced an additional £20,432 after the completion of the accounts (not included in the table above), of this, £13,922 was contested and is currently awaiting decision by the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA).

1. Investment Management

Powers of Investment

The principal powers to invest are contained in the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 and require an administering authority to invest any pension fund money that is not needed immediately to make payments from the Pension Fund. The regulations provide a prudential framework within which the Pension Fund's investment strategy should be implemented and managed.

The regulations state that the Administering Authority must, after taking proper advice, formulate an investment strategy which includes:

- a requirement to invest fund money in a wide variety of investments;
- the authority's assessment of the suitability of particular investments and types of investments;
- the authority's approach to risk, including the ways in which risks are to be assessed and managed;
- the authority's approach to pooling investments, including the use of collective investment vehicles and shared services;
- the authority's policy on how social, environmental and corporate governance considerations are taken into account in the selection, non-selection, retention and realisation of investments; and
- the authority's policy on the exercise of the rights (including voting rights) attaching to investments.

When setting its Investment Strategy, the Pension Fund is required to have a properly diversified portfolio of assets to reduce overall portfolio risk and volatility and must ensure that the asset allocation policy is compatible with achieving its locally determined solvency target.

The regulations permit a range of investments and the Fund is required to must set out the maximum percentage of the total value of all investments of fund money that it will invest in particular investments or classes of investment.

The Pension Fund's Investment Strategy Statement, which was in force during the 2020/21 financial year is set out on pages 58 – 65. This is also available from the Pension Fund's website:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

Responsibility for Investing the Pension Fund's Assets

The Pensions Committee of the County Council is responsible for setting the overall investment strategy of the Pension Fund and monitoring investment performance.

The majority of the Pension Fund's investments are managed by external Investment Managers, who have substantial discretionary powers regarding their individual portfolios. The split of the Pension Fund between these managers at 31 March 2021 is shown in the following table.

Investment Manager	Pension Fund %
Allianz Global Investors Europe GmbH	6.2
Baillie Gifford & Co.	14.7
CBRE Global Collective Investors (UK) Ltd.	7.7
HarbourVest Partners, LLC.	2.7
Insight Investment Management Limited	5.2
Legal & General Assurance (Pensions Management) Limited	2.7
LGT Capital Partners (Ireland) Ltd.	9.8
Longview Partners LPP	6.0
Macquarie Group Limited	1.1
Municipal & General Securities Company Limited	1.0
Pantheon Ventures	1.7
Permira Advisers LLP	0.0
Royal London Asset Management Ltd.	12.5
Standard Life Investments Ltd.	0.3
UBS Group AG	28.3

An amount of cash is held by the County Council in order to manage the payment of members' pension benefits and the collection of contributions. This is invested in accordance with the Pension Fund's Treasury Management Strategy which

Investment Report

is reviewed and approved annually by the Pensions Committee. The 2020/21 Treasury Management Strategy was approved by the Pensions Committee on 3 March 2020.

2. Investment Strategy Statement

2.1. Introduction

This is the Investment Strategy Statement (“ISS”) of the Hertfordshire Pension Fund (“the Fund”), which is administered by Hertfordshire County Council, (“the Administering Authority”). The ISS is made in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 (“the Regulations”). This document replaces the Fund’s Statement of Investment Principles.

The ISS has been prepared by the Pension Committee (“the Committee”) having taken advice from the Fund’s investment adviser, Mercer. The Committee acts on the delegated authority of the Administering Authority.

The ISS, which was approved by the Committee on 3 March 2020, is subject to periodic review at a maximum every three years or following any significant change in investment policy. The Committee has provided the Pension Board with an opportunity to review and comment on the contents of the Fund’s investment strategy and will continue to work with the Pension Board to review its operation.

This ISS has been designed to be a living document and is an important governance tool for the Fund. This document sets out the investment strategy of the Fund, provides transparency in relation to how the Fund investments are managed, and acts as a risk register.

This ISS also supports the development of asset pooling, which represents a major change in the way LGPS funds manage assets. The implementation of the Fund’s investment strategy will be mainly through assets held by the ACCESS Pool (more details provided in section 4).

The Committee seeks to invest, in accordance with the ISS, any Fund money that is not needed immediately to make payments from the Fund. The ISS should be read in conjunction with the Fund’s Funding Strategy Statement (dated 1 April 2020).

Investment Beliefs

The Committee has, as part of the process of creating this Investment Strategy Statement agreed a set of ‘Investment Beliefs’ which are summarised briefly below:

- All investment decisions should be made on an objective basis supported by the most appropriate evidence available.
- The Hertfordshire Pension Fund has very long term liabilities and it is therefore believed that a long-term approach to investment matters is both appropriate and desirable.
- Risk and return are related. Riskier assets are expected to be held only when there is a reasonable expectation of higher returns being generated. There are some risks for which no additional return is expected; these should be avoided or mitigated.
- Diversification is an effective way of reducing the volatility of an asset portfolio and therefore reducing the volatility of the Pension Fund’s funding level.
- Investment risk is multi-dimensional and complex. The Fund is subject to a range of investment risks which are addressed in the investment strategy-setting process. There are other risks such as regulatory risk, employer risk and longevity risk which are addressed elsewhere.
- Excess returns are not certain. The Committee aims to manage the Fund on a cost-effective basis and seeks correspondingly favourable terms from the Fund’s asset managers.
- The real world, of economies and markets, is complex. Simple explanations are unlikely to be robust. To reflect this complexity the Committee takes material time and effort to understand the issues with which it is faced and also, from time to time, undertakes training on specific topics from specialist providers.
- Innovation and evolution can be of benefit to the long term investor. A willingness to consider new investment ideas is likely to bring value to the Fund in the longer term, especially if balanced with a consistency of thought and governance processes.
- As an investor with a long time horizon, ESG issues are likely to have a material impact on investment risks and returns and contribute to our ability to meet investment objectives. Therefore, considering these issues is consistent with the fiduciary duty of the Committee. Long-term sustainability issues, particularly climate change, present risks and opportunities that require explicit consideration, both today and into the future. Stewardship can help to create and preserve long term value for companies and markets as a whole.

2.2. Investment strategy and the process for ensuring suitability of investments

The Fund's objective is to pay benefits as they fall due and this requires the build-up of sufficient reserves in advance. The Fund is currently assessed to have a deficit, in respect of historic benefits accrued, and so the asset strategy is focused on achieving returns in excess of gilts, without taking undue risk in order to reduce this deficit. Having a thorough understanding of the risks facing the Fund is crucial and these are covered later in this statement.

The target asset allocation as at March 2016 for the fund is set out in the table below and has an allocation of 75% to growth assets and 25% to defensive assets:

Asset class	Allocation %	Role (s) within the strategy
Equity: UK Global Total	 16.0 34.2 50.2	Long term growth in excess of gilt returns and expected inflation. Includes diversification of UK and Global equities for market growth and currency exposure
Bonds	25.0	Dampens the volatility of funding level Income generating Liability matching properties Diversification of return source
Property	8.0	Diversification. Generates investment income; Returns expected to be inflation-sensitive Exposure to Illiquidity premium
Alternatives	15.8	Diversified source of returns Some inflation protection Source of income Exposure to illiquidity premium
Cash	1.0	Cash flow to meet statutory liabilities, including monthly pension payroll payments.

Following detailed investment strategy reviews in both 2016 and 2019, the revised investment strategy will target an asset allocation of 65% to growth assets, and 35% to defensive assets, of which 10% will be invested in real assets. The Fund will look to deliver this new strategy and asset allocation over the medium term and will work with the Fund's investment consultant to implement this new strategy. The table below provides an overview of the role each asset plays in achieving the Fund's objectives is set out in the table below:

Asset class	Allocation %	Role (s) within the strategy
Equity: UK Global Global Climate Aware Emerging Market Total	2.0 31.0 2.0 5.0 40.0	Long term growth in excess of gilt returns and expected inflation. Includes diversification of UK and Global equities for market growth and currency exposure
Bonds	25.0	Dampens the volatility of funding level Income generating Liability matching properties Diversification of return source
Property	8.0	Diversification. Generates investment income; Returns expected to be inflation-sensitive Exposure to Illiquidity premium
Alternatives	16.0	Diversified source of returns Some inflation protection Source of income Exposure to illiquidity premium
Real Assets*	10.0	Diversification Generates investment income and some inflation protection Exposure to illiquidity premium
Cash	1.0	Cash flow to meet statutory liabilities, including monthly pension payroll payments.

*The Fund has allocated to a range of Real Assets, High Lease to Value Property (HLV), Infrastructure Debt and Private Residential Property (PRS), with the allocations split evenly.

The Fund may invest in strategies that utilise both exchange-traded and OTC derivatives, including, but not limited to, forward currency contracts, options, futures and swaps for investment purposes. Derivatives may be used for hedging or efficient portfolio management purposes or to create a synthetic equity exposure. Derivatives will not be used for speculative purposes. These instruments can be highly volatile and expose investors to a high risk of loss.

The Committee is responsible for the Fund's asset allocation which is determined via a triennial strategy review as part of the actuarial valuation process, but is kept under constant review; noting that strategic changes are an evolutionary process.

The triennial review looks at both qualitative and quantitative analysis, covering:

- The required level of return that will mean the Fund can meet its future benefit obligations as they fall due
- The level of risk that the Fund can tolerate in absolute terms, and in relation to its funding level and deficit

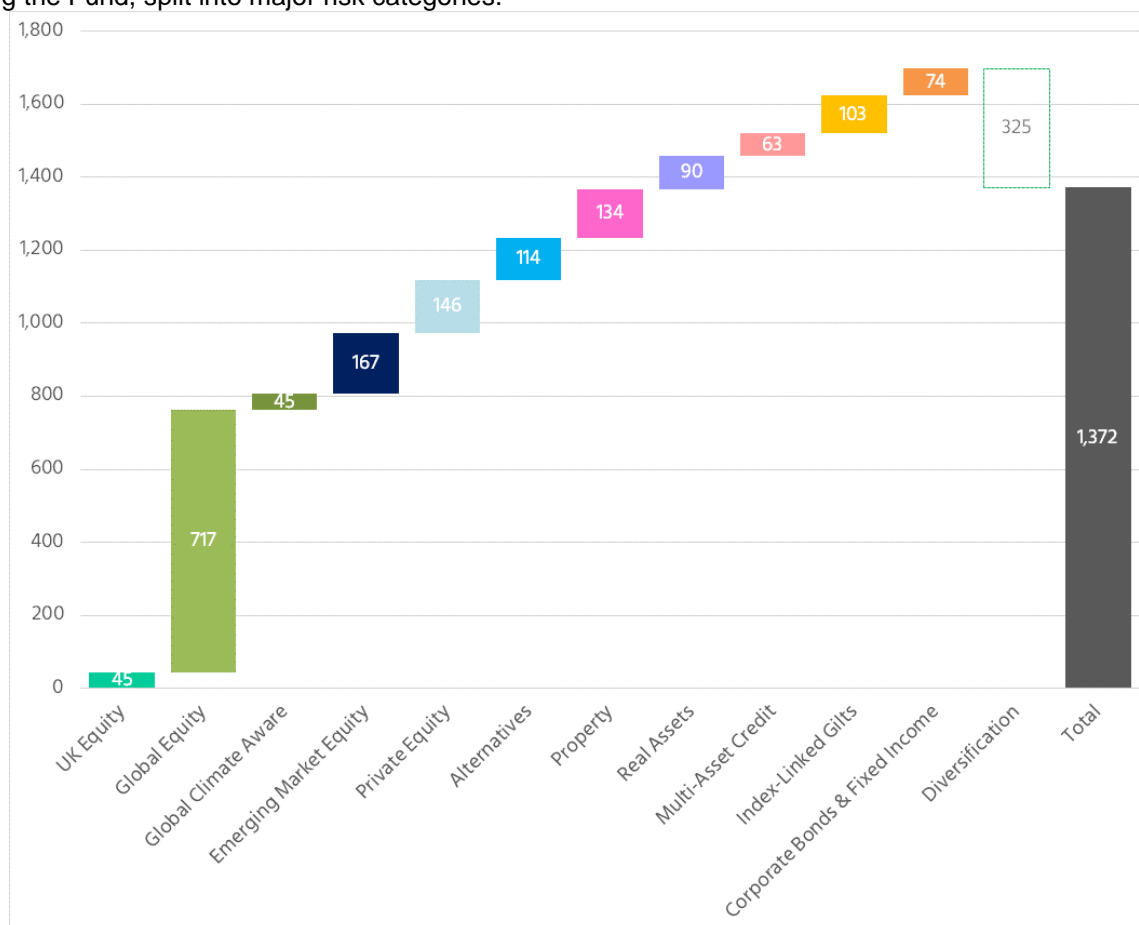
- An analysis of the order of magnitude of the various risks facing the Fund is established in order that a priority order for mitigation can be determined
- The desire for diversification across asset class, region, sector, and type of security

2.3. Risk measurement and management

The Committee assesses risks both qualitatively and quantitatively, with the starting point being the triennial strategy review. Risks are considered, understood and then prioritised accordingly.

Investment Risks

The Fund is exposed to a number of different types of risk of which the most significant are related to investment and market risk. The chart below shows the VaR¹ (Value at Risk, essentially the minimum losses that would occur in a 1-in-20 downside event) facing the Fund, split into major risk categories.



As the above graphic illustrates, although equities are expected to outperform the liabilities over the long term, they are the Fund's largest single source of risk. The other significant source of risk is from changes in the present value of its liabilities which are sensitive to change in gilt yields and inflation expectations. Further detail on the risks and any mitigation actions that the Fund takes to address them are detailed below.

Equities

The largest risk that the Fund is running is in relation to its equity holdings. Should equity market conditions deteriorate significantly this will have a negative impact on the funding level. The Fund holds equities in order to provide the necessary returns to ensure that the Fund remains affordable. The Committee believes that the extra returns that are expected to be generated by equities compensate for the level of risk equities bring to the Fund, but mitigates this risk by investing significant amounts in diversifying assets; bonds, property and alternatives.

The Fund is a long term investor but does require income over and above contributions received in order to pay pensions. A strategy is therefore being developed that would seek additional income from alternative assets and bonds, rather than from equities, in order to avoid being a forced seller at a low point in the market.

¹ VaR calculation based on the valuation results of 31 March 2019.
Hertfordshire Pension Fund Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21

Liabilities

The Fund's liabilities are affected by both discount rates (gilt yield) and inflation; the pensions that the Fund will ultimately pay to members are linked to inflation and so as inflation expectations rise so do the expected cashflows that the Fund will have to pay in future. The Fund's liabilities are also sensitive to discount rates because of the method that the actuary uses to place a present value on all the future pension payments. The Fund will seek to invest in a range of assets that:

- provide returns in excess of inflation;
- in some cases provide an inflation-linked income, subject to a tolerable level of volatility;
- are sensitive to discount rates to reduce the impact that changes to the present value of the liabilities have on the funding level.

Alternatives

The Fund has a significant amount of assets allocated to a range of alternatives, with specific allocations to property and private equity in addition to an alternatives mandate which invests in a range of asset classes. The risks that these investments bring at an individual level are not insignificant but the Committee believe that over the long term alternatives will provide returns that compensate for the risks being run. Additionally the level of diversification the assets provide helps to reduce the Funds reliance on returns from equities. Illiquid assets such as property are also a valuable source of income.

Active Manager Risk

Investment Managers are appointed to manage the Fund's investments on its behalf. This risk is small relative to other risks; nevertheless the Fund still addresses this risk through diversification of its exposure to active managers and careful monitoring of their progress. The Fund maintains a balance between passive and active management; determining the most appropriate approach in relation to the asset class. The Fund has an active risk management programme in place that aims to help it identify the risks being taken and put in place processes to manage, measure, monitor and (where possible) mitigate the risks being taken. Key risks and mitigating controls are incorporated in the Fund's risk register which is monitored on an ongoing basis and reported to the Pensions Committee and LGPS Board quarterly.

The Fund's portfolio is well diversified across asset classes, geography and asset managers. As different asset classes have varying correlations with other asset classes, by investing in a range of different investments, the fund can reduce the total level of risk run to a material extent.

The other principal risks that the Fund is exposed to can be identified as:

- The Fund's investment strategy and asset allocation does not deliver the long term asset returns and growth required to meet the Fund's liabilities;
- The Funding level of the Pension Fund deteriorates;
- Scheme employers default on meeting their obligations to the Pension Fund and LGPS; and
- Third party risk – failure of Fund providers and regulatory non-compliance.

Details of these risks and a summary of control mechanisms can be found in appendix E of the Fund's funding strategy statement <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

Cashflow Risk

The Fund's cash flow position is currently positive but the Fund is gradually becoming more mature and this position is monitored by the Fund's officers and Fund Actuary at each triennial valuation. This will become an important consideration in setting and monitoring the Fund's investment strategy and asset allocation to illiquid and liquid assets. This issue is currently addressed at total Fund level. As part of the lead up to the next triennial valuation the Fund will look to develop sub-strategies to address the differing funding levels of the employers within the scheme. The Fund also receives investment income which could be used to pay benefits rather than be re-invested if and when the Fund becomes cash flow negative.

Demographic Risk

The Committee reviews the demographic assumptions of the Fund every three years as part of its triennial valuation to mitigate the risk that any changes to longevity and other factors would have on the Fund. Measures to mitigate this risk include review of employer contributions, asset allocation and bond or other insurance.

Further details on the assumptions used in the valuation can be found in appendix C of the Fund's funding strategy statement <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

Fund Governance Risk

The Fund believes that there is a benefit to the Fund to be gained from good governance of its Committee in the form of either an increased return and/or decreased risk. Poor governance can lead to opportunities and risks being missed, and have a detrimental effect on the funding level and deficit.

Details of the Fund's governance structure can be found in the Governance Compliance Statement, details of which can be found in the Annual Report and Accounts <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

Environmental, Social and Governance ('ESG') Risks

The Committee believes that ESG, including climate change, risks should be taken into account on an ongoing basis and are an integral part of the Fund's strategy and objective of being a long-term investor. Climate change is a systemic risk that will impact investments at the asset class, sector and company level and will require increasing consideration. Understanding climate change risks from an investment perspective and developing a plan to manage this is a current area of focus.

The Committee believes that good stewardship via engagement with the underlying companies through our investment managers is key in relation to strong corporate governance and managing ESG risks, which in turn will enhance returns. Details of the Fund's policies can be found later in this statement.

