

Brent Pension Fund Funding Strategy Statement April 2026

Effective date	1 April 2026
Previous valuation date	31 March 2025
Date approved	18 February 2026
Next review	March 2029
Prepared in accordance with SAB / CIPFA / MHCLG guidance dated	January 2025

Contents

Brent Pension Fund – Funding Strategy Statement		Page
1	Purpose of the Brent Pension Fund and the funding strategy statement	
	PART A – Key Funding Principles	4
2	How does the Fund calculate employer contributions?	4
3	What additional contributions may be payable?	8
4	How does the Fund calculate assets and liabilities?	9
	PART B – Employer Events	10
5	What happens when an employer joins the Fund?	10
6	What happens if an employer has a bulk transfer of staff?	12
7	What happens when an employer leaves the Fund?	13
8	What are the statutory reporting requirements?	15
Appendices		
Appendix A – The regulatory framework		
Appendix B – Roles and responsibilities		
Appendix C – Glossary		
Appendix D – Risks and controls		
Appendix E – Actuarial assumptions		
Appendix F - Contribution review policy		

1 Purpose of the Brent Pension Fund and the Funding Strategy Statement

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) regulations require funds to maintain and publish a funding strategy statement (FSS). According to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) the purpose of the FSS is to document the processes the administering authority uses to:

- *establish a clear and transparent fund-specific strategy identifying how employers' pension liabilities are best met going forward*
- *support the desirability of maintaining as constant and stable primary contribution rate as possible, as defined in Regulation 62(5) of the LGPS Regulations 2013*
- *ensure that the regulatory requirements to set contributions to ensure the solvency and long-term cost efficiency of the fund are met*
- *explain how the fund balances the interests of different employers*
- *explain how the fund deals with conflicts of interest and references other policies/strategies.*

You can find more information about the LGPS at www.lgpsmember.org and about the regulatory framework in [Appendix A](#).

This document sets out the FSS for Brent Pension Fund (the Fund). If you have any queries about the FSS, contact sawan.shah@brent.gov.uk.

The Brent Pension Fund is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and is administered by the Brent Council, known as the administering authority. The administering authority runs the Fund on behalf of participating employers, their employees and current and future pensioners. You can find out more about roles and responsibilities in [Appendix B](#).

Brent Council worked with the fund's actuary, Hymans Robertson, to prepare this FSS which is effective from 1 April 2026, and is expected to remain in force until 31 March 2029 at the latest, unless an interim review is carried out prior to then. [LGPS Regulations](#) (specifically Regulation 62) require an actuarial valuation to be carried out every three years, under which contribution rates for all participating employers are set for the following three years. This FSS sets out the assumptions and methodology underpinning the 2025 actuarial valuation actuarial exercise.

1.1 What are the funding strategy objectives?

The funding strategy objectives are to:

- take a prudent long-term view to secure the regulatory requirement for long-term solvency, with sufficient funds to pay benefits to members and their dependants
- use a balanced investment strategy to minimise long-term cash contributions from employers and meet the regulatory requirement for long-term cost efficiency
- where appropriate, ensure stable employer contribution rates
- reflect different employers' characteristics to set their contribution rates, using a transparent funding strategy
- use reasonable measures to reduce the risk of an employer defaulting on its pension obligations.

The Fund engages with employers when developing funding strategy in a way which balances the risk appetite of stakeholders. The funding strategy therefore reflects the specific characteristics of its fund employers and its own investment strategy.

1.2 Who is the FSS for?

The FSS is mainly for employers participating in the Fund, because it sets out how money will be collected from them to meet the Fund's obligations to pay members' benefits.

Different types of employers participate in the Fund:

Scheduled bodies

Employers who are specified in a schedule to the LGPS regulations, including councils and employers like academies and further education establishments. Scheduled bodies must give employees access to the LGPS if they can't accrue benefits in another pension scheme, such as another public service pension scheme.

Designating employers (otherwise known as Resolution bodies)

Employers like town and parish councils can join the LGPS through a resolution. If a resolution is passed, the Fund can't refuse entry. The employer then decides which employees can join the scheme.

Admission bodies

Other employers can join through an admission agreement. The Fund can set participation criteria for them and can refuse entry if the requirements aren't met. This type of employer includes contractors providing outsourced services like cleaning or catering to a scheduled body.