Asset Pooling Risk

The Fund is a member of the ACCESS pool and may be exposed to additional risk during the transition of assets to the pool and may incur unexpected costs in relation to the transition of assets among managers. The pool will seek suitable professional advice during this transition period to budget and manage cost.

2.4. Approach to asset pooling

Hertfordshire is a member of the ACCESS pool along with the following 10 other pension funds:

- East Sussex
- Essex
- Hampshire
- Cambridgeshire
- Isle of Wight
- Kent
- Norfolk
- Northamptonshire
- Suffolk
- West Sussex

All eleven funds are committed to working together collaboratively to meet the criteria for pooling and have signed an Inter Authority Agreement to underpin their partnership. Passively-managed investments were the first investments pooled by ACCESS in 2018, since then a number of equity and bond funds have been established by ACCESS and Fund investments migrated to these funds.

The ACCESS Funds have set out how they meet the pooling criteria, the pool's structure, governance arrangements and services to be shared in the submission made to the Government in July 2016, which is available on ACCESS's website <http://www.accesspool.org/>

All eleven ACCESS funds expect that all investments will be pooled apart from a minority of investments where there is a no value for money benefit to pooling. These have been / will be set out as part of the pooling criteria.

Assets to be invested in the Pool

The Fund's intention is to invest its assets through the ACCESS Pool as and when suitable Pool investment solutions become available. An indicative timetable for investing through the Pool was set out in the July 2016 submission to Government. The key criteria for assessment of Pool solutions will be as follows:

1. That the Pool enables access to an appropriate solution that meets the objectives and benchmark criteria set by the Fund
2. That there is a clear financial benefit to the Fund in investing in the solution offered by the Pool, should a change of provider be necessary.

Assets held outside the pool

At the time of preparing this statement the Fund has elected not to invest the following assets via the ACCESS Pool, however this position will change in the future as the pool's capacity to manage these asset classes develops:

Asset class	Manager	% of Fund strategic assets	Benchmark	Reason for not investing via the ACCESS pool
Property	CBRE	8.0%	75% MSCI Global Funds Index (lagged one quarter) / 25% MSCI All Balanced Property Funds Index	This mandate is made up of illiquid assets which because of the nature of the entities invested in is likely to make pooling both extremely difficult to implement and more costly for the Fund.
Real Assets	Allianz, Macquarie, M&G and Legal & General	10.0%	Various	These mandates are made up of illiquid asset classes which because of the nature of both the fee structure and legal structure of the entities invested in is likely to make pooling both extremely difficult to implement and significantly more costly for the Fund.
Private Equity	HarbourVest, Standard Life Capital, Pantheon	5.0%	FTSE All-Share index	Existing illiquid asset programmes will run off at normal lifecycle to avoid crystallising exit costs and loss of illiquidity premium earned.
Alternatives	LGT Capital	11.0%	3 month sterling LIBOR	This mandate is made up of illiquid and liquid asset classes which because of the nature of both the fee structure and legal structure of the entities invested in is likely to make pooling both extremely difficult to implement and significantly more costly for the Fund.
Operational Cash	Hertfordshire County Council	1.0%	7 day LIBID	The Hertfordshire Pension Fund needs to manage its cash flow to meet statutory liabilities, including monthly pension payroll payments, therefore a reasonable level of operational cash will be held outside the pool.

In the fullness of time, it is expected that the ACCESS Pool will have capacity and expertise to manage illiquid and alternative assets in a cost effective way, and therefore ultimately all the Fund's non-cash assets will be held in the pool.

2.5. Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance ('ESG') and Stewardship policies

ESG issues are likely to have a material impact on investment risks and returns and contribute to our ability to meet investment objectives. Therefore considering these issues is consistent with the fiduciary duty of the Committee. Long-term sustainability issues, particularly climate change, present risks and opportunities that require explicit consideration, both today and into the future.

The Fund is a long-term investor and is committed to being an active owner by promoting good stewardship. Stewardship can help to create and preserve long term value for companies and markets as a whole. The Fund wishes to promote a policy of dialogue on responsible investment issues, through its investment managers, with company management. It also recognises the importance of collaboration for effective engagement.

The Fund invests via pooled funds and therefore has given underlying investment managers full discretion in assessing ESG factors, including climate change, and to exercise voting and engagement rights on its behalf. Managers are expected to undertake their stewardship obligations in line with their corporate governance policies and current best practice, including the UK Stewardship Code (the 'Code'). The Fund supports the Code and is intending to become a signatory to the 2020 Code. The Fund encourages its underlying investment managers to comply with the Code through regular reviews of their compliance with it.

The Committee considers, amongst other factors how ESG, climate change and stewardship is integrated within the investment processes when appointing a new manager and when monitoring investment managers. In recognition of the importance of climate change from a risk/return perspective the Committee has made an allocation to a climate aware equity index fund. Further allocations to strategies that target long-term ESG themes and opportunities may be explored in the future.

Investment managers' approaches to ESG, climate change and stewardship are monitored on an annual basis to ensure they are appropriate and in keeping with the Fund's policy. Going forward, as part of this reporting the Committee will receive an annual report from its Investment Consultant on the ESG credentials of its investment managers, the carbon intensity of their equity portfolios and their approach to stewardship. The Fund's approach to ESG reporting is being developed further over time.

The Committee has not set any investment restrictions on the appointed equity managers in relation to products or services, but sensitive topics remain an area of ongoing consideration.

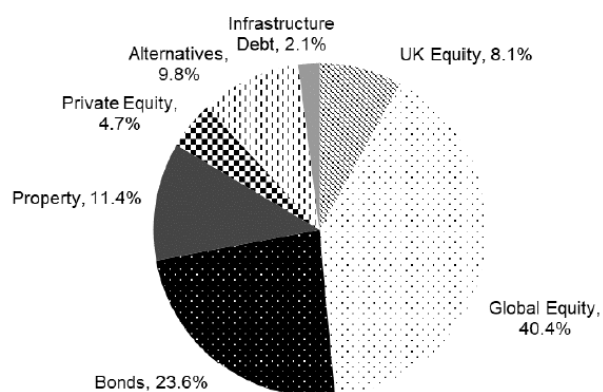
The Committee recognises that ESG and stewardship are rapidly developing topics and is committed to developing its understanding and approaches in these areas. The Committee recognises the importance of working collaboratively with ACCESS to make the Fund's ESG approach effective, particularly in the appointment of managers who integrate financially material ESG risks effectively within their investment processes.

3. Investment Policy

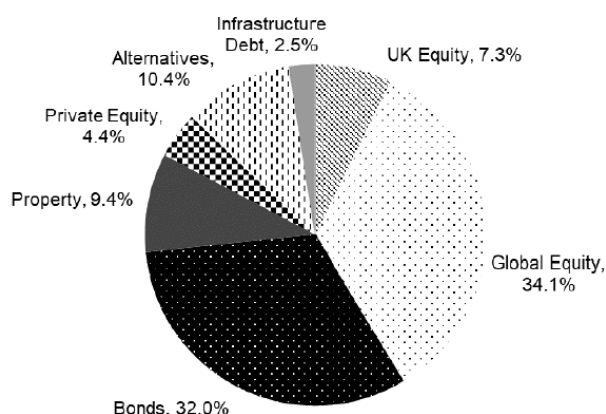
The Investment Strategy Statement, on page 58, sets out the target asset allocation of the Pension Fund for 2020/21, in comparison with the Pension Fund's specific benchmark allocation.

The actual distribution of the Pension Fund's assets across the main asset classes as at 31 March 2021 (and as at 31 March 2020 for comparison) are shown below:

Distribution of the Pension Fund at 31 March 2021

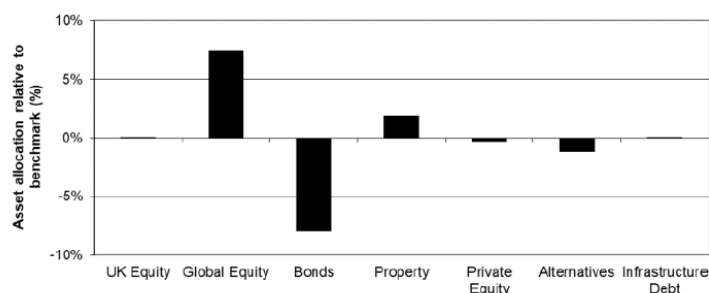


Distribution of the Pension Fund at 31 March 2020

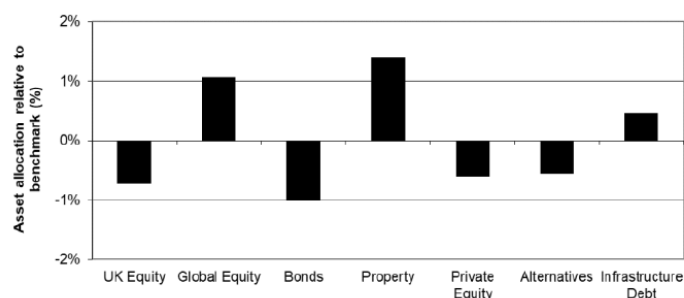


The actual asset allocation of the Pension Fund relative to the benchmark allocation is outlined below as at 31 March 2021 (with 31 March 2020 also shown for comparison):

Actual asset allocation relative to benchmark allocation as at 31 March 2021



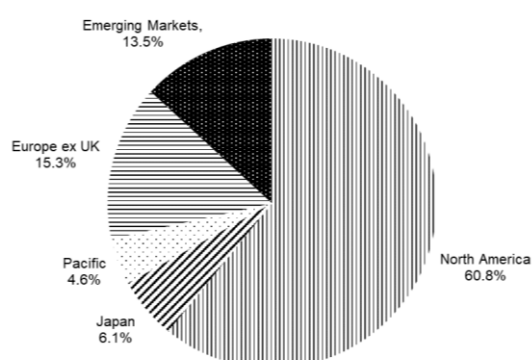
Actual asset allocation relative to benchmark allocation as at 31 March 2020



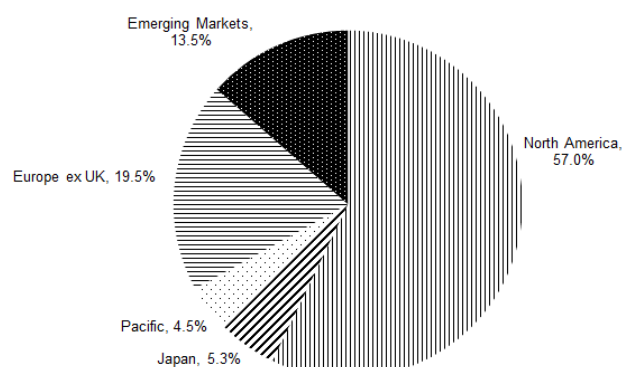
As at 31 March 2021, the Pension Fund's allocation to global equities and property was overweight relative to the benchmark allocation, with other allocations underweight, particularly bonds.

The regional distribution of the Pension Fund's overseas equity investments as at 31 March 2021 (and as at 31 March 2020 for comparison) is shown below:

Distribution of Pension Fund's Overseas equity investments at 31 March 2021



Distribution of Pension Fund's Overseas equity investments at 31 March 2020



The top ten largest direct equity holdings of the Pension Fund as at 31 March 2021 (and as at 31 March 2020 for comparison) are shown below.

Ten Largest Equity Holdings at 31 March 2021	Market Value (£millions)	% of Total Investments
Microsoft	14.9	0.3
Taiwan Semiconductor-SP	13.0	0.2
Amazon	11.9	0.2
United Health	11.2	0.2
Agilent Technologies	10.7	0.2
Intuit	9.8	0.2
Visa	9.4	0.2
Accenture	9.2	0.2
Cooper	9.0	0.2
Novo Nordisk	8.7	0.2

Ten Largest Equity Holdings at 31 March 2020	Market Value (£millions)	% of Total Investments
Microsoft	28.4	0.6
United Health	17.3	0.4
Visa	16.5	0.3
Roche	15.1	0.3
Cooper	14.9	0.3
Ecolab	14.5	0.3
Agilent Technologies	14.0	0.3
Accenture	13.9	0.3
Intuit	13.6	0.3
Taiwan Semiconductor	12.1	0.3

4. Review of World Markets (courtesy of Mercers)

Investment Markets ¹

The period started with lockdowns across most large developed countries which led to an unprecedented collapse in quarterly GDP growth in Q2 2020. China, on the other hand saw a strong rebound in GDP growth as it began to reopen its economy following its lockdown earlier in the year. This mitigated the overall negative impact on global GDP growth to some extent. Late in the quarter, the sharp rebound previously seen in China became more global as western countries slowly started to reopen their economies. With economies largely open again, global GDP rebounded at record pace over Q3 2020.

Q4 2020 saw COVID-19 infections rising again sharply across western countries, leading to a gradual return of restrictions. The impact on quarterly GDP growth was less pronounced this time because GDP was at a lower level already than before the COVID-19 shock, whilst at the same time consumers and businesses were better prepared to function somewhat amid these restrictions. At the same time, the start of vaccines being rolled out late in the quarter led to optimism that fuller and more sustainable reopenings could be achieved in 2021.

The first quarter of 2021 began with lockdowns in numerous countries including the UK as much of the world faced another wave of Covid-19. Nevertheless, gradual vaccine rollout in developed countries drove economic recovery optimism. Political risk declined as Joe Biden was sworn in as US President, despite the incident on Capitol Hill on 6 January, and the UK completed its transition out of the EU without major incidents. Economic data continued to point towards a global recovery but with wide regional dispersions.

Equities

On a year-on-year basis to 31 March 2021, risk assets had exceptionally high returns as shown in the performance section. This has a lot to do with the base effect as we are currently comparing valuations just after four consecutive quarters of a bull run to valuations in the immediate aftermath of the worst market downturn since the Global Financial Crisis. The strong bull market in risk assets over the last year in anticipation of a strong vaccine-led rebound had a large impact as well.

During Q2 2020, equity markets reversed much but not all of the losses suffered during the Covid-19 shock in March 2020, in spite of record downgrades of earnings forecast for 2020. Over the third quarter of 2020 the equity rebound continued for most markets, led primarily by large cap companies achieving secular growth, as western economies tentatively reopened whilst accommodative fiscal and monetary policy remained in place. Over the fourth quarter, the vaccine announcements revealing better than expected efficacy and faster than expected deployment, alongside a reduction in political uncertainty boosted market sentiment. Markets positioned for a full economic reopening in 2021 with small caps and value stocks leading markets higher. The first quarter of 2021 was marked by higher volatility. Streams of retail investor activity in January led to short squeezes, followed by a sharp rise in bond yields in the back end of the quarter placing pressure on equity markets. In spite of this, equities ended the quarter with strong returns supported by ongoing stimulus as investors looked towards the anticipated economic recovery and rebound in corporate earnings.

Bonds

The COVID-19 crisis led to swift and unprecedented fiscal and monetary policy responses to support economies and markets across the globe, starting at the end of Q1 2020. This led to a government bond rally over the year as nominal yields fell to the lowest level in history for many countries, including the UK. The UK 10-year gilt yield, reached an all-time low just above 0% in August before partially retracing to just above 0.2% by the end of 2020. In Q1 2021, UK gilt yields rose sharply in line with global yields as investors priced in the strong recovery and increasing inflation risk. The UK 10-year gilt yield ended the quarter at 0.85%, having recovered all of the lost ground in 2020.

A consultation on the future of RPI, launched in March 2020, led to the decision to converge RPI to CPIH from 2030 without any spread adjustment being applied to compensate index-linked gilt holders (and other recipients of RPI-linked payments). In spite of the consultation outcome being deemed unfavourable for holders of index-linked gilts, the decision had been widely anticipated and the reduction in long-dated breakeven inflation rates implied in index-linked gilts was modest over the year. Moreover, inflation expectations rose sharply in 2021 which benefited index-linked gilts only to some degree due to the high duration component of the asset class.

After a sharp increase in credit spreads during the worst of the COVID-19 market shock in March 2020, credit spreads tightened subsequently as market optimism returned, bolstered by government support. Credit spreads ended the year at slightly lower levels than in late 2019 and remained broadly unchanged over Q1 2021. This led to strong returns for UK credit, as demand for spread assets remained strong over the year and outperformance of credit relative to government bonds on a duration-adjusted basis.

Property

The recovery of UK real estate markets from the shock of Covid-19 slowed during Q4 2020 with the emergence of a 'second wave' of the pandemic, a second lockdown, and a potential Brexit cliff-edge at year-end. Despite this, real estate performance was broadly resilient. With the UK remaining in lockdown, sentiment has been subdued in early 2021, but as the vaccination programme gathers pace optimism about the path to recovery is returning.

Investment Performance²

Equity Markets

At a global level, developed markets as measured by the FTSE World index, returned 39.9%. Meanwhile, a return of 40.8% was recorded by the FTSE All World Emerging Markets index.

At a regional level, European markets returned 34.9% as indicated by the FTSE World Europe ex UK index. At a country level, UK stocks as measured by the FTSE All Share index returned 26.7%. The FTSE USA index returned 42.7% while the FTSE Japan index returned 26.3%. The considerable underperformance of UK equities relative to global markets is attributed to the index's large exposure to oil, gas and basic materials which only started to benefit from a full recovery being priced in at the end of 2020.

The huge year-on-year returns can to a large degree be attributed to the base effect as the measurement period begins when equity markets had just touched bottom following the 2020 Covid-19 crash.

Equity market total return figures are in Sterling terms over the 12-month period to 31 March 2021.

Bonds

UK Government Bonds as measured by the FTSE Gilts All Stocks Index, returned -5.5%, while long dated issues as measured by the corresponding Over 15 Year Index had a return of -10.4% over the year as the longer end of the nominal yield curve rose by more than the shorter end. The yield for the FTSE Gilts All Stocks index rose over the year from 0.7% to 1.2% while the Over 15 Year index yield rose from 0.8% to 1.3%.

The FTSE All Stocks Index-Linked Gilts index returned 2.3% with the corresponding over 15-year index exhibiting a return of 3.6%. Rising inflation expectations offset rising nominal yields to an extent, leading index-linked gilts to outperform their nominal counterparts over the year.

Corporate debt as measured by the Bank of America Merrill Lynch Sterling Non-Gilts index returned 7.0%. Bond market total return figures are in Sterling terms over the 12-month period to 31 March 2021.