Some existing employers may be referred to as **community admission bodies** (CABs). CABs are employers with a community of interest with another scheme employer. Others may be called **transferee admission bodies** (TABs), that provide services for scheme employers. These terms aren't defined under current regulations but remain in common use from previous regulations.

The Scheme Advisory Board refer to three different tiers of employers which may participate in the LGPS, specifically:

- Tier 1 – Local Authorities (including contractors participating in the LGPS with Local Authority backing)
- Tier 2 – Academy Trusts and Further Education Institutions (Colleges).
- Tier 3 – Standalone employers with no local or national taxpayer backing. Include universities, housing associations and charities.

1.3 How is the funding strategy specific to the Brent Pension Fund?

The funding strategy reflects the specific characteristics of the Fund employers and its own investment strategy.

1.4 How often is the Funding Strategy Statement reviewed?

The FSS is reviewed in detail at least every three years ahead of the triennial actuarial valuation and an annual check is carried out in the intervening years.

Any amendments will be consulted on and approved by the Pensions Committee.

Amendments to the FSS may be in the following circumstances:

- material changes to the scheme benefit structure (e.g. HM Treasury-led)
- on the advice of the fund actuary

- significant changes to investment strategy or if there has been significant market volatility which impacts the FSS or goes beyond FSS expectation
- if there have been significant changes to the fund membership and/or Fund maturity profile
- if there have been significant or notable changes to the number, type, or individual circumstances of any of the employing authorities to such an extent that they impact on the funding strategy (e.g. exit/restructuring/failure) which could materially impact cashflow and/or maturity profile and/or covenant)
- if there has been a material change in the affordability of contributions and/or employer(s) financial covenant strength which has an impact on the FSS.
- recommendations from MHCLG/GAD.

In undertaking such reviews, the administering authority should consider:

- looking at experiences in relation to long-term funding assumptions (in terms of both investment income and forecast contributions income) and consequences of actions taken by employers (e.g. pay awards and early retirements)
- the implications for the funding strategy and, if significant, determine what action should be taken to review the FSS
- the implications arising from the funding strategy for meeting the liabilities of individual employers and any amendments required to the ISS
- consulting with individual employers specifically impacted by any changes as an integral part of the monitoring and review process

A review won't necessarily lead to rates changes for individual employers but could impact admissions, terminations, approach to managing risk and employer risk assessment.

1.5 Links to Administration Strategy

The Fund maintains an Administration Strategy Statement which outlines the responsibilities, standards and procedures for employers and the Fund. A copy of our Administration Strategy can be found [here](#).

Adherence with the requirements of the Administration Strategy Statement is crucial to ensure the well-running of the pension Fund and any failure to do so may lead to uncertainty around the value of an employer's liabilities and the need for prudent assumptions to fill any data gaps.

1.6 Actuarial valuation report

The actuarial valuation report sets out 1) the actuary's assessment of the past service funding position, and 2) the contributions required to ensure full funding by the end of the time horizon. The Rates and Adjustments certificate shows the contribution rates payable by each employer (which may be expressed as a percentage of payroll and/or monetary amounts).

PART A – Key Funding Principles

2 How does the Fund calculate employer contributions?

2.1 Calculating contribution rates

Employee contribution rates are set by the LGPS regulations.

Employer contributions rates are determined by a mandatory actuarial valuation exercise and are made up of the following elements:

- **the primary contribution rate** – contributions payable towards future benefits
- **the secondary contribution rate** – the difference between the primary rate and the total employer contribution

The primary rate also includes an allowance for the Fund’s expenses.

The fund actuary uses a model to project each employer’s asset share over a range of future economic scenarios. The contribution rate takes each employer’s assets into account as well as the projected benefits due to their members. The value of the projected benefits is worked out using employer membership data and the assumptions in [Appendix E](#).

The total contribution rate for each employer is then based on:

- **the funding target** – how much money the Fund aims to hold for each employer
- **the time horizon** – the time over which the employer aims to achieve the funding target
- **the likelihood of success** – the proportion of modelled scenarios where the funding target is met.

This approach takes into account the maturing profile of the membership when setting employer contribution rates.

The approach taken by the fund actuary helps the Fund meet the aim of maintaining as stable a primary employer contribution rate as possible.

2.2 The contribution rate calculation

Table 1: contribution rate calculation for individual or pooled employers

Type of employer	Scheduled bodies			CABs and designating employers		TABs
	Local authorities	Academies converted from LEA	Free Schools	Open to new entrants	Closed to new entrants	(all)
SAB Tier	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3	Tier 1
Funding target*	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing, but may move to low-risk exit basis		Ongoing

Minimum likelihood of success	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
Maximum time horizon	20 years	20 years	20 years	15 years	Average future working lifetime	Same as letting employer
Primary rate approach**	The contributions must be sufficient to meet the cost of benefits earned in the future with the required likelihood of success at the end of the time horizon, expressed as a percentage of pensionable pay					
Secondary rate	The difference between the total contribution rate payable (determined as per 2.1) and the primary rate. Negative adjustments are expressed as a percentage of payroll and positive adjustments can be expressed as a percentage of payroll or monetary amounts (for mature closed employers).					
Stabilised contribution rate?	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Treatment of surplus (assessed at valuation date)	Covered by stabilisation arrangement		Total contribution rate must be set at least at the primary rate. However, reductions may be permitted by the administering authority subject to additional consideration of the low-risk exit basis position.			
Phasing of contribution changes	Covered by stabilisation arrangement		3 years			

* See [Appendix E](#) or further information on funding targets.

** The Primary Rate for the Whole Fund is the weighted average (by payroll) of the individual employers' primary rates

Employers participating in the Fund under a pass-through agreement will pay a contribution rate as agreed between the contractor and letting employer, subject to administering authority approval.

The Fund manages funding risks as part of the wider risk management framework, as documented in the Fund's risk register. The funding-specific risks identified and managed by the Fund are set out in [Appendix D](#).

2.3 Making contribution rates stable

Making employer contribution rates reasonably stable is an important funding objective. Where appropriate, contributions are set with this objective in mind. The Fund may adopt a stabilised approach to setting contributions for individual employers, which keeps contribution variations within a pre-determined range from year-to-year. Stabilisation criteria and limits are reviewed during each triennial valuation process.

The administering authority believes a stabilised approach remains a prudent long-term strategy and the robustness of this approach was once again tested by extensive asset liability modelling (ALM) carried out by the Fund actuary at the 31 March 2025 funding valuation.

Table 2: current stabilisation approach

Type of employer	Local authorities, Academies converted from LEA
Maximum contribution increase per year	+1.5% of pay
Maximum contribution decrease per year	-1.5% of pay

At their absolute discretion, the administering authority may permit acceleration or extension of contribution rises and reductions within the contribution stability mechanism.

Note that in light sustained past service funding position improvements and higher expected future investment returns at the 2025 funding valuation only, stabilised employers have experienced a one-off contribution rate reduction outside of the normal stabilisation parameters (when comparing the certified 2026/27 rates with the 2025/26 rates).

2.4 How does the funding strategy link to the investment strategy

The funding strategy sets out how money will be collected from employers to meet the Fund's obligations. Contributions, assets and other income are then invested according to an investment strategy set by the administering authority. You can find the Fund's investment strategy in its Investment Strategy Statement (ISS).

The funding and investment strategies are closely linked. The Fund must be able to pay benefits when they are due – those payments are met from a combination of contributions (through the funding strategy) and asset returns and income (through the investment strategy). If investment returns or income fall short the Fund won't be able to pay benefits, so higher contributions would be required from employers.

The investment strategy is set considering the Fund's long-term funding requirements and its investment risk appetite. The fund's current strategic investment strategy is summarised in the table below.

Asset class	Allocation
Equities	52.5%
Property	2.5%
Infrastructure	5.0%
Private Debt	5.0%
Diversified Growth	20.0%
Multi Asset Credit	5.0%
Gilts	10.0%

2.5 Does the funding strategy reflect the investment strategy?

The funding policy is consistent with the investment strategy. Future investment return expectations are set with reference to the investment strategy, including a margin for prudence which is consistent with the regulatory requirement that Funds take a 'prudent longer-term view' of funding liabilities (see [Appendix A](#))

2.6 Reviewing contributions between valuations

The Fund may amend contribution rates between formal valuations, in line with its policy on contribution reviews. The Fund's policy is available in Appendix F. The purpose of any review is to establish the most appropriate contributions. A review may lead to an increase or decrease in contributions.