Property

Over 12-month period to 31 March 2021, the MSCI UK All Property Index returned 0.7% in Sterling terms.

Commodities

The price of Brent Crude Oil rose 181.1% from \$22.60 to \$63.52 per barrel over the one-year period. Over the same period, the price of Gold increased 5.7% from \$1612.10 per troy ounce to \$1704.74.

The S&P GSCI Commodity Spot Index returned 64.4% over the one-year period to 31 March 2021 in Sterling terms.

Currencies

Over the 12-month period to 31 March 2021, Sterling appreciated by 11.3% against the US Dollar from \$1.24 to \$1.32. Sterling appreciated by 13.9% against the Yen from ¥133.86 to ¥152.46. Sterling appreciated against the Euro by 3.9% from €1.13 to €1.17 over the same period.

¹ Statistics sourced from Thomson Reuters Datastream unless otherwise specified.

² Statistics sourced from MSCI Investment Property Database.

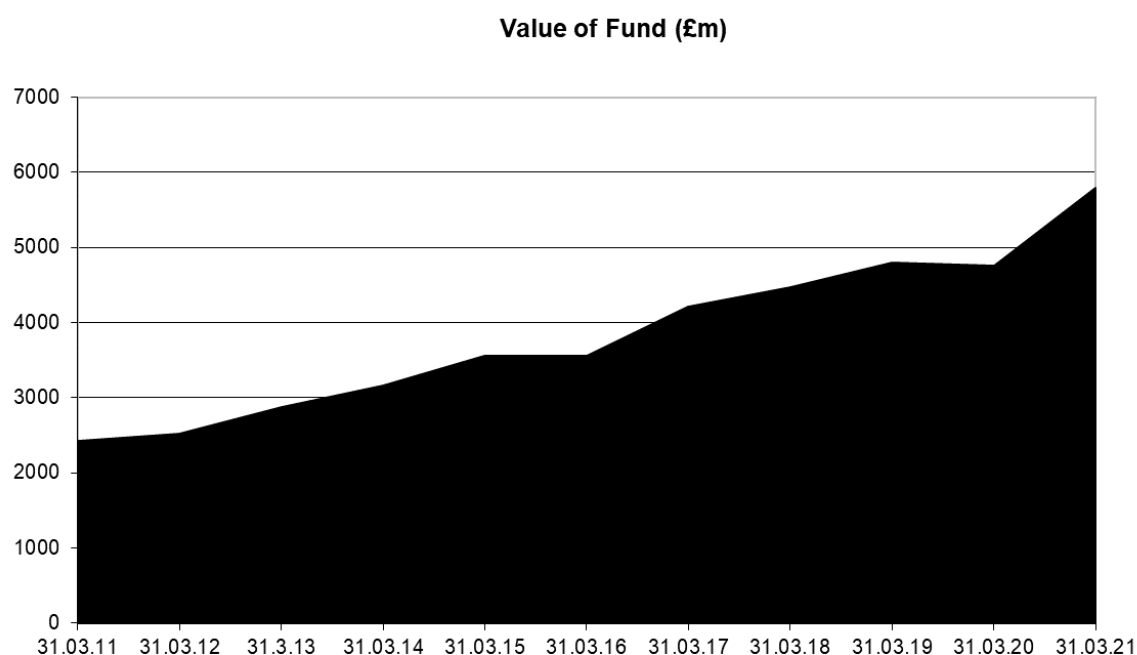
5. Investment Performance

In order to monitor the performance of the investment managers, the Pension Fund participates in performance measurement services. In 2020/21 these services were provided by BNY Mellon Asset Servicing B.V. and Mercer. The performance of the investment managers is reported to the Pensions Committee on a quarterly basis.

Over the twelve months to 31 March 2021, the Pension Fund return was 22.0% (gross of fees) and 21.8% (net of manager fees).

Change in the Pension Fund's Total Assets

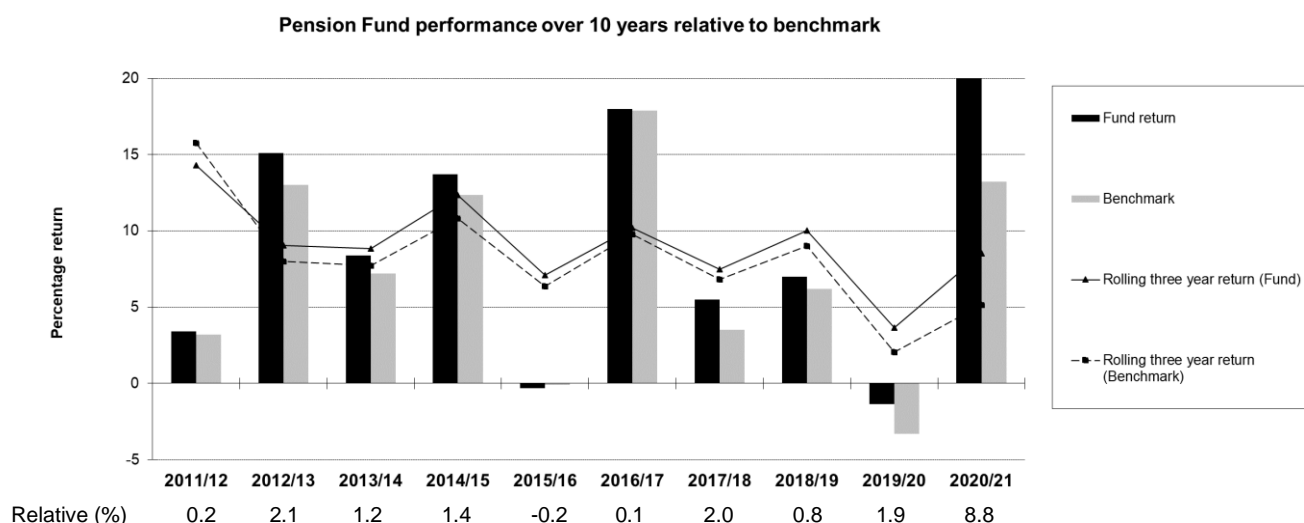
The change in the value of the Pension Fund's invested assets over the ten years to 2020/21 is shown below.



Comparison with the Pension Fund's Benchmark

The Pension Fund's performance is analysed against a customised benchmark, as set out in the Investment Strategy Statement on pages 58-65. The graph below shows the annual investment returns (gross of fees) of the Pension Fund compared to the benchmark over the last ten years. This shows that the Pension Fund has performed above benchmark in nine years out of the last ten.

Overlaid on the chart is a rolling three year annualised return of the Fund's assets compared with the equivalent figures for the benchmark.



The table below shows the long term performance of the Pension Fund to 31 March 2021 against the benchmark.

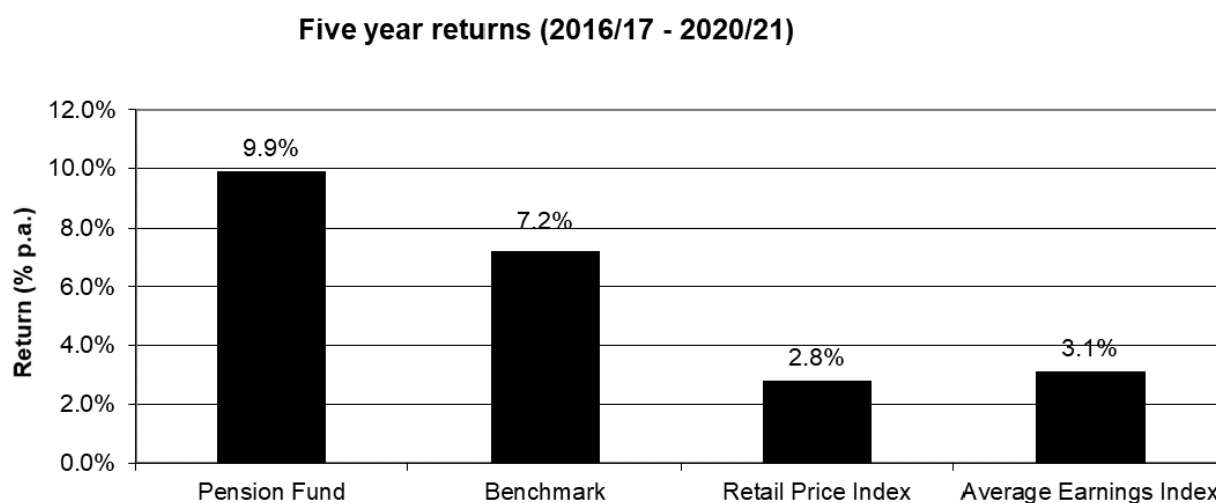
	Pension Fund	Benchmark	Relative Performance
3 year (% p.a.)	8.8	5.1	3.6
5 year (% p.a.)	9.9	7.2	2.7
10 year (% p.a.)	8.9	7.1	1.8

Performance is shown gross of fees, source BNY Mellon.

Performance Comparisons

Long term returns

The five year returns from 31 March 2016 to 31 March 2021 are shown in the chart below:

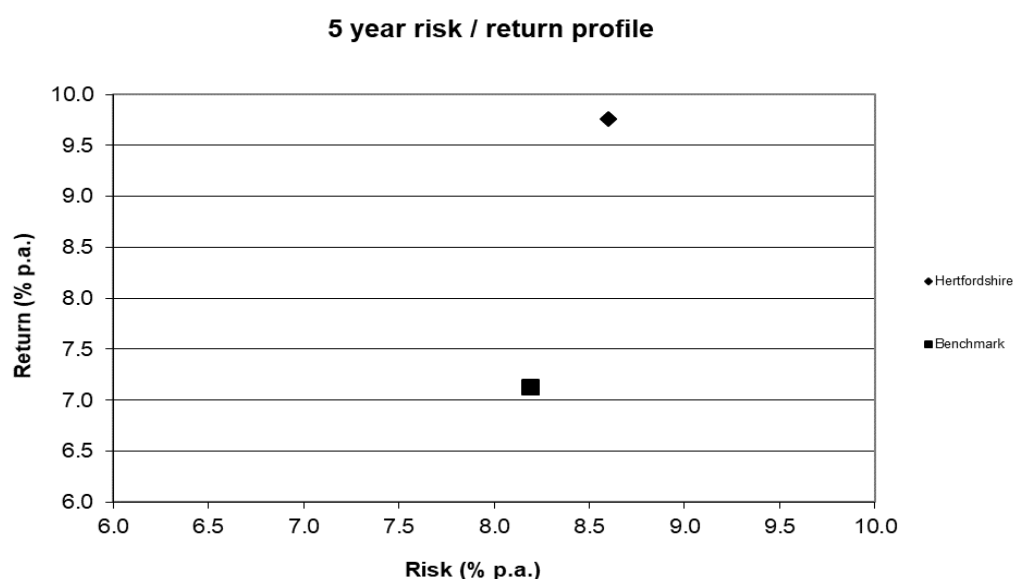


Pension Fund performance is shown gross of fees. Retail Price Index and Return for Average Earnings Index shown for the five years to 28 February 2021 and 31 January 2021 (respectively) as those were the latest available at the time of writing.

The chart above shows that over the last five financial years, the Pension Fund's performance outperformed retail price inflation and the rate of growth in average earnings.

Risk comparisons

The chart below highlights the risk and return profile of Pension Fund relative to its benchmark over the last five years to 31 March 2021.



Risk is defined as the volatility or annualised standard deviation of quarterly returns.

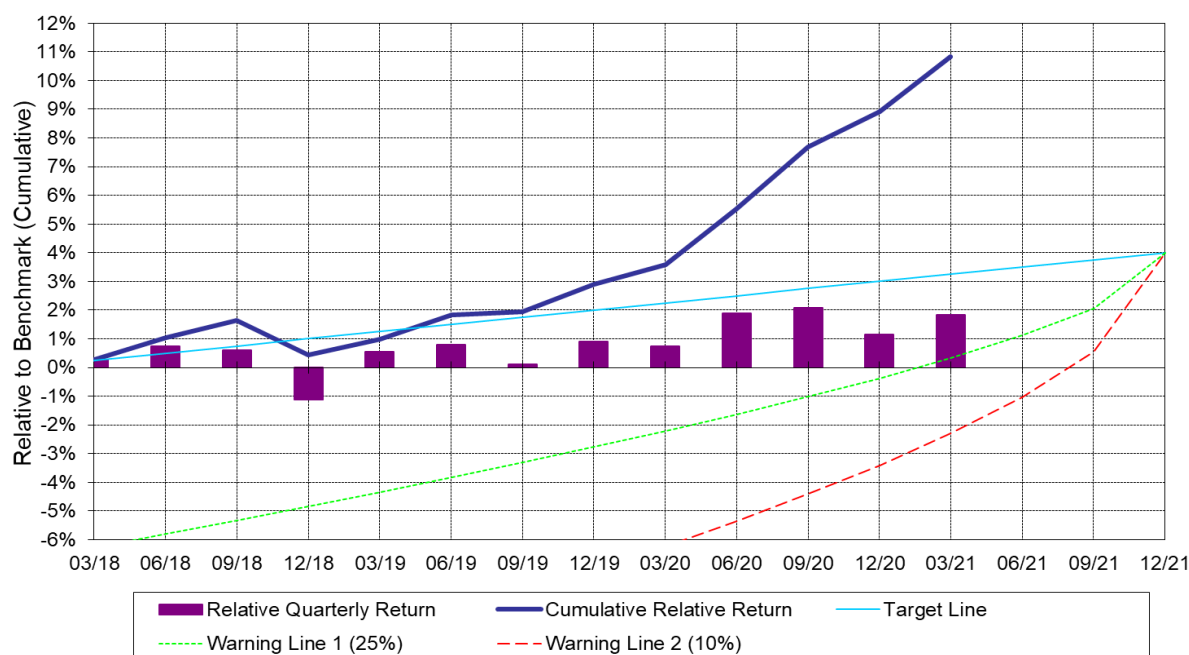
This highlights that the Pension Fund's returns have been marginally more volatile than the Pension Fund's benchmark. The Pension Fund did however generate higher returns than the benchmark over this period and so has been more than compensated for the additional risk.

Control chart

The control chart below highlights the performance of the Pension Fund over time against its targets to put into perspective any significant deviation from the target.

The chart spans three years as this is the time period over which the majority of the managers are expected to meet their target.

Total Fund - Performance from 31 March 2018 (Net of Fees)



Relative returns based on quarterly values and performance available at the time. Chart may not sum exactly to other figures in the report which are based on custodians figures who will have allowed for finalised accounting values.

The lines on the charts are as follows:

The Benchmark Return

This is the horizontal line, at point 0%, representing the benchmark return. If the Fund's performance was exactly in line with the benchmark return, the performance line (see below) would follow this horizontal line exactly.

Relative Quarterly Return

The bars represent the difference between the Fund's investment returns from those of the benchmark over each quarterly period. A positive bar (above zero) represents positive performance and a negative bar (below zero) represents negative performance.

Cumulative Relative Return

This solid line represents the cumulative performance achieved relative to the benchmark return. Because active investment management produces uneven returns, the performance is not expected to exactly follow the target line. Instead the performance will fluctuate with the objective that the performance line will meet or exceed the target line by the end of the period.

The Target Line

This is a simplistic representation of cumulative added value over the period. If, for example, a manager has a target to achieve a return of 0.5% p.a. in excess of the benchmark return, the graph will show the target of 1.5% added value by the end of the three year period. This is shown as a thin light blue line.

ACTIVE EMPLOYERS

Scheduled Bodies

Councils and other bodies whose employees have a statutory right to be in the Scheme

Broxbourne Borough Council	Police and Crime Commissioner
Dacorum Borough Council	St Albans District Council
East Herts District Council	Stevenage Borough Council
Hertford Regional College	Three Rivers District Council
Hertfordshire Constabulary	University of Hertfordshire
Hertfordshire County Council	Watford Borough Council
Hertsmere Borough Council	Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
North Hertfordshire College	West Hertfordshire College
North Herts District Council	West Herts Crematorium
Oaklands College	

Academies, Free Schools, Studio Schools and Technical Schools

Adeyfield School (STAGS)	Links ESC
Agora Learning Partnership (HFL MAT)	Little Reddings Primary School
Alban City School	Longdean School
Alban Wood Primary School & Nursery	Loreto College
Applecroft	Mandeville Primary
Ascot Road Community Free School	Manor Fields Primary School
Beaumont	Marlborough School Science College
Bedmond Academy	Meryfield Community Primary School
Beech Hyde Primary School & Nursery	Monkswalk School
Beechfield Primary School	Mount Grace
Birchwood High School	Mount Pleasant Lane School
Bishops Hatfield Girls School	Nicholas Breakspear Catholic School
Bovingdon Primary	Northgate Primary School
Brandles School	Onslow St Audreys
Broadfields Primary School	Our Lady Catholic Primary School
Bromet Primary School	Oxhey Wood Primary School
Broxbourne Academy	Parmiter's School (AC)
Bushey Meads School	Pinewood School
Camps Hill Academy	Presdales
Chancellors School	Queens School
Chaulden Junior Academy	Ralph Sadlier
Chauncy School	Richard Hale
Cherry Tree Primary School	Rickmansworth School
Christ Church CoE School	Ridgeway Academy (Sir Frederic Osborn Academy)
Churchfield CoE Academy	Robert Barclay Academy
Countess Anne Academy	Roebuck Academy
Crabtree Infants School	Roman Way First School
Crabtree Junior School	Roselands School
Cranbourne School	Roundwood Park School
Croxley Danes School	Roysia