2.7 What is pooling for funding and contribution rate purposes?

A single contribution rate is payable by all employers in the pool and individual funding positions are not tracked.

2.8 What is pooling for contribution rate purposes only?

A single contribution rate is payable by all employers in the pool and individual funding positions are tracked, by the Fund actuary.

Contribution rates can be volatile for smaller employers that are more sensitive to individual membership changes, pooling across a group of employers minimises this.

As individual funding positions are tracked, some employers may be better funded or more poorly funded than the pool average. In this type of pooling arrangement, employers do not target full funding at exit. If an employer leaves the Fund, the cessation valuation is based on their own funding position rather than the pool average.

CABs that are closed to new entrants aren't usually allowed to enter a pool.

TABs are usually also ineligible for pooling (with other TABs). Where pass-through is in place, a TAB will be pooled with the letting authority.

The current contribution rate pools are:

- LEA schools generally pool with the Council, although there may be exceptions for specialist or independent schools
- Academies may be pooled within their Multi-Academy Trust

2.9 Administering authority discretion

Individual employers may be affected by circumstances not easily managed within the FSS rules and policies. If this happens, the administering authority may adopt alternative funding approaches on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, the administering authority may allow greater flexibility to the employer's contributions if added security is provided. Flexibility could include things like a reduced contribution rate, extended time horizon, or permission to join a pool. Added security may include a suitable bond, a legally binding guarantee from an appropriate third party, or security over an asset.

The Fund may, at its absolute discretion, permit the prepayment of employer contributions in specific circumstances.

2.10 Non cash funding

The Fund will not accept any form of non-cash assets in lieu of contributions.

2.11 Managing surpluses and deficits

The funding strategy is designed to ensure that all employers are at least fully funded on a prudent basis at the end of their own specific time horizon. The uncertain and volatile nature of pension scheme funding means that it is likely there will be times when employers are in surplus and times when employers are in deficit. The funding strategy recognises this by 1) including sufficient prudence to manage the effect of this over the time horizon, and 2) making changes to employer contribution rates to ensure the funding strategy objectives are met.

Fluctuations in funding positions are inevitable over the time horizon, due to market movements and changing asset values, which could lead to the emergent of deficits and surplus from time to time, and lead to changes in employer contribution rates.

3 What additional contributions may be payable?

3.1 Pension costs – awarding additional pension and early retirement on non ill-health grounds

If an employer awards additional pension as an annual benefit amount, they pay an additional contribution to the Fund as a single lump sum. The amount is set by guidance issued by the Government actuary's Department and updated from time to time.

If an employee retires before their normal retirement age on unreduced benefits, employers will be asked to pay additional contributions called strain payments.

Employers typically make strain payments as a single lump sum, though strain payments may be spread over an appropriate period if the administering authority agrees.

3.2 Pension costs – early retirement on ill-health grounds

If a member retires early because of ill-health, their employer must pay a funding strain, which may be a large sum.

The administering authority does not offer any arrangement to mitigate this. Individual employers should make their own arrangements if they are concerned about the risk of unmanageable ill-health strain costs.

Employers must tell the administering authority if the policy ends or if there are any changes to coverage or premium.

4 How does the Fund calculate assets and liabilities?

4.1 How are employer asset shares calculated?

The Fund adopts a cashflow approach to track individual employer assets.

Each Fund employer has a notional share of the Fund's assets, which is assessed yearly by the actuary. The actuary starts with assets from the previous year-end, adding cashflows paid in/out and investment returns to give a new year-end asset value. The fund actuary makes a simplifying assumption, that all cashflow and investment returns have been paid uniformly over the year. This assumption means that the sum of all employers' asset values is slightly different from the Whole Fund asset total over time. This minimal difference is split between employers in proportion to their asset shares at each valuation.

If an employee moves one from one employer to another within the Fund, assets equal to the cash equivalent transfer value (CETV) will move from the original employer to the receiving employer's asset share. These are calculated on an annual basis.

Alternatively, if employees move when a new academy is formed or an outsourced contract begins, the fund actuary will calculate assets linked to the value of the liabilities transferring.

4.2 How are employer liabilities calculated?

The Fund holds membership data for all active, deferred and pensioner members. Based on this data and the assumptions in [Appendix E](#), the fund actuary projects the expected benefits for all members into the future. This is expressed as a single value – the liabilities – by allowing for expected future investment returns.

Each employer's liabilities reflect the experience of their own employees and ex-employees.

4.3 What is a funding level?

An employer's funding level is the ratio of the market value of asset share against liabilities. If this is less than 100%, the employer has a shortfall: the employer's deficit. If it is more than 100%, the employer is in surplus. The amount of deficit or surplus is the difference between the asset value and the liabilities value.

Funding levels and deficit/surplus values measure a particular point in time, based on a particular set of future assumptions. While this measure is of interest, for most employers the main issue is the level of contributions payable. The funding level does not directly drive contribution rates. See section 2 for further information on rates.

PART B – Employer Events

5 What happens when an employer joins the Fund?

5.1 When can an employer join the Fund

Employers can join the Fund if they are a new scheduled body or a new admission body. New designated employers may also join the Fund if they pass a designation to do so.

On joining, the Fund will determine the assets and liabilities for that employer within the Fund. The calculation will depend on the type of employer and the circumstances of joining.

A contribution rate will also be set. This will be set in accordance with the calculation set out in Section 2, unless alternative arrangements apply (for example, the employer has agreed a pass-through arrangement). More details on this are in Section 5.3 below.

5.2 New academies

Academies converting from local authority status

New academies (including free schools) join the fund as separate scheduled employers. Only active members of former council schools transfer to new academies. Free schools do not transfer active members from a converting school but must allow new active members to transfer in any eligible service.

Liabilities for transferring active members will be calculated (on the ongoing basis) by the fund actuary on the day before conversion to an academy. Liabilities relating to the converting school's former employees (ie members with deferred or pensioner status) remain with the ceding council.

New academies will be allocated an asset share based on the estimated funding level of the ceding council's active members, having first allocated the council's assets to fully fund their deferred and pensioner members. This funding level will then be applied to the transferring liabilities to calculate the academy's initial asset share, capped at a maximum of 100%.

The council's estimated funding level will be based on market conditions on the day before conversion. The fund treats new academies as separate employers in their own right, who are responsible for their allocated assets and liabilities. Whilst academies are not pooled, their contributions may be set on a pooled basis as follows:

Academy type	Primary contribution rate	Secondary contribution rate
Converting from LEA	Calculated using the current funding strategy (set out in section 2) and the transferring membership	Balance so that total rate equals Council rate each year
Free school	Calculated using the current funding strategy (set out in section 2) and the initial membership.	

If an academy leaves one MAT and joins another, all active, deferred and pensioner members transfer to the new MAT.

The fund's policies on academies may change based on updates to guidance from the MHCLG or the DfE. Any changes will be communicated and reflected in future funding strategy statements.

5.3 New admission bodies as a results of outsourcing services

New admission bodies usually join the Fund because an existing employer (usually a scheduled body like a council or academy) outsources a service to another organisation (a contractor). This involves TUPE transfers of staff from the letting employer to the contractor. The contractor becomes a new participating Fund employer for the duration of the contract and transferring employees remain eligible for LGPS membership. At the end of the contract, employees typically revert to the letting employer or a replacement contractor.

Liabilities for transferring active members will be calculated by the fund actuary on the day before the outsourcing occurs.

New contractors will be allocated an asset share equal to the value of the transferring liabilities. The admission agreement may set a different initial asset allocation, depending on contract-specific circumstances.

There is flexibility for outsourcing employers when it comes to pension risk potentially taken on by the contractor. You can find more details on outsourcing options from the administering authority or in the contract admission agreement.

5.4 Other new employers

There may be other circumstances that lead to a new admission body entering the Fund, e.g. set up of a wholly owned subsidiary company by a local authority. Calculation of assets and liabilities on joining and a contribution rate will be carried out allowing for the circumstances of the new employer.

New designated employers may also join the Fund. Contribution rates will be set using the same approach as any other designated employers in the Fund.

5.5 Risk assessment for new admission bodies

Under the LGPS regulations, a new admission body must assess the risks it poses to the fund if the admission agreement ends early, for example if the admission body becomes insolvent or goes out of business. In practice, the fund actuary assesses this because the assessment must be carried out to the administering authority's satisfaction.

After considering the assessment, the administering authority may decide the admission body must provide security, such as a guarantee from the letting employer, an indemnity or a bond.