Appendix 1: List of Employing Bodies

Dame Alice Owens School	Samuel Ryder Academy
Danes Education Trust	Sandringham School
De Havilland Primary School	Sarratt Primary School
Divine Saviour RC Primary School	Scholars' Education Trust - Central Team
Elstree UTC	Simon Balle
Fair Field Junior School	Sir John Lawes School
Fairlands Academy	Sir Thomas Moore
Flamstead End Primary & Nursery	Springmead Primary School
Fleetville Infants	Spiral Partnership Trust
Fleetville Juniors	St Joan of Arc
Francis Combe	St Albans Girls School
Freman College	St Catherine of Siena
Garden City Academy	St Clement Danes School
Goffs Churchgate Academy	St Georges
Goff's School	St Johns
Grange Junior School	St John's Catholic Primary School
Greneway	St Johns COFE infant Nursery school
Grove Academy (Aspire Trust) formerly Berrygrove Academy	St Mary's Catholic School Royston
Grove Road Primary School	St Mary's Cof E High School
Hailey Hall School	St Michael's
Haileybury Turnford	Stanborough
Hammond Primary	Summercroft Primary School
Harpenden Academy	The Barclay School
Hartsbourne Primary School	The Grange Academy (Meller Educational Trust)
Hatfield Community Free School	The Orchard Primary School
Herts and Essex Academy	The Reach Free School
Hertsmere Jewish Primary School	The Sele School
Hertswood School	The Wroxham School
Hitchin Boys	Thomas Alleyne
Hitchin Girls School	Tring School
Holy Rood Catholic Primary School	Verulam School
Inclusive MAT	Warren Dell Primary School
John Henry Newman	Waterside Academy
John Warner School	Watford Grammar School for Boys
Jupiter Community Free School	Watford Grammar School for Girls
Katherine Warington School	Watford St John's CofE Primary School
King James Academy Royston (previously Meridian Academy - Actives)	Watford UTC
Kings Langley School	West Herts Community Free School
Knights Templar School	Westfield Academy
Knightsfield	Wheatfields Junior School
Knutsford School	Wheatfields Infants and Nursery School
Lanchester Community Free School	Wilbury Junior School
Larkspur Primary School	Wilshire Dacre Academy
Larwood Academy	Windhill
Laurance Haines School	Woodside Primary School
Laureate Academy	Woolgrove School
Leventhorpe School	Yavneh College
Links Academy Hatfield	

Employers who can designate their employees to be in the Scheme

Abbots Langley Parish Council	Knebworth Parish Council
Aldbury Parish Council	London Colney Parish Council
Aldenham Parish Council	Markyate Parish Council
Ashwell Parish Council	Nash Mills Parish Council
Berkhamsted Town Council	North Mymms Parish Council
Bishop's Stortford Town Council	Redbourn Parish Council
Buntingford Town Council	Royston Town Council
Chipperfield Parish Council	Sandridge Parish Council
Chorleywood Parish Council	Sawbridgeworth Town Council
Colney Heath Parish Council	South Mimms Parish Council
Croxley Green Parish Council	St Stephens Parish Council
E2BN	Stanstead Abbots Parish Council
Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council	Stanstead St Margaret's Parish Council
Harpenden Town Council	Tring Town Council
Hatfield Town Council	University Bus
Hertford Town Council	Walkern Parish Council
Hertingfordbury Parish Council	Ware Town Council
Hertford Heath Parish Council	Watford Rural Parish Council
Hertfordshire Association of Local Councils	Welwyn Parish Council
Kimpton Parish Council	Wheathamsted Parish Council
Kings Langley Parish Council	Woolmer Green Parish Council

Admitted Bodies (employers who participate by virtue of an admission agreement)

ABM Catering Ltd (Verulam Sch)	Hertsmere Leisure Trust
APCOA Parking Ltd	HFL
Aramark	Highfield Park Trust
Aspens Services Limited	Interserve
B3 Living (formerly Broxbourne Housng Association)	John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance)
Banardos (Lot 5)	Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation
Birkin Cleaning Services	Mears (Building Contractors) Ltd
Broxbourne Environmental Services Trading (BEST) LTD	Mountain Healthcare Ltd
Care By Us (East Herts)	ONE YMCA (East Quad)
Carter Jonas	Quantum Care Ltd
Caterlink Ltd (St Marys Cheshunt)	Radlett Centre Trust
Cleantec Services Ltd - St Mary's CE Academy, Cheshunt	Refuge
Compass Group UK Ltd	Ringway Infrastructure Service
Culinera Limited	Securitas
Edwards & Blake (Ridgeway Academy -Sir Frederic Osborn School)	Settle Group
Elstree Film Studio	SLM Community Leisure Charitable Trust
Engie Services Limited(previous Engine Colfey, Balfour Beatty)	Sports and Leisure Management
Finesse Leisure (formally Welwyn Hatfield Leisure Limited)	Steria
Fusion Lifestyle	Stevenage Leisure Limited
Geoffrey Osborne Ltd	Tenon FM Ltd
HCL	Thrive Homes
Hertfordshire NHS Partnership Trust	Updata Infrastructure UK Ltd
Herts Ability Ltd (prev Hertfordshire Action on Disability)	Urbaser Ltd
Herts at Home	Watford and District YMCA
Herts Building Control Ltd	Watford Community Housing Trust
Herts Community Meals	WPS UK Ltd (formerly Opus (UK) Ltd)
Herts Living Ltd	

CEASED EMPLOYERS

Employers with no active members but with some outstanding liabilities whose pensioners are or will be paid from the Pension Fund

Scheduled Bodies

Brookman's Park JMI	Hertingfordbury Cowper Primary
Christchurch JMI	Lee Valley Water
Colne Valley Water Company	Magistrates Courts Committee
Da Vinci Studio School (North Herts School Trust)	Rickmansworth & Uxbridge Valley Water Company
Department of Health	St Catherines of Sienna RC JMI
Department of Transport - Motor Tax	Thames Water Authority
Hertfordshire Probation Trust	Wroxham JMI

Designated Bodies

Codicote Parish Council	Shenley Parish Council
Letchworth Garden City Council	

Admitted Bodies

Abbots Care	Hemel Hempstead Day Centre Ltd
ABM Catering Ltd	Hertford Museum Trust
Action for Children	Hertfordshire Care Trust
Affinity Sutton	Hertfordshire Career Services Ltd
Age Concern Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire E-Learning Partnership
Aldenham Renaissance Ltd	Hertfordshire Training & Enterprise Council
Alliance in Partnership Ltd	Herts Family Mediation Service
Amey Plc	HERTS YOUNG MARINERS BASE (HYMB)
ARP Trading	Hitchin Markets Ltd
Art Café	Kameleon 4
Aspire Leisure Trust	Leonard Cheshire
Association of Charity Officers	MACE Ltd
Barnados (Hoddesdon)	Mitie Property Services
Bushey Citizens Advice Bureau	National Car Parks
Capita Secure Info Solutions	North Hertfordshire Hospice Care Association
Carers in Hertfordshire	Northgate Information Solutions
Carers in Herts	NSL
Caterplus	Office and General
Central Parking Systems	Offley Place Ltd
Change, Grow, Live (CGL)	Principle Cleaning
Chauncy Housing Association	Pro Action
Churchill Contract Services Limited	PSLA (Holywell School)
Citizens Advice Bureau in Hertsmeire	Rhodes Museum Foundation
Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers	Riversmead Housing Association(Network Homes)
Colesseum Theatre	RM Education Ltd
Comfort Call	Serco (Welwyn Hatfield BC)
Commission for New Towns - Hemel Hempstead	Shenley Park Trust
Commission for New Towns - Stevenage	Society of Education Officers
Community Building Services	St Albans Diocesan Board for Social Responsibility
Compass Contract Services Ltd	St Mary's Trading (All Sorts)
CP Plus Limited	Stevenage Homes
Cucina (Hertswood Academy)	Superclean Services Wolthorpe Ltd
Dacorum Council for Voluntary Service	The Fairway Public House Limited
Dacorum Sports Trust	Three Rivers West Trust
DC Leisure Management Ltd	Town & Country Markets
Digica FMS	TSG Mechanical Services Ltd
East Herts Citizens Advice Service	Veolia
EEIDB	Watford & Three Rivers Trust
Elior UK	Watford Town Centre Partnership Limited
Europa Services Limited	Wellfield Trust
Evergreen Facilities Services (Hemel Hempstead School)	
Exemplas	Welwyn and Hatfield Community Housing Trust
Goldsborough Home Care	West Hertfordshire Computer Consortium
Gosling Sports Park (previously Welwyn Hatfield Sports Centre Trust)	Weston Voluntary Nursery
Group for the Rootless of Watford	
	Womans Royal Voluntary Society
	YMCA - (Royston & Buntingford)

1 Introduction

1.1 What is this document?

This is the Funding Strategy Statement (FSS) of the Hertfordshire Pension Fund (“the Fund”), which is administered by Hertfordshire County Council, (“the Administering Authority”).

This latest version of the Funding Strategy Statement follows from a review undertaken as part of the 2019 actuarial valuation exercise.

It has been prepared by the Administering Authority in collaboration with the Fund’s actuary, Hymans Robertson LLP, and after consultation with the Fund’s employers and investment adviser. It is effective from 31st March 2020.

1.2 What is the Hertfordshire Pension Fund?

The Fund is part of the national Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The LGPS was set up by the UK Government to provide retirement and death benefits for local government employees, and those employed in similar or related bodies, across the whole of the UK. The Administering Authority runs the Hertfordshire Pension Fund, in effect the LGPS for the Hertfordshire area, to make sure it:

- receives the proper amount of contributions from employees and employers, and any transfer payments;
- invests the contributions appropriately, with the aim that the Fund’s assets grow over time with investment income and capital growth; and
- uses the assets to pay Fund benefits to the members (as and when they retire, for the rest of their lives), and to their dependants (as and when members die), as defined in the LGPS Regulations. Assets are also used to pay transfer values and administration costs.

The roles and responsibilities of the key parties involved in the management of the Fund are summarised in Appendix A.

1.3 Why does the Fund need a Funding Strategy Statement?

Employees’ benefits are guaranteed by the LGPS Regulations, and do not change with market values or employer contributions. Investment returns will help pay for some of the benefits, but probably not all, and certainly with no guarantee. Employees’ contributions are fixed in those Regulations also, at a level which covers only part of the cost of the benefits.

Therefore, employers need to pay the balance of the cost of delivering the benefits to members and their dependants.

The FSS focuses on how employer liabilities are measured, the pace at which these liabilities are funded, and how employers or pools of employers pay for their own liabilities. This statement sets out how the Administering Authority has balanced the conflicting aims of:

- affordability of employer contributions,
- transparency of processes,
- stability of employers’ contributions, and
- prudence in the funding basis.

The requirement to maintain and publish an FSS is also contained in the LGPS Regulations, as set out in Appendix B.

The FSS is a summary of the Fund’s approach to funding its liabilities and when other funding decisions are required, for example when employers join or leave the Fund. It is not an exhaustive statement of policy on all issues. The FSS forms part of a framework which includes:

- the LGPS Regulations;
- the Rates and Adjustments Certificate (confirming employer contribution rates for the next three years) which can be found in an appendix to the formal valuation report;
- the Fund’s policies on admissions and cessations;
- actuarial factors for valuing individual transfers, early retirement costs and the costs of buying added service; and
- the Fund’s Investment Strategy Statement (see section 4 : “Funding strategy and links to investment strategy

1.4 How does the Fund and this FSS affect me?

This depends on who you are:

- a member of the Fund, i.e. a current or former employee, or a dependant: the Fund needs to be sure it is collecting and holding enough money so that your benefits are always paid in full;
- an employer in the Fund (or which is considering joining the Fund): you will want to know how your contributions are calculated, that these are fair by comparison to other employers in the Fund, in what circumstances you might need to pay more and what happens if you cease to be an employer in the Fund. Note that the FSS applies to all employers participating in the Fund;
- an Elected Member whose council participates in the Fund: you will want to be sure that the council balances the need to hold prudent reserves for members' retirement and death benefits, with the other competing demands for council money;
- a Council Tax payer: your council seeks to strike the balance above, and also to minimise cross-subsidies between different generations of taxpayers.

1.5 What does the FSS aim to do?

The FSS sets out the objectives of the Fund's funding strategy, including:

- to ensure the long-term solvency of the Fund, using a prudent long term view. This will ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet all members'/dependants' benefits as they fall due for payment;
- to ensure that employer contribution rates are reasonably stable where appropriate;
- to minimise the long-term cash contributions which employers need to pay to the Fund, by recognising the link between assets and liabilities and adopting an investment strategy which balances risk and return;
- to reflect the different characteristics of different employers in determining contribution rates. This involves the Fund having a clear and transparent funding strategy to demonstrate how each employer can best meet its own liabilities over future years; and
- to use reasonable measures to reduce the risk to other employers and ultimately to the Council Tax payer from an employer defaulting on its pension obligations.

1.6 How do I find my way around this document?

In Section 2 there is a brief introduction to some of the main principles behind funding, i.e. deciding how much an employer should contribute to the Fund from time to time.

In Section 3 we outline how the Fund calculates the contributions payable by different employers in different situations.

In Section 4 we show how the funding strategy is linked with the Fund's investment strategy.

In the Appendices we cover various issues in more detail:

- A. The responsibilities of key parties
- B. The regulatory framework, including how and when the FSS is reviewed,
- C. The calculation of employer contributions
- D. The Actuarial assumptions which the Fund Actuary currently makes about the future,
- E. Key risks and controls for the Fund,
- F. Glossary

If you have any other queries please contact the Pensions Team at Pensions.Team@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

2 Basic Funding issues

2.1 How does the actuary measure the required contribution rate?

In essence this is a three-step process:

1. Calculate the ultimate funding target for that employer, i.e. the ideal amount of assets it should hold in order to be able to pay all its members' benefits. See Appendix C for more details of what assumptions we make to determine that funding target;
2. Determine the time horizon over which the employer should aim to achieve that funding target. See the table in section 3.3 and Note (c) for more details;
3. Calculate the employer contribution rate such that it has at least a given probability of achieving that funding target over that time horizon, allowing for different likelihoods of various possible economic outcomes over that time horizon. See 2.4 below and the table in 3.3 Note (e) for more details.

2.2 What is each employer's contribution rate?

This is described in more detail in Appendix D. Employer contributions are normally made up of two elements:

- a) the estimated cost of benefits being built up each year, after deducting the members' own contributions and including administration expenses. This is referred to as the "*Primary rate*", and is expressed as a percentage of members' pensionable pay; plus
- b) an adjustment for the difference between the Primary rate above, and the actual contribution the employer needs to pay, referred to as the "*Secondary rate*". Payment of the Secondary rate will aim to return the employer to, or protect, a fully funded position over an appropriate period (the "time horizon"). The Secondary rate may be expressed as a percentage of pay and/or a monetary amount in each year.

The rates for all employers are shown in the Fund's Rates and Adjustments Certificate, which forms part of the formal Actuarial Valuation Report. Employers' contributions are expressed as minima, with employers able to pay contributions at a higher rate. Any additional contributions over and above the certified rate will be considered by the Fund actuary at subsequent valuations, i.e. will be reflected as a credit when next calculating the employer's contributions.

2.3 What different types of employer participate in the Fund?

Historically the LGPS was intended for local authority employees only. However over the years, with the diversification and changes to delivery of local services, many more types and numbers of employers now participate. There are currently more employers in the Fund than ever before, largely a result of schools transferring to academy status and services being outsourced from scheme employers such as Councils.

In essence, participation in the LGPS is open to public sector employers providing some form of service to the local community. Whilst the majority of members will be local authority employees (and ex-employees), the majority of participating employers are those providing services in place of (or alongside) local authority services.

The LGPS Regulations define various types of employer as follows:

- **Scheduled bodies** - councils, and other specified employers such as academies and further education establishments. These must provide access to the LGPS in respect of their employees who are not eligible to join another public sector scheme (such as the Teachers Pension Scheme). These employers are so-called because they are specified in a schedule to the LGPS Regulations.

It is now possible for Local Education Authority schools to convert to academy status, and for other forms of school (such as Free Schools) to be established under the academies legislation. All such academies (or Multi Academy Trusts), as employers of non-teaching staff, become separate new employers in the Fund. As academies are defined in the LGPS Regulations as "Scheduled Bodies", the Administering Authority has no discretion over whether to admit them to the Fund, and the academy has no discretion whether to continue to allow its non-teaching staff to join the Fund. There has also been guidance issued by the DCLG regarding the terms of academies' membership in LGPS Funds.

- **Designating employers** - employers such as town and parish councils are able to participate in the LGPS via a resolution (and the Fund cannot refuse them entry where the resolution is passed). These employers can designate which of their employees are eligible to join the scheme.
- Other employers are able to participate in the Fund via an admission agreement, and are referred to as '**admission bodies**'. These employers are generally those with a "community of interest" with another scheme

Appendix 2: Funding Strategy Statement 2020

employer – **community admission bodies** (“CAB”) or those providing a service on behalf of a scheme employer – **transferee admission bodies** (“TAB”). CABs will include housing associations and charities, TABs will generally be contractors. The Fund is able to set its criteria for participation by these employers and can refuse entry if the requirements as set out in the Fund’s admissions policy are not met. The terminology CAB and TAB has been dropped from recent LGPS Regulations, which instead combine both under the single term ‘admission bodies’; however, we have retained the old terminology as we consider it to be helpful in setting funding strategies for these different employers.

2.4 How does the contribution rate vary for different employers?

All three steps outlined in section 2.1 are considered when setting contributions (more details are given in Section 3 and Appendix D).

1. The **funding target** is based on a set of assumptions about the future, (e.g. investment returns, inflation, pensioners’ life expectancies). An employer’s individual funding target is set so that there are sufficient assets to pay for all accrued benefits at the end of its participation in the Fund and that the employers liabilities do not fall on other employers in the Fund in the future;
2. The **time horizon** required is, in broad terms, the period over which any deficit is to be recovered. A shorter period will lead to higher contributions, and vice versa (all other things being equal). Employers may be given a lower time horizon if they have a less permanent anticipated membership, or do not have tax-raising powers to increase contributions if investment returns under-perform; and
3. The **probability of achieving** the funding target over that time horizon will be dependent on the Fund’s view of the strength of employer covenant and its funding profile. Where an employer is considered to be weaker, or potentially ceasing from the Fund, then the required probability will be set higher, which in turn will increase the required contributions (and vice versa).

For some employers it may be agreed to pool contributions, see 3.4. Any costs of non ill-health early retirements must be paid by the employer, see 3.6. Costs of ill-health early retirements are covered in 3.7 and 3.8.

2.5 How is a funding level calculated?

An employer’s “funding level” is defined as the ratio of:

- the market value of the employer’s share of assets (see Appendix D, section D5, for further details of how this is calculated), to;
- the value placed by the actuary on the benefits built up to date for the employer’s employees and ex-employees (the “liabilities”). The Fund actuary agrees with the Administering Authority the assumptions to be used in calculating this value.

If this ratio is less than 100% then it means the employer has a shortfall, which is the employer’s deficit; if it is more than 100% then the employer is said to be in surplus. The amount of deficit or shortfall is the difference between the asset value and the liabilities value.

It is important to note that the deficit/surplus and funding level are only measurements at a particular point in time, on a particular set of assumptions about the future. Whilst we recognise that various parties will take an interest in these measures, for most employers the key issue is how likely it is that their contributions will be sufficient to pay for their members’ benefits (when added to their existing asset share and anticipated investment returns).

In short, deficits and funding levels are short term measures, whereas contribution-setting is a longer term issue.

2.6 How does the Fund recognise that contribution levels can affect council and employer service provision, and council tax?

The Administering Authority and the Fund actuary are acutely aware that, all other things being equal, a higher contribution required to be paid to the Fund will mean less cash available for the employer to spend on the provision of services. However, this is balanced against the following considerations:

- The Fund provides invaluable financial security to local families, whether to those who formerly worked in the service of the local community who have now retired, or to their families after their death;
- The Fund must have the assets available to meet these retirement and death benefits, which in turn means that the various employers must each pay their own way. Lower contributions today will mean higher contributions tomorrow: deferring payments does not alter the employer’s ultimate obligation to the Fund in respect of its current and former employees;

- Each employer will generally only pay for its own employees and ex-employees (and their dependants), not for those of other employers in the Fund;
- The Fund strives to maintain reasonably stable employer contribution rates where appropriate and possible. However, a recent shift in regulatory focus means that solvency within each generation is considered by the Government to be a higher priority than stability of contribution rates;
- The Fund wishes to avoid the situation where an employer falls so far behind in managing its funding shortfall that its deficit becomes unmanageable in practice: such a situation may lead to employer insolvency and the resulting deficit falling on the other Fund employers. In that situation, those employers' services would in turn suffer as a result;
- Council contributions to the Fund should be at a suitable level, to protect the interests of different generations of council tax payers. For instance, underpayment of contributions for some years will need to be balanced by overpayment in other years; the council will wish to minimise the extent to which council tax payers in one period are, in effect, benefiting at the expense of those paying in a different period.

Therefore, there is clearly a balance to be struck between the Fund's need for maintaining prudent funding levels, and the employers' need to allocate their resources appropriately. The Fund achieves this through various techniques which affect contribution increases to various degrees, as discussed in section 3. In deciding which of these techniques to apply to any given employer, the Fund will consider a risk assessment of that employer using a knowledge base which is regularly monitored and kept up-to-date. This database will include such information as the type of employer, its membership profile and funding position, any guarantors or security provision, material changes anticipated, etc. This helps the Fund establish a picture of the financial standing of the employer, i.e. its ability to meet its long term Fund commitments. To ensure that the information is kept up to date, employers are required to complete an annual survey to confirm the accuracy of information held on the database.

Where an employer is considered relatively low risk then the Fund will permit options such as stabilisation (see 3.3 Note (b)), a longer time horizon relative to other employers, and/or a lower probability of achieving their funding target. Such options will temporarily produce lower contribution levels than would otherwise have applied. This is permitted in the expectation that the employer will still be able to meet its obligations for many years to come.

An employer whose risk assessment indicates a less strong covenant i.e. their assessed financial strength in regards to their ability to pay for pension obligations in the long run, will generally be required to pay higher contributions (for instance, with a higher funding target, and/or a shorter deficit recovery period relative to other employers, and/or a higher probability of achieving the target). This is because of the higher probability that at some point it will fail or be unable to meet its pension contributions, with its deficit in the Fund then falling to other Fund employers, or because the employer has less time to meet its obligations to the Fund.

2.7 What approach has the Fund taken to dealing with uncertainty arising from the McCloud court case and its potential impact on the LGPS benefit structure?

The LGPS benefit structure from 1 April 2014 is currently under review following the Government's loss of the right to appeal the McCloud and other similar court cases. The courts have ruled that the 'transitional protections' awarded to some members of public service pension schemes when the schemes were reformed (on 1 April 2014 in the case of the LGPS) were unlawful on the grounds of age discrimination. At the time of writing, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has not provided any details of changes as a result of the case. However, it is expected that benefits changes will be required, and they will likely increase the value of liabilities. At present, the scale and nature of any increase in liabilities are unknown, which limits the ability of the Fund to make an accurate allowance.

The LGPS Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) issued advice to LGPS funds in May 2019. As there was no finalised outcome of the McCloud case by 31 August 2019, the Fund Actuary has acted in line with SAB's advice and valued all member benefits in line with the current LGPS Regulations.

The Fund, in line with the advice in the SAB's note, has considered how to allow for this risk in the setting of employer contribution rates. Although the benefit structure changes that will arise from the McCloud judgement are uncertain, the Fund has elected to make an explicit allowance for the potential impact in the assessment of employer contribution rates at the 2019 valuation by increasing the likelihoods of success that are used to determine contribution rates. Once the outcome of the McCloud case is known, the Fund may revisit the contribution rates set to ensure they remain appropriate. The Fund has also considered the McCloud judgement in its approach to cessation valuations. Please see note (j) to table 3.3 for further information.

2.8 When will the next actuarial valuation be?

On 8 May 2019 MHCLG issued a consultation seeking views on (among other things) proposals to amend the LGPS valuation cycle in England and Wales from a three year (triennial) valuation cycle to a four year (quadrennial) valuation cycle.

Whatever the outcome of that consultation, the Fund will carry out the next actuarial valuations in 2022 (3 years after the 2019 valuation date). Currently, the Fund intends to carry out the next actuarial valuation in 2022 (3 years after the 2019 valuation date) in line with MHCLG's desired approach in the consultation. The Fund has therefore instructed the Fund actuary to certify contribution rates for employers for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023 as part of the 2019 valuation of the Fund.

3 Calculating contributions for individual Employers

3.1 General comments

A key challenge for the Administering Authority is to balance the need for stable, affordable employer contributions with the requirement to take a prudent, longer-term view of funding and ensure the solvency of the Fund. With this in mind, the Fund's three-step process identifies the key issues:

1. What is a suitably (but not overly) prudent funding target?
2. How long should the employer be permitted to reach that target? This should be realistic but not so long that the funding target is in danger of never actually being achieved.
3. What likelihood is required to reach that funding target? This will always be less than 100% as we cannot be certain of the future. Higher likelihood "bars" can be used for employers where the Fund wishes to reduce the risk that the employer ceases leaving a deficit to be picked up by other employers.

These and associated issues are covered in this Section.

The Administering Authority recognises that there may occasionally be particular circumstances affecting individual employers that are not easily managed within the rules and policies set out in the Funding Strategy Statement. Therefore, the Administering Authority reserves the right to direct the actuary to adopt alternative funding approaches on a case by case basis for specific employers.

Importantly, the 2019 valuation exercise was carried out against a very uncertain backdrop (politics, economies, investment markets, LGPS benefit structure). Given this degree of uncertainty, employers may be asked to make contributions (i) at either existing levels or (ii) at least at the level of the Primary Rate.

3.2 The effect of paying contributions below the measured level

There are a number of methods which the Administering Authority may permit, in order to improve the stability of employer contributions. These include, where circumstances permit:

- capping of employer contribution rate changes within a pre-determined range ("stabilisation");
- the use of extended time horizons;
- adjusting the required probability of meeting the funding target;
- the phasing in of contribution rises or reductions;
- the pooling of contributions amongst employers with similar characteristics; and/or
- the use of some form of security or guarantee to justify a lower contribution rate than would otherwise be the case.

Employers which are permitted to use one or more of the above methods will often be paying, for a time, contributions less than the measured contribution rate. Such employers should appreciate that:

- their true long term liability (i.e. the actual eventual cost of benefits payable to their employees and ex-employees) is not affected by the choice of method,
- lower contributions in the short term will be assumed to incur a greater loss of investment returns on the deficit. Thus, deferring a certain amount of contribution may lead to higher contributions in the long-term, and
- it may take longer to reach their funding target, all other things being equal.

Section 3.3 summarises how the main funding policies differ for different types of employer, followed by more detailed notes where necessary. Section 3.4 onwards deals with funding issues which apply to all employers.

3.3 The different approaches used for different employers

Type of employer	Scheduled Bodies			Designating Employers	Community Admission Bodies		Transferee Admission Bodies*
Sub-type	Local Authorities & Police	Academies	Other scheduled bodies	Parish & Town Councils	Open to new entrants	Closed to new entrants	
Funding Target Basis used	Ongoing participation basis, assumes long-term Fund participation (see Appendix C)				Ongoing participation basis, but may move to "gilts exit basis" - see note (a)		Contractor exit basis, assumes fixed contract term in the Fund (see Appendix C)
Primary rate approach	(see Appendix D, section D.2)						
Stabilised contribution rate?	Yes see note (b)	Yes see note (b)	No	No	No	No	No
Maximum time horizon <u>see note (c)</u>	20 years	20 years	20 years	20 years	Future working lifetime of members	Future working lifetime of members	Outstanding contract term
Secondary rate see note (d)	% of payroll or monetary amount	% of payroll	% of payroll or monetary amount	% of payroll	% of payroll or monetary amount	Monetary amount	% of payroll or monetary amount
Treatment of surplus	Covered by stabilisation arrangement	Covered by stabilisation arrangement	Preferred approach: contributions kept at future service rate. However, reductions may be permitted by the Admin. Authority				Reduce contributions by spreading the surplus over the remaining contract term
Probability of achieving target see note (e)	71%	71%	71%	71%	75% - 85%	75% - 85%	75-85%
Phasing of contribution changes	Covered by stabilisation arrangement	Covered by stabilisation arrangement	Max 3 years	Max 3 years	Max 3 years	Max 3 years	None
Review of rates see note (f)	Administering Authority reserves the right to review contribution rates and amounts, and the level of security provided, at regular intervals between valuations						Particularly reviewed at regular intervals in last 3 years of contract
New employer	n/a	see note (g)	n/a	See section 2.3	See note (h)		See notes (h) & (i)
Cessation of participation: cessation debt payable	Cessation is assumed not to be generally possible, as Scheduled Bodies are legally obliged to participate in the LGPS. In the rare event of cessation occurring, the cessation debt principles applied would be as per Note (j) .				Can be ceased subject to terms of admission agreement. Cessation debt will be calculated on a basis appropriate to the circumstances of cessation – see Note (j) .		Participation assumed to expire at the end of the contract. Cessation debt/credit (if any) calculated on the contractor exit basis, unless admission terminated early in which case a gilts cessation basis may be used.

* Where the Administering Authority recognises a fixed contribution rate agreement between a letting authority and a contractor, the certified employer contribution rate will be derived differently. Additionally, in these cases, upon cessation the contractor's assets and liabilities will transfer back to the letting employer with no crystallisation of any deficit or surplus. Further detail on fixed contribution rate agreements is set out in note (i).

Note (a) Basis for CABs closed to new entrants

In the circumstances where:

- the employer is an Admission Body but not a Transferee Admission Body, and
- the employer has no guarantor for future deficits and contributions, and
- the admission agreement is likely to terminate, or the employer is likely to lose its last active member, within a time-frame considered appropriate by the Administering Authority to prompt a change in funding,

the Administering Authority may set a higher funding target (e.g. using a discount rate set equal to gilt yields) by the time the agreement terminates or the last active member leaves, in order to protect other employers in the Fund. This policy will increase regular contributions and reduce, but not entirely eliminate, the possibility of a final deficit payment being required from the employer when a cessation valuation is carried out.

The Administering Authority also reserves the right to adopt the above approach in respect of those Admission Bodies whose admission agreement is open or where there is no immediate expectation that the admission agreement will cease, where there is no guarantor for future deficits and contributions, or where the strength of covenant is considered to be weak.

Note (b) Stabilisation

Stabilisation is a mechanism where employer contribution rate variations from year to year are kept within a pre-determined range, thus allowing those employers' rates to be relatively stable. In the interests of stability and affordability of employer contributions, the Administering Authority, on the advice of the Fund Actuary, believes that stabilising contributions can still be viewed as a prudent longer-term approach. However, employers whose contribution rates have been "stabilised" (and may therefore be paying less than their theoretical contribution rate) should be aware of the risks of this approach.

This stabilisation mechanism allows short term investment market volatility to be managed so as not to cause volatility in employer contribution rates, on the basis that a long term view can be taken on net cash inflow, investment returns and strength of employer covenant.

In general, stabilisation will only be considered for employers who are:

- Scheduled bodies that have tax raising powers, or are part of a pool
- Open to new entrants
- Have a long term time horizon in the Fund
- Have been assessed as having a strong employer covenant so as to protect the Fund and the other employers in the Fund against the risk of the employer defaulting in relation to its liabilities.

The current stabilisation mechanism applies if:

- the employer satisfies the eligibility criteria set by the Administering Authority, as set out above and;
- there are no material events which cause the employer to become ineligible, e.g. significant reductions in active membership (due to outsourcing or redundancies), or changes in the nature of the employer (perhaps due to Government restructuring).

As part of extensive modelling carried out for the 2019 valuation exercise (see Section 4), the impact of various stabilisation parameters was investigated - as a consequence, eligible employers' contribution rates will increase/decrease by no greater than 1% of pay until the next assessment as part of the 2022 valuation exercise. For many eligible employers, contribution levels will be unchanged.

Note (c) Maximum time horizon

The maximum time horizon starts at the commencement of the revised contribution rate (1 April 2020 for the 2019 valuation). The Administering Authority would normally expect the same period to be used at successive triennial valuations but would reserve the right to propose alternative time horizons, for example where there were no new entrants.

Note (d) Secondary rate

For employers where stabilisation is not being applied, the Secondary contribution rate for each employer covering the three-year period until the next valuation will often be set as a percentage of salaries. However, the Administering Authority reserves the right to amend these rates between valuations and/or to require these payments in monetary terms instead, for instance where:

- the employer is relatively mature, i.e. has a large Secondary contribution rate (e.g. above 15% of payroll), or
- there has been a significant reduction in payroll due to outsourcing or redundancy exercises, or
- the employer has closed the Fund to new entrants.

Note (e) Likelihood of achieving funding target

Each employer has their funding target calculated, and a relevant time horizon over which to reach that target. Contributions are set such that, combined with the employer's current asset share and anticipated market movements over the time horizon, the funding target is achieved with a given minimum probability. A higher required probability bar will give rise to higher required contributions, and vice versa.

The way in which contributions are set using these three steps, and relevant economic projections, is described in further detail in Appendix D.

Different probabilities are set for different employers depending on their nature and circumstances: in broad terms, a higher probability will apply due to one or more of the following:

- the Fund believes the employer poses a greater funding risk than other employers,
- the employer does not have tax-raising powers;
- the employer does not have a guarantor or other sufficient security backing its funding position; and/or
- the employer is likely to cease participation in the Fund in the short or medium term.

The table in 3.3 includes indicative likelihoods for different types of employers. In practice, the likelihood for a specific employer will be driven by the risk rating allocated to that employer during a covenant review exercise undertaken by the Fund.

Note (f) Regular Reviews

The Fund reserves the right to review contribution rates and amounts, and the level of security provided, at regular intervals between Valuations. Such reviews may be triggered by significant events including but not limited to: significant reductions in payroll, altered employer circumstances, Government restructuring affecting the employer's business, or failure to pay contributions or arrange appropriate security as required by the Administering Authority.

The result of a review may be to require increased contributions (by strengthening the actuarial assumptions adopted and/or moving to monetary levels of deficit recovery contributions), and/or an increased level of security or guarantee.

Note (g) New Academy conversions

At the time of writing, the Fund's policies on academies' funding issues are as follows:

- i. The new academy will be regarded as a separate employer in the scheme in its own right.
- ii. The new academy's past service liabilities on conversion will be calculated based on its active Fund members on the day before conversion. For the avoidance of doubt, these liabilities will include all past service of those members, but will exclude the liabilities relating to any ex-employees of the school who have deferred or pensioner status;
- iii. The new academy will be allocated an initial asset share from the ceding council's assets in the Fund. This asset share will be calculated using the estimated funding position of the ceding council at the date of academy conversion. The share will be based on the active members' funding level, having first allocated assets in the council's share to fully fund deferred and pensioner members. The assets allocated to the academy will be limited if necessary so that its initial funding level is subject to a maximum of 100%. The asset allocation will be based on market conditions and the academy's active Fund membership on the day prior to conversion;

- iv. Schools that convert to Academy status who are already in the Schools & Academies Pool will continue to pay the prevailing rate of the pool until the next Triennial Valuation, at which they have the opportunity to opt out if they wish to have an individual employer contribution rate calculated;

The Fund's policies on academies are subject to change in the light of any amendments to MHCLG and/or DfE guidance (or removal of the formal guarantee currently provided to academies by the DfE). Any changes will be notified to academies and will be reflected in a subsequent version of this FSS. In particular, policies (iii) and (iv) above will be reconsidered at each valuation.

Note (h) New Admission Bodies

With effect from 1 October 2012, the LGPS 2012 Miscellaneous Regulations introduced mandatory new requirements for all Admission Bodies brought into the Fund from that date. Under these Regulations, all new Admission Bodies will be required to provide some form of security, such as a guarantee from the letting employer, an indemnity, or a bond. The security is required to cover some or all of the following:

- the strain cost of any redundancy early retirements resulting from the premature termination of the contract;
- allowance for the risk of asset underperformance;
- allowance for the risk of a greater than expected rise in liabilities;
- allowance for the possible non-payment of employer and member contributions to the Fund; and/or
- the current deficit.

Any security must be to the satisfaction of the Administering Authority and where applicable to the letting employer and will be reassessed at regular intervals. See also Note (i) below

The Fund will only consider requests from "CAB's" or other similar bodies to join the Fund if they are sponsored by a scheduled body with tax raising powers who will guarantee the liabilities of the body and supplemented, where appropriate, by the provision of a form of security as above.

The above approaches reduce the risk, to other employers in the Fund, of potentially having to pick up any shortfall in respect of Admission Bodies ceasing with an unpaid deficit.

Note (i) New Transferee Admission Bodies

A new TAB usually joins the Fund as a result of the letting/outsourcing of some services from an existing employer (normally a Scheduled Body such as a council or academy) to another organisation (a "contractor"). This involves the TUPE transfer of some staff from the letting employer to the contractor. Consequently, for the duration of the contract, the contractor can seek admitted body status in the Fund so that the transferring employees maintain their eligibility for LGPS membership. At the end of the contract the employees revert to the letting employer or to a replacement contractor.