This must cover some or all of the:

- strain costs of any early retirements, if employees are made redundant when a contract ends prematurely
- allowance for the risk of assets performing less well than expected
- allowance for the risk of liabilities being greater than expected
- allowance for the possible non-payment of employer and member contributions
- admission body's existing deficit.

Where an academy is the letting employer, the Fund will expect academies to ensure and confirm that the outsourcing complies with the requirements set out in the DfE Academy Trust LGPS Guarantee policy before permitting an admission body in the Fund. Where this requirement is met, no additional risk assessment or security will typically be required for the admitted body as the pension liabilities will be covered by the DfE Academy Guarantee.

A copy of our Admissions policy is available on request.

6 What happens if an employer has a bulk transfer of staff?

Bulk transfer cases will be looked at individually, but generally:

- the Fund won't pay bulk transfers greater in value than either the asset share of the transferring employer in the fund, or the value of the liabilities of the transferring members, whichever is lower
- the Fund won't grant added benefits to members bringing in entitlements from another Fund, unless the asset transfer is enough to meet the added liabilities
- the Fund may permit shortfalls on bulk transfers if the employer has a suitable covenant and commits to meeting the shortfall in an appropriate period, which may require increased contributions between valuations.

7 What happens when an employer leaves the Fund?

7.1 What is a cessation event?

Triggers for considering cessation from the Fund are:

- the last active member stops participation in the Fund
- insolvency, winding up or liquidation of the admission body
- a breach of the agreement obligations that isn't remedied to the Fund's satisfaction
- failure to pay any sums due within the period required
- failure to renew or adjust the level of a bond or indemnity, or to confirm an appropriate alternative guarantor
- termination of a deferred debt arrangement (DDA).

The administering authority, at its discretion, can defer triggering a cessation for up to three years by issuing a suspension notice. That means cessation won't be triggered if the employer takes on one or more active members during the agreed time.

If no DDA exists, the administering authority will instruct the fund actuary to carry out a cessation valuation to calculate if there is a surplus or a deficit when the Fund leaves the scheme.

7.2 What happens on cessation?

The administering authority must protect the interests of the remaining Fund employers when an employer leaves the scheme. The actuary aims to protect remaining employers from the risk of future loss. The funding target adopted for the cessation calculation is below. These are defined in [Appendix E](#).

- (a) Where there is no guarantor, cessation liabilities and a final surplus/deficit will usually be calculated using a low-risk basis, which is more prudent than the ongoing participation basis.
- (b) Where there is a guarantor, the guarantee will be considered before the cessation valuation. Where the guarantor is a guarantor of last resort this will have no effect on the cessation valuation. If this isn't the case (i.e. if the guarantee continues to apply in respect of the former employer's obligations post cessation), cessation may be calculated using the same basis that was used to calculate liabilities (and the corresponding asset share) on joining the Fund.
- (c) Depending on the guarantee, it may be possible to transfer the employer's liabilities and assets to the guarantor without crystallising deficits or surplus. This may happen if an employer can't pay the contributions due and the approach is within guarantee terms. This is known as 'subsumption' of the assets and liabilities.

If the Fund can't recover the required payment in full, unpaid amounts will be paid by the related letting authority (in the case of a ceased admission body) or shared between the other Fund employers. This may require an immediate revision to the rates and adjustments certificate or be reflected in the contribution rates set at the next formal valuation.

The fund actuary charges a fee for cessation valuations and there may be other cessation expenses. Fees and expenses are at the employer's expense.

The cessation policy is available from the administering authority.

7.3 What happens if there is a surplus?

If the cessation valuation shows the exiting employer has more assets than liabilities – an exit credit – the administering authority can decide how much (if any) will be paid back to the employer based on:

- the surplus amount
- the proportion of the surplus due to the employer's contributions over the employer's period of participation in the Fund
- any representations (like risk sharing agreements or guarantees) made by the exiting employer and any employer providing a guarantee or some other form of employer assistance/support
- any other relevant factors.

The exit credit policy is available from the administering authority.

7.4 What happens if there is a deficit?

If there is a deficit, full payment will usually be expected in a single lump sum or:

- spread over an agreed period, if the employer enters into a deferred spreading agreement (DSA)
- if an exiting employer enters into a deferred debt agreement (DDA), it stays in the Fund and pays contributions until the cessation debt is repaid. Payments are reassessed at each formal valuation.

The employer flexibility on exit policy is available from the administering authority.

7.5 What if an employer has no active members?

When employers leave the Fund because their last active member has left, they may pay a cessation debt, receive an exit credit or enter a DDA/DSA. Beyond this they have no further obligation to the Fund and either:

- a) their asset share runs out before all ex-employees' benefits have been paid. The other Fund employers will be required to contribute to the remaining benefits. The fund actuary will portion the liabilities on a pro-rata basis based on each employer's share of overall liabilities at each formal valuation.
- b) the last ex-employee or dependant dies before the employer's asset share is fully run down. The fund actuary will apportion the remaining assets to the other Fund employers based on each employer's share of overall liabilities at each formal valuation.

8 What are the statutory reporting requirements?

8.1 Reporting regulations

The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 requires the Government actuary's Department to report on LGPS Funds in England and Wales after every three-year valuation, in what's usually called a section 13 report. The report includes advice on whether the following aims are achieved:

- Compliance
- Consistency
- Solvency
- Long term cost efficiency

8.2 Solvency

Employer contributions are set at an appropriate solvency level if the rate of contribution targets a funding level of 100% over an appropriate time, using appropriate assumptions compared to other Funds. Either:

- (a) employers collectively can increase their contributions, or the Fund can realise contingencies to target a 100% funding level; or
- (b) there is an appropriate plan in place if there is, or is expected to be, a reduction in employers' ability to increase contributions as needed.

8.3 Long-term cost efficiency

Employer contributions are set at an appropriate long-term cost efficiency level if the contribution rate makes provision for the cost of current benefit accrual, with an appropriate adjustment for any surplus or deficit. To assess this, the administering authority may consider absolute and relative factors.

Relative factors include:

1. comparing LGPS Funds with each other
2. the implied deficit recovery period
3. the investment return required to achieve full funding after 20 years.

Absolute factors include:

1. comparing Funds with an objective benchmark
2. the extent to which contributions will cover the cost of current benefit accrual and interest on any deficit
3. how the required investment return under relative considerations compares to the estimated future return targeted by the investment strategy
4. the extent to which contributions paid are in line with expected contributions, based on the rates and adjustment certificate
5. how any new deficit recovery plan reconciles with, and can be a continuation of, any previous deficit recovery plan, allowing for Fund experience.

These metrics may be assessed by GAD on a standardised market-related basis where the Fund's actuarial bases don't offer straightforward comparisons. Standard information about the Fund's approach to solvency of the pension Fund and long-term cost efficiency will be provided in a uniform dashboard format in the valuation report to facilitate comparisons between Funds.

Appendices

Appendix A – The regulatory framework

A1 Why do Funds need a funding strategy statement?

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) regulations require Funds to maintain and publish a funding strategy statement (FSS). The purpose of the FSS was set out in Section 1.

To prepare this FSS, the administering authority has used guidance jointly prepared by the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB), MHCLG, and by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) dated January 2025.

The Fund has a fiduciary duty to scheme members and obligations to employers to administer the scheme competently to keep employer contributions at an affordable level. The funding strategy statement sets out how the Fund meets these responsibilities.

A2 Consultation

Both the LGPS regulations and most recent CIPFA guidance state the FSS should be prepared in consultation with “*persons the authority considers appropriate*”. This should include ‘*meaningful dialogue... with council tax raising authorities and representatives of other participating employers*’.

In practice, for the Fund, the consultation process for this FSS included issuing a draft version to participating employers and attending an open employers’ forum.

The fund also shared the draft FSS with the Department for Education.

A3 How is the FSS published?

The FSS is published on the Fund’s website at <https://www.brent.gov.uk/pensions> and copies are made available on request.

A4 How does the FSS fit into the overall Fund documentation?

The FSS is a summary of the Fund’s approach to funding liabilities and isn’t exhaustive. The Fund publishes other statements like the Investment Strategy Statement and the Fund’s annual report and accounts also includes up-to-date Fund information.

You can see all Fund documentation at <https://www.brent.gov.uk/pensions>.