Traditionally, the TAB would be set up in the Fund as a new employer with responsibility for all the accrued benefits of the transferring employees; in this case, the contractor would usually be assigned an initial asset allocation equal to the past service liability value of the employees' Fund benefits. In return, the contractor is then expected to ensure that its share of the Fund is also fully funded at the end of the contract: see Note (j).

Recently, the Fund has given employers that "outsource" services the ability to have flexibility in the way that they can deal with the pension risk potentially taken on by the contractor. If the contractor does not take on the risk (the traditional approach), then there are different approaches that may be adopted - in particular, employers in the Fund may choose to apply the Fund's Fixed Rate Policy. In simple terms, under the Fixed Rate policy the contractor pays a fixed contribution rate throughout its participation in the Fund and on cessation does not pay any deficit or receive an exit credit. In other words, the pension risks "pass through" to the letting employer.

The Administering Authority is willing to administer either the traditional approach or the Fixed Rate approach – given the approach is documented appropriately. Ultimately, as the risk resides with the employer letting the contract, it is for them to agree the appropriate route with the contractor.

Note (j) Admission Bodies Ceasing

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Admission Agreement, the Administering Authority may consider any of the following as triggers for the cessation of an admission agreement with any type of body:

- An employer's last active member stops contributing to the Fund. It should be noted, however, that LGPS Regulation changes in 2015 mean that the Administering Authority has the discretion, in any given case, to defer taking action for up to three years;
- The insolvency, winding up or liquidation of the Admission Body;
- Any breach by the Admission Body of any of its obligations under the Agreement that they have failed to remedy to the satisfaction of the Fund;
- A failure by the Admission Body to pay any sums due to the Fund within the period required by the Fund; or
- The failure by the Admission Body to renew or adjust the level of the bond or indemnity, or to confirm an appropriate alternative guarantor, as required by the Fund.

In the case of a transferee admission body, participation is assumed to expire at the end of the contract.

On cessation, the Administering Authority will instruct the Fund actuary to carry out a cessation valuation to determine whether there is any deficit or surplus. Where there is a deficit, payment of this amount in full would normally be sought from the Admission Body; where there is a surplus, following the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Amendment Regulations 2018 which came into effect on 14th May 2018, this will result in the issue of an exit credit to the Admission Body within three months of the cessation date, (or an alternative date agreed between the Administering Authority and the Admission Body) unless a risk-sharing arrangement has been put in place – see Note (i) above. The actuary will adopt an approach which, to the extent reasonably practicable, protects the other employers from the likelihood of any material loss emerging in the future.

As discussed in Section 2.7, the LGPS benefit structure from 1 April 2014 is currently under review following the Government's loss of the right to appeal the McCloud and other similar court cases. The Fund has considered how it will reflect the current uncertainty regarding the outcome of this judgement in its approach to cessation valuations. For cessation valuations that are carried out before any changes to the LGPS benefit structure (from 1 April 2014) are confirmed, the Fund's policy is that the actuary will apply a 1% loading to the ceasing employer's post 2014 benefit accrual value, as an estimate of the possible impact of resulting benefit changes.

The Fund actuary charges a fee for carrying out an employer's cessation valuation, and there will be other Fund administration expenses associated with the cessation, both of which the Fund will recharge to the employer. For the purposes of the cessation valuation, this fee will be treated as an expense incurred by the employer and will be deducted from the employer's cessation surplus or added to the employer's cessation deficit, as appropriate. This process improves administrative efficiency as it reduces the number of transactions required to be made between the employer and the Fund following an employer's cessation.

For transferee admission bodies, the cessation valuation will normally be calculated using the ongoing basis, in line with the basis on which they were admitted to the Fund, unless admission is terminated early in which case a gilts cessation basis may be used. The original letting/outsourcing employer will then be liable for future deficits and contributions arising.

For non-Transferee Admission Bodies whose participation is voluntarily ended either by themselves or the Fund, or where a cessation event has been triggered, the Administering Authority must look to protect the interests of other ongoing employers. The actuary will therefore adopt an approach which, to the extent reasonably practicable, protects the other employers from the likelihood of any material loss emerging in future:

- a) Where there is a guarantor for future deficits and contributions, the details of the guarantee will be considered prior to the cessation valuation being carried out. In some cases, the guarantor is simply "guarantor of last resort" and will only be called on if the body were to fail - therefore the cessation valuation here will be carried out consistently with the approach taken had there been no guarantor in place. Alternatively, where the guarantor is not simply guarantor of last resort and has a closer relationship with the body (e.g. having financial dependencies), the cessation may be calculated using the ongoing participation basis or contractor exit basis as described in Appendix C;

- b) Where a guarantor does not exist then, in order to protect other employers in the Fund, the cessation liabilities and final deficit or surplus will normally be calculated using a “gilts cessation exit basis”, which is more prudent than the ongoing participation basis. This has no allowance for potential future investment outperformance above gilt yields and has added allowance for future improvements in life expectancy. This could give rise to significant cessation debts being required and reduces the chance that any surplus would be payable to the employer;
- c) Again, depending on the nature of the guarantee, it may be possible to simply transfer the former Admission Body’s liabilities and assets to the guarantor, without needing to crystallise any deficit or surplus. This approach may be adopted where the employer cannot pay the contributions due, and this is within the terms of the guarantee.

Under (a) and (b), any shortfall would usually be levied on the departing Admission Body as a single lump sum payment. If this is not possible then the Fund may spread the payment subject to there being some security in place for the employer such as a bond indemnity or guarantee. If any payments are unlikely to be forthcoming then the Fund will look to any bond, indemnity or guarantee in place for the employer.

In the rare event that the Fund is not able to recover the required payment in full and there is no guarantor, then the unpaid amounts fall to be shared amongst all of the other employers in the Fund. If material, this will require an immediate revision to the Rates and Adjustments Certificate affecting other employers in the Fund. If not, it will be reflected in the contribution rates set at the next formal valuation following the cessation date.

As an alternative, where the ceasing Admission Body is continuing in business, the Fund at its absolute discretion reserves the right to enter into an agreement with the ceasing Admission Body. Under this agreement the Fund would accept an appropriate alternative security to be held against any deficit and would carry out the cessation valuation on an ongoing basis: deficit recovery payments would be derived from this cessation debt. This approach would be monitored as part of each triennial valuation: the Fund reserves the right to revert to a “gilts cessation basis” and seek immediate payment of any funding shortfall identified. The Administering Authority may need to seek legal advice in such cases, as the Body would have no contributing members.

3.4 Pooled contributions

The Administering Authority, with the advice of the actuary, may set up pools for smaller employers with similar or complementary characteristics to pool their contributions as a way of smoothing out changes to contribution rates. This will always be in line with its broader funding strategy.

Community Admission Bodies that are deemed by the Administering Authority to have closed to new entrants are not usually permitted to participate in a pool.

Transferee Admission Bodies are also not usually permitted to participate in a Pool. Depending on the contract circumstances, some Transferee Admission Bodies may, however, be pooled with their letting authority.

The current pools in place within the Fund are as follows:

- the Academies pool (including academies, free schools, university technical colleges and studio schools, etc.); and
- the Parish and Town Councils pool.

The intention of the pool is to minimise contribution rate volatility which would otherwise occur, for example when members join, leave, take early retirement and receive pay rises markedly different from expectations. Such events can cause large changes in contribution rates for very small employers in particular, unless they are pooled.

It should be noted that the employers in the pool will still have their own individual funding positions tracked by the Actuary, so that some employers will be much better funded, and others much more poorly funded, than the pool average. This therefore means that if any given employer was funding on a stand-alone basis, as opposed to being in the pool, then its contribution rate could be much higher or lower than the pool contribution rate.

It should also be noted that, if an employer is considering ceasing from the Fund, its required contributions would be based on its own funding position (rather than the pool average), and the cessation terms would also apply: this would mean potentially very different (and possibly much higher) contributions would be required from the employer in that situation.

Those employers which have been pooled are identified in the Rates and Adjustments Certificate. Employers who participate in a pool, will be required to comply with the conditions and requirements set out in the pooling policy applicable to that Pool, which can be found at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>.

Employers will be advised of their individual funding positions as well as that of the pool at each Valuation. In paying a pooled contribution rate, Pool Members must acknowledge that they may be paying a rate that is more or less than the employer contribution rate that would have been payable if the employer contribution rate had been determined on an individual employer basis. Pool Members may wish to consider making additional payments to the Pension Fund to improve their funding/balance sheet position, particularly where their funding level is lower than that of the rest of the pool.

3.5 Additional flexibility in return for added security

At its discretion, the Administering Authority may permit greater flexibility to the employer's contributions if the employer provides added security to the satisfaction of the Administering Authority.

Such flexibility includes a reduced rate of contribution, an extended time horizon, or permission to join a pool with another body (e.g. the Local Authority). Such security may include, but is not limited to, a suitable bond, a legally-binding guarantee from an appropriate third party, or security over an employer asset of sufficient value.

The degree of flexibility given may take into account factors such as:

- the extent of the employer's deficit;
- the amount and quality of the security offered;
- the employer's financial security and business plan; and
- whether the admission agreement is likely to be open or closed to new entrants.

3.6 Non ill health early retirement costs

It is assumed that members' benefits are payable from the earliest age that the employee could retire without incurring a reduction to their benefit (and without requiring their employer's consent to retire). Note the relevant age may be different for different periods of service, following the benefit changes from April 2008 and April 2014. Employers are required to pay additional contributions ('strain') wherever an employee retires before attaining this age. Strain costs are payable in full in the year of retirement. The actuary's funding basis makes no allowance for premature retirement except on grounds of ill-health.

3.7 Ill health early retirement costs

In the event of a member's early retirement on the grounds of ill-health, a funding strain will usually arise, which can be very large. Such strains are currently met by each employer, although individual employers may elect to take external insurance (see 3.8 below).

3.8 External Ill health insurance

If an employer that is not in the current pools set out in 3.4 provides satisfactory evidence to the Administering Authority of a current external insurance policy covering some ill health early retirement strains, then the employer's contribution to the Fund each year is reduced by the amount of that year's insurance premium, so that their aggregate payments as percentages (pension fund contributions plus insurance premium) remain unchanged. The consequence is that the employer will be putting less into the Fund, reflecting their choice to insure the ill health part of the LGPS benefit package via the external insurance.

For employers that are in one of the current pools, the recommended pool contribution rate has already been reduced by the amount of that year's insurance premium and no further reduction will apply.

All employers must keep the Administering Authority notified of any changes in the insurance policy's coverage or premium terms, or if the policy is ceased.

3.9 Employers with no remaining active members

In general an employer ceasing in the Fund, due to the departure of the last active member, will pay a cessation debt on an appropriate basis (see 3.3, Note (j)) and consequently have no further obligation to the Fund. Thereafter it is expected that one of two situations will eventually arise:

- a) The employer's asset share runs out before all its ex-employees' benefits have been paid. In this situation the other Fund employers will be required to contribute to pay all remaining benefits: this will be done by the Fund actuary apportioning the remaining liabilities on a pro-rata basis at successive formal valuations;
- b) The last ex-employee or dependant dies before the employer's asset share has been fully utilised. In this situation the remaining assets would be apportioned pro-rata by the Fund's actuary to the other Fund.

In exceptional circumstances the Fund may permit an employer with no remaining active members to continue contributing to the Fund. This would require the provision of a suitable security or guarantee, as well as a written ongoing commitment to fund the remainder of the employer's obligations over an appropriate period. The Fund would reserve the right to invoke the cessation requirements in the future, however. The Administering Authority may need to seek legal advice in such cases, as the employer would have no contributing members.

3.10 Policies on bulk transfers

The Fund will consider bulk transfers on a case by case basis, but in general:

- The Fund will not pay bulk transfers greater than the lesser of (a) the asset share of the transferring employer in the Fund, and (b) the value of the past service liabilities of the transferring members;
- The Fund will not grant added benefits to members bringing in entitlements from another Fund unless the asset transfer is sufficient to meet the added liabilities; and
- The Fund may permit shortfalls to arise on bulk transfers if the Fund employer has suitable strength of covenant and commits to meeting that shortfall in an appropriate period. This may require the employer's Fund contributions to increase between valuations.

4 Funding strategy and links to investment strategy

4.1 What is the Fund's investment strategy?

The Fund has built up assets over the years and continues to receive contribution and other income. All of this must be invested in a suitable manner. How these assets are invested is set out in the Investment Strategy Statement, which is accessible from the Fund's website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

The investment strategy is set by the Administering Authority, after consultation with the employers and after taking investment advice. The precise mix, manager make up and target returns are set out in the Investment Strategy Statement, which is available to members and employers and via the link above.

The investment strategy is set for the long-term but is reviewed from time to time. A full review is carried out as part of each actuarial valuation and is kept under review annually between actuarial valuations to ensure that it remains appropriate to the Fund's liability profile.

The same investment strategy is currently followed for all employers.

4.2 What is the link between funding strategy and investment strategy?

The Fund must be able to meet all benefit payments as and when they fall due. These payments will be met by contributions (resulting from the funding strategy) or asset returns and income (resulting from the investment strategy). To the extent that investment returns or income fall short, then higher cash contributions are required from employers, and vice versa

Therefore, the funding and investment strategies are inextricably linked.

4.3 How does the funding strategy reflect the Fund's investment strategy?

In the opinion of the Fund actuary, the current funding policy is consistent with the current investment strategy of the Fund. The actuary's assumptions for future investment returns (described further in Appendix C) are based on the current benchmark investment strategy of the Fund. The future investment return assumptions underlying each of the fund's three funding bases in C3 include a margin for prudence, and are therefore also considered to be consistent with the requirement to take a "prudent longer-term view" of the funding of liabilities as required by the UK Government (see Appendix B1).

In the short term – such as the three yearly assessments at formal valuations – there is the scope for considerable volatility in asset values. However, the actuary takes a long term view when assessing employer contribution rates and the contribution rate setting methodology considers this potential variability.

The Fund does not hold a contingency reserve to protect it against the volatility of equity investments.

4.4 Does the Fund monitor its overall funding position?

The Administering Authority monitors the relative funding position, i.e. changes in the relationship between asset values and the liabilities value, on a quarterly basis and reports this to Pensions Committee and to the LGPS Board.

5 Statutory reporting and comparison to other LGPS Funds

5.1 Purpose

Under Section 13(4)(c) of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 ("Section 13"), the Government Actuary's Department must, following each triennial actuarial valuation, report to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) on each of the LGPS Funds in England & Wales. This report will cover whether the rate of employer contributions for each fund are set at an appropriate level to ensure both the solvency and the long term cost efficiency of the Fund.

This additional MHCLG oversight may have an impact on the strategy for setting contribution rates at future valuations.

5.2 Solvency

For the purposes of Section 13, the rate of employer contributions shall be deemed to have been set at an appropriate level to ensure solvency if:

- a) the rate of employer contributions is set to target a funding level for the Fund of 100%, over an appropriate time period and using appropriate actuarial assumptions (where appropriateness is considered in both absolute and relative terms in comparison with other funds); and either
- b) employers collectively have the financial capacity to increase employer contributions, and/or the Fund is able to realise contingent assets should future circumstances require, in order to continue to target a funding level of 100%; or
- c) there is an appropriate plan in place should there be, or if there is expected in future to be, a material reduction in the capacity of fund employers to increase contributions as might be needed.

5.3 Long Term Cost Efficiency

The rate of employer contributions shall be deemed to have been set at an appropriate level to ensure long term cost efficiency if:

- a) the rate of employer contributions is sufficient to make provision for the cost of current benefit accrual,
- b) with an appropriate adjustment to that rate for any surplus or deficit in the Fund.

In assessing whether the above condition is met, MHCLG may have regard to various absolute and relative measures. MHCLG may assess and compare these metrics on a suitable standardised market-related basis, for example where the local funds' actuarial bases do not make comparisons straightforward.

Relative measures are primarily concerned with comparing the Fund with other LGPS Funds and include:

- the implied deficit recovery period (the estimated period until the Fund reaches a 100% funding level); and
- the investment return required to achieve full funding after 20 years.

Absolute measures are primarily concerned with comparing the Fund with a given objective benchmark and include:

- the extent to which the contributions payable are sufficient to cover the cost of current benefit accrual and the interest cost on any deficit;
- how the required investment return under "relative considerations" above compares to the estimated future return being targeted by the Fund's current investment strategy;
- the extent to which contributions actually paid have been in line with the expected contributions based on the extant rates and adjustment certificate; and
- the extent to which any new deficit recovery plan can be directly reconciled with, and can be demonstrated to be a continuation of, any previous deficit recovery plan, after allowing for actual Fund experience.

Appendix A – Responsibilities of key parties

The efficient and effective operation of the Fund needs various parties to each play their part.

A1 The Administering Authority should:-

1. Operate the Fund in accordance with the LGPS Regulations;
2. Effectively manage any potential conflicts of interest arising from its dual role as Administering Authority and a Fund employer;
3. Collect employer and employee contributions, investment income and other amounts due to the Fund;
4. Ensure that cash is available to meet benefit payments as and when they fall due;
5. Pay from the Fund the relevant benefits and entitlements that are due;
6. Invest surplus monies (i.e. contributions and other income which are not immediately needed to pay benefits) in accordance with the Fund's Investment Strategy Statement (ISS) and LGPS Regulations;
7. Communicate appropriately with employers so that they fully understand their obligations to the Fund;
8. Take appropriate measures to safeguard the Fund against the consequences of employer default;
9. Manage the valuation process in consultation with the Fund's actuary;
10. Provide data and information as required by the Government Actuary's Department to carry out their statutory obligations (see Section 5);
11. Prepare and maintain an FSS and an ISS, after consultation;
12. Notify the Fund's actuary of material changes which could affect funding (this is covered in a separate agreement with the actuary); and
13. Monitor all aspects of the fund's performance and funding and amend the ISS as necessary and appropriate.

A2 The Individual Employer should:-

1. Deduct contributions from employees' pay correctly;
2. Pay all contributions, including their own as determined by the actuary, promptly by the due date;
3. Establish and exercise a discretions policy within the regulatory framework;
4. Make additional contributions in accordance with agreed arrangements in respect of, for example, augmentation of scheme benefits, early retirement strain; and
5. Notify the Administering Authority promptly of all changes to its circumstances, prospects or membership, which could affect future funding.
6. In the case of admission bodies, ensure completion of admission agreements prior to contract commencement.

A3 The Fund Actuary should:-

1. Prepare valuations, including the setting of employers' contribution rates. This will involve agreeing assumptions with the Administering Authority, having regard to the FSS and LGPS Regulations, and targeting each employer's solvency appropriately;
2. Provide data and information as required by the Government Actuary's Department to carry out their statutory obligations (see Section 5);
3. Provide advice relating to new employers in the Fund, including the level and type of bonds or other forms of security (and the monitoring of these);
4. Prepare advice and calculations in connection with bulk transfers and individual benefit-related matters;
5. Assist the Administering Authority in considering possible changes to employer contributions between formal valuations, where circumstances suggest this may be necessary;
6. Advise on the termination of employers' participation in the Fund; and
7. Fully reflect actuarial professional guidance and requirements in the advice given to the Administering Authority.

A4 Other parties:-

1. Investment advisers (either internal or external) should ensure the Fund's ISS remains appropriate, and consistent with this FSS;
2. Investment managers, custodians and bankers should all play their part in the effective investment (and dis-investment) of Fund assets, in line with the ISS;
3. Auditors should comply with their auditing standards, ensure Fund compliance with all requirements, monitor and advise on fraud detection, and sign off annual reports and financial statements as required;
4. Governance advisers may be appointed to advise the Administering Authority on efficient processes and working methods in managing the Fund;
5. Legal advisers (either internal or external) should ensure the Fund's operation and management remains fully compliant with all regulations and broader local government requirements, including the Administering Authority's own procedures;
6. The Department for Communities and Local Government (assisted by the Government Actuary's Department) and the Scheme Advisory Board, should work with LGPS Funds to meet Section 13 requirements.

Appendix B – Regulatory framework

B1 Why does the Fund need an FSS?

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has stated that the purpose of the FSS is:

- *“to establish a **clear and transparent fund-specific strategy** which will identify how employers’ pension liabilities are best met going forward;*
- *to support the regulatory framework to maintain **as nearly constant employer contribution rates as possible;***
and
- *to take a **prudent longer-term view** of funding those liabilities.”*

These objectives are desirable individually but may be mutually conflicting.

The requirement to maintain and publish a FSS is contained in LGPS Regulations which are updated from time to time. In publishing the FSS the Administering Authority has to have regard to any guidance published by Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) (most recently in 2016) and to its Investment Strategy Statement.

This is the framework within which the Fund’s actuary carries out triennial valuations to set employers’ contributions and provides recommendations to the Administering Authority when other funding decisions are required, such as when employers join or leave the Fund. The FSS applies to all employers participating in the Fund.

B2 Consultation and review

The LGPS Regulations requires the Fund to consult on its FSS. It is covered in more detail by the most recent CIPFA guidance, which states that the FSS must first be subject to “consultation with such persons as the authority considers appropriate”, and should include “a meaningful dialogue at officer and elected member level with council tax raising authorities and with corresponding representatives of other participating employers”.

In practice, for the Fund, the consultation process for this FSS was as follows:

- a) A draft version of the FSS was issued to all participating employers in December 2019 for comment;
- b) Comments were requested within 60 days;
- c) There was an Employers Forum on 15 January 2020 at which questions regarding the FSS could be raised and answered;
- d) Following the end of the consultation period the FSS was updated where required, approved by the Fund’s Pensions Committee in February 2020 then published in March 2020.

B3 How is the FSS published?

The FSS is made available through the following routes:

- Published on the website, at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

A full copy is included in the annual report and accounts of the Fund <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

B4 How often is the FSS reviewed?

The FSS is reviewed in detail at least every three years as part of the triennial valuation. This version is expected to remain unaltered until it is consulted upon as part of the formal process for the next valuation in 2022.

It is possible that (usually slight) amendments may be needed within the three year period. These would be needed to reflect any regulatory changes, or alterations to the way the Fund operates (e.g. to accommodate a new class of employer). Any such amendments would be consulted upon as appropriate:

- trivial amendments would be simply notified at the next round of employer communications,
- amendments affecting only one class of employer would be consulted with those employers,
- other more significant amendments would be subject to full consultation.

Material changes to the FSS would need agreement by the Pensions Committee and would be included in the relevant Committee Meeting minutes.

B5 How does the FSS fit into other Fund documents?

The FSS is a summary of the Fund's approach to funding liabilities. It is not an exhaustive statement of policy on all issues, for example there are a number of separate statements published by the Fund including the Investment Strategy Statement, Governance Compliance Statement and Communications Strategy Statement. In addition, the Fund publishes an Annual Report and Accounts with up to date information on the Fund.

These documents can be found on the web at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/hertfordshire-pension-fund.aspx>

Appendix C - Actuarial assumptions

C1 What are the actuarial assumptions used to calculate employer contribution rates?

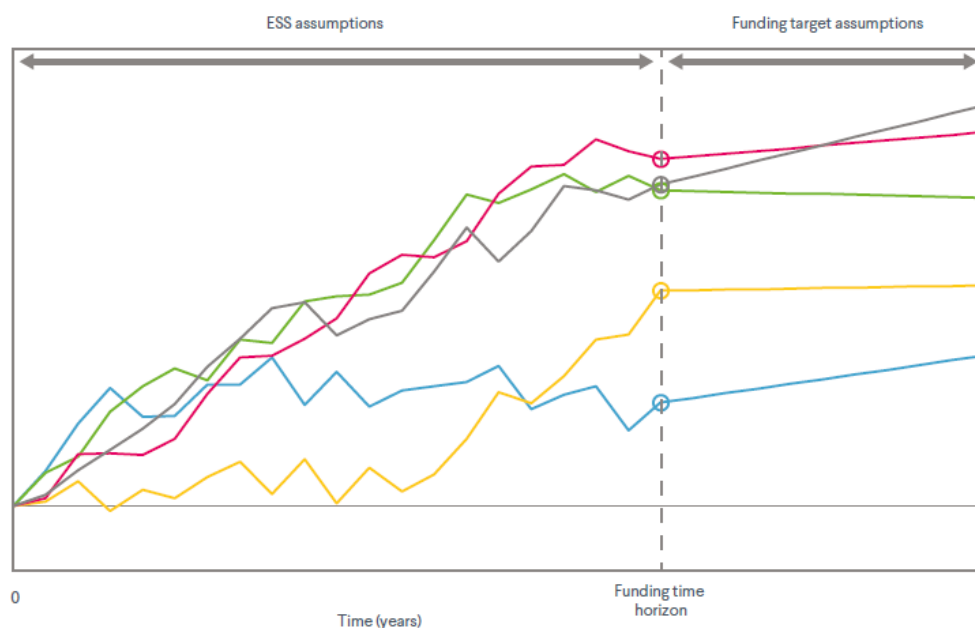
These are expectations of future experience used to place a value on future benefit payments (“the liabilities”) and future asset values. Assumptions are made about the amount of benefit payable to members (the financial assumptions) and the likelihood or timing of payments (the demographic assumptions). For example, financial assumptions include investment returns, salary growth and pension increases; demographic assumptions include life expectancy, probabilities of ill-health early retirement, and proportions of member deaths giving rise to dependants’ benefits.

Changes in assumptions will affect the funding target and required contribution rate. However, different assumptions will not of course affect the actual benefits payable by the Fund in future.

The actuary’s approach to calculating employer contribution rates involves the projection of each employer’s future benefit payments, contributions and investment returns into the future under 5,000 possible economic scenarios. Future inflation (and therefore benefit payments) and investment returns for each asset class (and therefore employer asset values) are variables in the projections. By projecting the evolution of an employer’s assets and benefit payments 5,000 times, a contribution rate can be set that results in a sufficient number of these future projections (determined by the employer’s required likelihood) being successful at the end of the employer’s time horizon. In this context, a successful contribution rate is one which results in the employer having met its funding target at the end of the time horizon.

Setting employer contribution rates therefore requires two types of assumptions to be made about the future:

1. Assumptions to project the employer’s assets, benefits and cashflows to the end of the funding time horizon. For this purpose, the actuary uses Hymans Robertson’s proprietary stochastic economic model - the Economic Scenario Service (“ESS”).
2. Assumptions to assess whether, for a given projection, the funding target is satisfied at the end of the time horizon. For this purpose, the Fund has three different funding bases.



Details on the ESS assumptions and funding target assumptions are included below (in C2 and C3 respectively).

C2 What assumptions are used in the ESS?

The actuary uses Hymans Robertson’s ESS model to project a range of possible outcomes for the future behaviour of asset returns and economic variables. With this type of modelling, there is no single figure for an assumption about future inflation or investment returns. Instead, there is a range of what future inflation or returns will be which leads to likelihoods of the assumption being higher or lower than a certain value.

The ESS is a complex model to reflect the interactions and correlations between different asset classes and wider economic variables. The table below shows the calibration of the model as at 31 March 2019. All returns are shown net of fees and are the annualised total returns over 5, 10 and 20 years, except for the yields which refer to the simulated yields at that time horizon.

		Annualised total returns							RPI inflation expectation	17 year real govt bond yield	17 year govt bond yield
		Cash	Index Linked Gilts (medium)	Fixed Interest Gilts (medium)	UK Equity	Overseas Equity	Property	A rated corporate bonds (medium)			
5 years	16th %ile	-0.4%	-2.3%	-2.9%	-4.1%	-4.1%	-3.5%	-2.7%	1.9%	-2.5%	0.8%
	50th %ile	0.7%	0.5%	0.3%	4.0%	4.1%	2.4%	0.8%	3.3%	-1.7%	2.1%
	84th %ile	2.0%	3.3%	3.4%	12.7%	12.5%	8.8%	4.0%	4.9%	-0.8%	3.6%
10 years	16th %ile	-0.2%	-1.8%	-1.3%	-1.5%	-1.4%	-1.5%	-0.9%	1.9%	-2.0%	1.2%
	50th %ile	1.3%	0.0%	0.2%	4.6%	4.7%	3.1%	0.8%	3.3%	-0.8%	2.8%
	84th %ile	2.9%	1.9%	1.7%	10.9%	10.8%	7.8%	2.5%	4.9%	0.4%	4.8%
20 years	16th %ile	0.7%	-1.1%	0.1%	1.2%	1.3%	0.6%	0.7%	2.0%	-0.7%	2.2%
	50th %ile	2.4%	0.3%	1.0%	5.7%	5.8%	4.3%	1.9%	3.2%	0.8%	4.0%
	84th %ile	4.5%	2.0%	2.0%	10.3%	10.4%	8.1%	3.0%	4.7%	2.2%	6.3%
	Volatility (Disp) (1 yr)	1%	7%	10%	17%	17%	14%	11%	1%		

C3 What assumptions are used in the funding target

At the end of an employer's funding time horizon, an assessment will be made – for each of the 5,000 projections – of how the assets held compare to the value of assets required to meet the future benefit payments (the funding target). Valuing the cost of future benefits requires the actuary to make assumptions about the following financial factors:

1. Benefit increases and CARE revaluation
2. Salary growth
3. Investment returns (the “discount rate”)

Each of the 5,000 projections represents a different prevailing economic environment at the end of the funding time horizon and so a single, fixed value for each assumption is unlikely to be appropriate for every projection. For example, a high assumed future investment return (discount rate) would not be prudent in projections with a weak outlook for economic growth. Therefore, instead of using a fixed value for each assumption, the actuary references economic indicators to ensure the assumptions remain appropriate for the prevailing economic environment in each projection. The economic indicators the actuary uses are: future inflation expectations and the prevailing risk free rate of return (the yield on long term UK government bonds is used as a proxy for this rate).

The Fund has three funding bases which will apply to different employers depending on their type. Each funding basis has a different assumption for future investment returns when determining the employer's funding target.

Funding basis	Ongoing participation basis	Contractor exit basis	Low risk exit basis
Employer type	All employers except Transferee Admission Bodies and closed Community Admission Bodies	Transferee Admission Bodies	Community Admission Bodies that are closed to new entrants
Investment return assumption underlying the employer's funding target (at the end of its time horizon)	Long term government bond yields plus an asset outperformance assumption (AOA) of 1.8% p.a.	Long term government bond yields plus an AOA equal to the AOA used to allocate assets to the employer on joining the Fund	Long term government bond yields with no allowance for outperformance on the Fund's assets

C4 What other assumptions apply?

The following assumptions are those of the most significance used in both the projection of the assets, benefits and cashflows and in the funding target.

a) Salary growth

After discussion with Fund officers, the salary increase assumption at the 2019 valuation has been set to be a blended rate combined of:

1. 2.7% p.a. in 2020, followed by
2. 2% p.a. in 2021 and 2022.

This gives a single “blended” assumption of RPI less 0.6%. This is a change from the previous valuation, which assumed a blended assumption of RPI less 0.9% per annum.

b) Pension increases

Since 2011 the consumer prices index (CPI), rather than RPI, has been the basis for increases to public sector pensions in deferment and in payment. Note that the basis of such increases is set by the Government and is not under the control of the Fund or any employers.

At this valuation, we have continued to assume that CPI is 1.0% per annum lower than RPI. (Note that the reduction is applied in a geometric, not arithmetic, basis).

c) Life expectancy

The demographic assumptions are intended to be best estimates of future experience in the Fund based on past experience of LGPS funds which participate in Club Vita, the longevity analytics service used by the Fund, and endorsed by the actuary.

The longevity assumptions that have been adopted at this valuation are a bespoke set of “VitaCurves”, produced by the Club Vita’s detailed analysis, which are specifically tailored to fit the membership profile of the Fund. These curves are based on the data provided by the Fund for the purposes of this valuation.

Allowance has been made in the ongoing valuation basis for future improvements in line with the 2018 version of the Continuous Mortality Investigation model published by the Actuarial Profession and a 1.25% per annum minimum underpin to future reductions in mortality rates. This updated allowance for future improvements will generally result in lower life expectancy assumptions and hence a reduced funding target (all other things being equal).

d) General

The same financial assumptions are adopted for most employers (on the ongoing participation basis identified above), in deriving the funding target underpinning the Primary and Secondary rates: as described in (3.3), these calculated figures are translated in different ways into employer contributions, depending on the employer’s circumstances.

The demographic assumptions, in particular the life expectancy assumption, in effect vary by type of member and so reflect the different membership profiles of employers.

Appendix D - The calculation of Employer contributions

In Section 2 there was a broad description of the way in which contribution rates are calculated. This Appendix considers these calculations in much more detail.

As discussed in that section, the actuary calculates the required contribution rate for each employer using a three-step process:

- Calculate the funding target for that employer, i.e. the estimated amount of assets it should hold in order to be able to pay all its members' benefits. See Appendix C for more details of what assumptions we make to determine that funding target;
- Determine the time horizon over which the employer should aim to achieve that funding target. See the table in 3.3 and Note (c) for more details;
- Calculate the employer contribution rate such that it has at least a given likelihood of achieving that funding target over that time horizon, allowing for various possible economic outcomes over that time horizon. See the table in 3.3 Note (e) for more details.

The calculations involve actuarial assumptions about future experience, and these are described in detail in Appendix C.

D1 What is the difference between calculations across the whole Fund and calculations for an individual employer?

Employer contributions are normally made up of two elements:

- a) the estimated cost of ongoing benefits being accrued, referred to as the "Primary contribution rate" (see D2 below); plus
- b) an adjustment for the difference between the Primary rate above, and the actual contribution the employer needs to pay, referred to as the "Secondary contribution rate" (see D3 below).

The contribution rate for each employer is measured as above, appropriate for each employer's assets, liabilities and membership. The whole Fund position, including that used in reporting to MHCLG (see section 5), is calculated in effect as the weighted sum of all the individual employer rates. MHCLG currently only regulates at whole Fund level, without monitoring individual employer positions.

D2 How is the Primary contribution rate calculated?

The Primary element of the employer contribution rate is calculated with the aim that these contributions will meet the cost of current employees' future benefit payments as they accrue. This is based upon the cost (in excess of members' contributions) of the benefits which employee members earn from their service each year.

The Primary rate is calculated separately for all the employers, although employers within a pool will pay the contribution rate applicable to the pool as a whole. The Primary rate is calculated such that it is projected to:

1. meet the required funding target for all future years' accrual of benefits*, excluding any accrued assets,
2. within the determined time horizon (see note 3.3 Note (c) for further details),
3. with a sufficiently high likelihood, as set by the Fund's strategy for the category of employer (see 3.3 Note (e) for further details).

* The projection is for the current active membership where the employer no longer admits new entrants, or additionally allows for new entrants where this is appropriate.

The projections are carried out using an economic modeller (the "Economic Scenario Service") developed by the Fund's actuary Hymans Robertson: this allows for a wide range of outcomes as regards key factors such as asset returns (based on the Fund's investment strategy), inflation, and bond yields. Further information about this model is included in Appendix C. The measured contributions are calculated such that the proportion of outcomes meeting the employer's funding target (at the end of the time horizon) is equal to the required likelihood.

The approach includes expenses of administration to the extent that they are borne by the Fund and includes allowances for benefits payable on death in service and on ill health retirement. For employers in the current pools set out in 3.4, the

allowance for ill health retirement has been adjusted; each relevant pool's Primary rate has been reduced by the cost of the premium relating to the external insurance policy, which covers some ill health early retirement strains.

D3 How is the Secondary contribution rate calculated?

The Fund aims for the employer to have assets sufficient to meet 100% of its accrued liabilities at the end of its funding time horizon based on the employer's funding target assumptions. The Secondary rate is calculated as the balance over and above the Primary rate, such that the total contribution rate is projected to:

1. meet the required funding target relating to combined past and future service benefit accrual
2. at the end of the determined time horizon
3. with a sufficiently high likelihood, as set by the Fund's strategy for the category of employer

The projections are carried out using an economic modeller (the "Economic Scenario Service") developed by the Fund actuary Hymans Robertson: this allows for a wide range of outcomes as regards key factors such as asset returns, inflation, and bond yields. The measured contributions are calculated such that the proportion of outcomes meeting the employer's funding target at the end of the time horizon is equal to the required likelihood.

D4 Why do employers get different valuation results and contribution rates?

The results of these calculations for a given individual employer will be affected by:

1. past contributions relative to the cost of accruals of benefits;
2. different liability profiles of employers (e.g. mix of members by age, gender, service vs. salary);
3. the effect of any differences in the funding target, i.e. the valuation basis used to value the employer's liabilities at the end of the time horizon;
4. any different time horizons;
5. the difference between actual and assumed rises in pensionable pay;
6. the difference between actual and assumed increases to pensions in payment and deferred pensions;
7. the difference between actual and assumed retirements on grounds of ill-health from active status;
8. the difference between actual and assumed amounts of pension ceasing on death;
9. the additional costs of any non-ill-health retirements relative to any extra payments made; and/or
10. differences in the required likelihood of achieving the funding target.

D5 How is each employer's asset share calculated?

The Administering Authority does not operate separate bank accounts or investment mandates for each employer. Therefore, it cannot account for each employer's assets separately. Instead, the Fund actuary must apportion the assets of the whole Fund between the individual employers. There are broadly two ways to do this:

- 1) A technique known as "analysis of surplus" in which the Fund actuary estimates the surplus/deficit of an employer at the current valuation date by analysing movements in the surplus/deficit from the previous actuarial valuation date. The estimated surplus/deficit is compared to the employer's liability value to calculate the employer's asset value. The actuary will quantify the impact of investment, membership and other experience to analyse the movement in the surplus/deficit. This technique makes a number of simplifying assumptions due to the unavailability of certain items of information. This leads to a balancing, or miscellaneous, item in the analysis of surplus, which is split between employers in proportion to their asset shares.
- 2) A 'cashflow approach' in which an employer's assets are tracked over time allowing for cashflows paid in (contributions, transfers in etc.), cashflows paid out (benefit payments, transfers out etc.) and investment returns on the employer's assets.

Until 31 March 2016 the Administering Authority used the 'analysis of surplus' approach to apportion the Fund's assets between individual employers.

Since then, the Fund has adopted a cashflow approach for tracking individual employer assets.

The Fund actuary uses the Hymans Robertson's proprietary "HEAT" system to track employer assets on a monthly basis. Starting with each employer's assets from the previous month end, cashflows paid in/out and investment returns achieved on the Fund's assets over the course of the month are added to calculate an asset value at the month end. The Fund is satisfied that this new approach provides the most accurate asset allocations between employers that is reasonably possible at present.

D6 How does the Fund adjust employer asset shares when an individual member moves from one employer in the Fund to another?

Under the cashflow approach for tracking employer asset shares, the Fund has allowed for any individual members transferring from one employer in the Fund to another, via the transfer of a sum from the ceding employer's asset share to the receiving employer's asset share. This sum is equal to the member's Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) as advised by the Fund's administrators.

Appendix E – Key risks and controls

The Fund has an active risk management programme in place. Key risks are incorporated in the Fund's risk register which is monitored on an ongoing basis and reported to the Pensions Committee and LGPS Board on a quarterly basis.

Risk	Summary of Control Mechanisms
The Pension Fund Investment Strategy does not deliver the long term projected investments returns and does not comply with legislation	Ensure the investment strategy complies with the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations, Investment Strategy Statement and Investment Management Agreements.
	Set the Investment Strategy in light of the Fund's solvency target and risk and return objectives and review at regular intervals to ensure the Strategy is still appropriate
	Diversify investment across asset classes and markets to reduce the impact of financial market volatility including setting a limit for the proportion of the Pension Fund's assets held in illiquid asset classes such as private equity and property and keep the Fund's diversification policy under review.
	Establish limits for the maximum percentage of the total value of all investments in particular investments or classes of investment, within a prudential framework and after taking proper advice.
	Monitor and provide a quarterly report to the Pensions Committee on Investment Managers' performance against benchmark.
	Regularly review any assets that the Fund has previously determined should be held outside of the ACCESS pool, ensuring this continues to demonstrate value for money
	Monitor Investment Managers' compliance with the investment restrictions and limits laid out in the Pension Fund's Investment Strategy Statement and Investment Managers' Agreements and report any cases of non- compliance
The funding level of the Pension Fund deteriorates	Set investment out-performance targets at the triennial valuation with reference to the Pension Fund's current Investment Strategy and on a relatively prudent basis to reduce the risk of under-performance against anticipated returns. At the same time, review and agree the other actuarial assumptions such as salary increases, discount rates, longevity etc.
	Provide the Pensions Committee with quarterly actuarial reports that monitor the funding position of the Pension Fund and the sensitivity of this to changes in general market conditions.
	Monitor and ensure scheme employers pay the extra capital/strain cost of non-ill-health retirements following each individual decision and in the year the decision is made.
	Monitor cash flows at a whole Pension Fund level and an individual scheme employer level and certify secondary contributions as a monetary amount for those with reducing payrolls as identified at the triennial valuation.
	At each triennial valuation, assign any liabilities relating to ceased transferee admission bodies to the original ceding scheme employer.
	Monitor the 'characteristics' and individual funding position of pool members to ensure pooling is still appropriate. Require members of the Academies and Parish and Town Councils pools to sign a pooling agreement which sets certain conditions and requirements for scheme employers' participation in the pool.
	Set maximum time horizons after considering the particular characteristics of each type of scheme employer and the future working lifetime of its employees. Use shorter deficit recovery periods for organisations with a limited "life" in the Pension Fund or without statutory tax raising powers.
	Monitor the covenant of scheme employers and use a risk based approach for setting contribution strategies for employers.

Risk	Summary of Control Mechanisms
Scheme employers default on meeting their obligations to the Pension Fund and LGPS	Develop data quality controls with the Pension Fund's third party pension's administration service to monitor membership data submitted by scheme employers to ensure it is accurate and up to date.
	Develop a risk evaluation approach to identify covenant risk, categorising scheme employers as low, medium or high. Establish a set of risk criteria and monitor scheme employers against this. Engage with scheme employers at an early stage to address funding issues.
	Monitor contributions to ensure that scheme employers are paying the correct employer contribution rate to agreed deadlines.
	Do not allow unsupported employers to be admitted to the Pension Fund. Require all community admission bodies and transferee admission bodies to obtain a bond or guarantor from a scheme employer. Revalue bonds every three years to ensure the risk cover is still appropriate.
	Carry out regular financial checks on participating scheme employers, especially non-tax raising bodies.
	Carry out an annual employer survey to identify any changes in funding stream for scheme employers.
	Carry out relevant cessation valuations on a more prudent gilts basis to ensure the payment calculated when a scheme employer's liabilities are crystallised is sufficient to meet the future payment of benefits made by the Pension Fund.
	Review the Custodian's and Investment Managers' internal control reports to identify any concerns over controls and processes in place
The Pension Fund and its third party providers do not comply with regulations, statute or procedure	Ensure the Custodian undertakes monthly reconciliations with the Pension Fund's Investment Managers to ensure all assets are correctly accounted for and holdings are agreed.
	Require all large employers in the Pension Fund to provide an Annual Assurance Certification that payroll systems are compliant and have been tested by the scheme employers' internal auditors
	Take advice from Fund Actuary on position of Fund as at prior valuation, and consideration of proposed valuation approach relative to anticipated Section 13 analysis.
	Engage data matching service to receive earlier notifications of entitlement changes.
	Take proper advice to ensure a regulatory compliant asset pool in operation by statutory deadlines.
	Work in conjunction with the employers' procurement department to ensure all procurements are carried out in accordance with EU regulations.
	Review the Pension Fund SORP in preparing the Statement of Accounts to ensure compliance and engage external audit to review the Pension Fund accounts each year.
	Manage performance of the Pension Fund's third party pension's administration service through a service level agreement and monitor against Key Performance Indicators.
	Work closely with the Pension Fund's third party pension's administration service to ensure it complies with current regulations and is alert to and can implement any changes to scheme benefits.
	Ensure the Pension Fund's third party pension's administration service has a robust programme in place to test controls on the membership benefit system and that they are fully compliant and up to date.
	Engage internal and external audit reports to regularly test that appropriate controls are in place over the payment of benefits and expenses and collection of contributions and that they are working effectively. Implement any recommendations resulting from both these audits.

Appendix F – Glossary

Funding basis	The combined set of assumptions made by the Actuary, regarding the future, to calculate the value of the funding target at the end of the employer's time horizon. The main assumptions will relate to the level of future investment returns, salary growth, pension increases and longevity. More prudent assumptions will give a higher funding target, whereas more optimistic assumptions will give a lower funding target.
Administering Authority	The council with statutory responsibility for running the Fund, in effect the Fund's "trustees".
Admission Bodies	Employers where there is an Admission Agreement setting out the employer's obligations. These can be Community Admission Bodies or Transferee Admission Bodies. For more details (see 2.3).
Covenant	The assessed financial strength of the employer. A strong covenant indicates a greater ability (and willingness) to pay for pension obligations in the long run. A weaker covenant means that it appears that the employer may have difficulties meeting its pension obligations in full over the longer term.
Designating Employer	Employers such as town and parish councils that are able to participate in the LGPS via resolution. These employers can designate which of their employees are eligible to join the Fund.
Discount rate	An assumed rate of investment return, which is used to discount future assumed cashflows (in and out of the Fund) back to a single value at the present day. This is necessary to produce a funding level. A lower discount rate gives a higher value, and vice versa.
Employer	An individual participating body in the Fund, which employs (or used to employ) members of the Fund. Normally the assets and funding target values for each employer are individually tracked, together with its Primary rate at each valuation.
Funding level	The value of assets divided by the present value of accrued pension entitlements (expressed as a percentage). It is calculated on a chosen single set of actuarial assumptions.
Funding target	The amount of assets that should be held in order to be able to pay all members' benefits at a point in time.
Gilt	A UK Government bond, i.e. a promise by the Government to pay interest and capital as per the terms of that particular gilt, in return for an initial payment of capital by the purchaser. Gilts can be "fixed interest", where the interest payments are level throughout the gilt's term, or "index-linked" where the interest payments vary each year in line with a specified index (usually RPI). Gilts can be bought as assets by the Fund but are also used in funding as an objective measure of a risk-free rate of return.
Guarantee / guarantor	A formal promise by a third party (the guarantor) that it will meet any pension obligations not met by a specified employer. The presence of a guarantor will mean, for instance, that the Fund can consider the employer's covenant to be as strong as its guarantor's.
Letting employer	An employer which outsources or transfers a part of its services and workforce to another employer (usually a contractor). The contractor will pay towards the LGPS benefits accrued by the transferring members, but ultimately the obligation to pay for these benefits will revert to the letting employer. A letting employer will usually be a local authority but can sometimes be another type of employer such as an Academy.
LGPS	The Local Government Pension Scheme, a public sector pension arrangement put in place via Government Regulations, for workers in local government. These

Appendix 2: Funding Strategy Statement 2020

Regulations also dictate eligibility (particularly for Scheduled Bodies), members' contribution rates, benefit calculations and certain governance requirements. The LGPS is divided into 100 Funds which map the UK. Each LGPS Fund is autonomous to the extent not dictated by Regulations, e.g. regarding investment strategy, employer contributions and choice of advisers.

Maturity	A general term to describe a Fund (or an employer's position within a Fund) where the members are closer to retirement (or more of them already retired) and the investment time horizon is shorter. This has implications for investment strategy and, consequently, funding strategy.
Members	The individuals who have built up (and may still be building up) entitlement in the Fund. They are divided into actives (current employee members), deferreds (ex-employees who have not yet retired) and pensioners (ex-employees who have now retired, and dependants of deceased ex-employees).
Primary contribution rate	The employer contribution rate required to pay for ongoing accrual of active members' benefits (including an allowance for administrative expenses). See Appendix D for further details.
Profile	The profile of an employer's membership or liability reflects various measurements of that employer's members, i.e. current and former employees. This includes: the proportions which are active, deferred or pensioner; the average ages of each category; the varying salary or pension levels; the lengths of service of active members vs their salary levels, etc. A membership (or liability) profile might be measured for its maturity also.
Rates and Adjustments Certificate	A formal document required by the LGPS Regulations, which must be updated at the conclusion of the formal valuation. This is completed by the actuary and confirms the contributions to be paid by each employer (or pool of employers) in the Fund for the period until the next valuation is completed.
Scheduled Bodies	Types of employer explicitly defined in the LGPS Regulations, whose employees must be offered membership of their local LGPS Fund. These include Councils, colleges, universities, academies, police and fire authorities etc, other than employees who have entitlement to a different public sector pension scheme (e.g. teachers, police and fire officers, university lecturers).
Secondary contribution rate	The difference between the employer's actual and Primary contribution rates. See Appendix D for further details.
Stabilisation	Any method used to smooth out changes in employer contributions from one year to the next. This is very broadly required by the LGPS Regulations, but in practice is particularly employed for large stable employers in the Fund.

The ACCESS Annual Report can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.accesspool.org/document/7720>

Actuary	An independent qualified consultant who advises on the financial position of the Pension Fund. Every three years the Actuary reviews the assets and liabilities of the Pension Fund and produces the actuarial valuation which recommends the employer contribution rates.
Administering Authority	A local authority required to maintain a pension fund under the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations. Within the geographical boundary of Hertfordshire, the Administering Authority is Hertfordshire County Council.
Admission agreement	A contract between an administering authority, admitted body and if applicable, the outsourcing Scheme employer.
Augmentation	Additional membership awarded to a member by their employer, to a maximum of ten years.
Benchmark	A notional fund which is developed to provide a standard against which an Investment Manager's performance is measured.
Bonds	A certificate of debt issued by a company, government or other institution. A bondholder is a creditor of the issuer and usually receives interest at a fixed rate. Also referred to as fixed interest securities.
Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme	<p>A scheme that are a type of defined benefit pension scheme where the benefits at retirement are based on average pensionable earnings and the length of membership of the scheme.</p> <p>From 1 April 2014, the Scheme moved from a final salary scheme to a career average revalued earnings (CARE) scheme details of which are accessible from the Pension Fund website at https://www.lppapensions.co.uk/</p>
Chief Finance Officer	An officer of that has delegated responsibility to manage the financial arrangements for an organisation. Hertfordshire County Council delegates these responsibilities to the post of the Director of Resources.
Communication Policy Statement	A statement of policy on communications with members and employers including the provision of information about the Scheme, the format, frequency and method of distributing such information and the promotion of the Scheme to prospective members.
Custody/Custodian	The safe-keeping of securities by a financial institution. The Custodian is responsible for maintaining investment records, the settlement of transactions, income collection, tax reclamation and other administrative actions in relation to the Pension Fund's investments.
Deferred members	Members who leave their employment or opt out of the Scheme and have their benefits deferred until retirement or until they request a transfer to another pension scheme.
Defined benefit final salary scheme	A pension scheme where the scheme rules define the benefits independently of the contributions paid by the members and employer. Members' benefits are a specified fraction of a scheme member's final pay.
Equities	Shares in UK and overseas companies.
Ex-officio	A member of a body (a board, committee, council, etc.) who is part of it by virtue of holding another office.
Final pensionable pay	The figure used to calculate a member's pension benefits and is normally a members pay in the last year before they retire. A member's benefits could also be calculated on one of the previous two years pay if that amount is higher, or the average of any three consecutive years in the last ten years if the member has had a downgrade in the last ten years or pay has been restricted in that period.
Fixed interest securities	Investments which guarantee a fixed rate of interest. The securities represent loans which are repayable at a future date but which can be traded on a recognised stock exchange until this time. Also known as bonds.
Forward foreign exchange contract	An agreement between two parties to exchange one currency for another at a forward or future date.
Funded scheme	A pension scheme that has available assets to cover all liabilities, including the obligation of future payments to retirees.
Funding Strategy Statement	A statement of the Pension Fund's strategy for meeting employers' pension liabilities.
Futures	Contracts to buy or sell specific quantities of a commodity or financial instrument at a specified price with delivery set at a specified time in the future.
Governance Policy and Compliance Statement	A statement of the governance arrangements of the Pension Fund including the delegation of responsibility, terms of reference, representation and compliance with statutory guidelines.

Hertfordshire Local Government Association	A voluntary organisation, acting on behalf of the local government sector in Hertfordshire.
Index linked	Bonds on which the interest and ultimate capital repayment are recalculated on the basis of changes in inflation.
Investment Consultant	A professionally qualified individual or company who provides objective, impartial investment advice to the Pension Fund.
Investment Manager	An organisation that specialises in the investment of a portfolio of securities on behalf of an organisation subject to the guidelines and directions of the investor.
Lien	A form of security interest granted over an asset to secure the payment of a debt or performance of some other obligation.
Mandate	A set of instructions given to an investment manager as to how a fund is to be managed. Targets for performance against a benchmark or limits on investing in certain stocks or sectors may be set. This is formalised within an investment manager agreement between a pension fund and investment manager.
Pooled investment vehicles	An investment which allows investors' money to be pooled and used by investment managers to buy a variety of securities, thereby giving investors a stake in a diversified portfolio of securities.
Private equity	An asset class consisting of equity securities in operating companies that are not publicly traded on a stock exchange.
Quoted securities	Shares with prices quoted on a recognised stock exchange.
Rates and Adjustments Certificate	A certificate issued by the Pension Fund Actuary setting out the contribution rates payable by participating employers
Scheme	The Local Government Pension Scheme, a public sector pension arrangement put in place via Government Regulations, for workers in local government. The LGPS Regulations also dictate eligibility (particularly for scheduled bodies), members' contribution rates, benefit calculations and certain governance requirements. The Scheme is divided into 101 Pension Funds throughout the UK. Each pension fund is autonomous to the extent not dictated by the LGPS Regulations, e.g. regarding investment strategy, employer contributions and choice of advisers.
Scheme Administrator	An organisation responsible for the administration of the benefits of the Pension Fund, including the payment of benefits and maintenance of membership records. This is contracted to The London Pensions Fund Authority.
Spot market exchange rate	A spot exchange rate refers to the current exchange rate.
Investment Strategy Statement	A formal policy on how a pension fund will invest its assets including the types in investments to be held, the balance between different types of investments and risk.
Transfer values	A capital value transferred to or from a pension scheme in respect of a contributor's previous periods of pensionable employment.
Transferee admission bodies	An external body contracted to provide services or assets in connection with the exercise of a function of the local authority.
Unit Trust	A pooled fund in which investors can buy or sell units on an ongoing basis.
Unquoted securities	Shares which are dealt in the investment market but which are not listed on a recognised stock exchange.
VitaCurves	Bespoke analysis of the longevity of the Pension Fund's members.
Whole time equivalent salary	The pay a part-time member would receive if they worked full time.