Appendix B – Roles and responsibilities

B1 The administering authority is required to:

1. operate a pension Fund
2. collect employer and employee contributions, investment income and other amounts due to the pension Fund as stipulated in LGPS Regulations
3. have an escalation policy in situations where employers fail to meet their obligations
4. pay from the pension Fund the relevant entitlements as stipulated in LGPS Regulations
5. invest surplus monies in accordance with the relevant regulations
6. ensure that cash is available to meet liabilities as and when they fall due
7. ensure benefits paid to members are accurate and undertake timely and appropriate action to rectify any inaccurate benefit payments take measures as set out in the regulations to safeguard the Fund against the consequences of employer default
8. take measures as set out in the regulations to safeguard the fund against the consequences of employer default
9. manage the valuation process in consultation with the Fund's actuary
10. prepare and maintain an FSS and associated funding policies and ISS, after proper consultation with interested parties
11. monitor all aspects of the Fund's performance and funding, and amend the FSS/ISS accordingly
12. establish a policy around exit payments and payment of exit credits/debits in relation to employer exits
13. effectively manage any potential conflicts of interest arising from its dual role as both Fund administrator and scheme employer
14. enable the local pension board to review the valuation and FSS review process and as set out in their terms of reference
15. support and monitor a Local Pension Board (LPB) as required by the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, the Regulations and the Pensions Regulator's relevant Code of Practice

B2 Individual employers are required to:

1. ensure staff who are eligible are contractually enrolled and deduct contributions from employees' pay correctly after determining the appropriate employee contribution rate (in accordance with the Regulations),
2. provide the Fund with accurate data and understand that the quality of the data provided to the Fund will directly impact on the assessment of their liabilities and their contributions. In particular, any deficiencies in their data may result in the employer paying higher contributions than otherwise would be the case if their data was of high quality
3. pay all ongoing contributions, including employer contributions determined by the actuary and set out in the rates and adjustments certificate, promptly by the due date
4. develop a policy on certain discretions and exercise those discretions as permitted within the regulatory framework

5. make additional contributions in accordance with agreed arrangements in respect of, for example, augmentation of scheme benefits and early retirement strain
6. notify the administering authority promptly of all changes to active membership that affect future funding
7. Pay any exit payments on ceasing participation in the Fund timely provide the Fund with accurate data and understand that the quality of the data provided to the Fund will directly impact on the assessment of their liabilities and their contributions. In particular, any inaccuracies in data may result in the employer paying higher contributions than otherwise would be the case if their data was of high quality.

B3 The fund actuary should:

1. prepare valuations including the setting of employers' contribution rates at a level to ensure Fund solvency and long-term cost efficiency based on the assumptions set by the administering authority and having regard to the FSS and the LGPS Regulations
2. provide advice so the Fund can set the necessary assumptions for the valuation • prepare advice and calculations in connection with bulk transfers and the funding aspects of individual benefit-related matters such as pension strain costs, ill health retirement costs, compensatory added years costs, etc
3. provide advice and valuations to the Fund so that it can make decisions on the exit of employers from the Fund
4. provide advice to the Fund on bonds or other forms of security against the financial effect on the Fund of employer default
5. assist the Fund in assessing whether employer contributions need to be revised between valuations as permitted or required by the regulations
6. ensure that the Fund is aware of any professional guidance or other professional requirements that may be relevant in the role of advising the Fund.
7. identify to the Fund and manage any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the delivery the contractual arrangements to the Fund and other clients.

B4 Local Pension Boards (LPB):

Local Pension Boards have responsibility to assist the administering authority to secure compliance with the LGPS regulations, other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the LGPS, any requirements imposed by the Regulator in relation to the LGPS, and to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the LGPS. It will be for each Fund to determine the input into the development of the FSS (as appropriate within Fund's own governance arrangements) however this may include:

1. Assist with the development and review the FSS
2. Review the compliance of scheme employers with their duties under the FSS, regulations and other relevant legislation
3. Assist with the development of and review communications in relation to the FSS.

B5 Employer guarantors

1. Department for Education - To pay cessation debts in the case of academy cessations (where the obligations are not being transferred to another MAT) and to consider using intervention powers if an academy is deemed to be in breach of the regulations.
2. Other bodies with a financial interest (outsourcing employers)

3. Any other guarantor

B6 Other parties:

- 1 internal and external investment advisers ensure the investment strategy statement (ISS) is consistent with the funding strategy statement
- 2 investment managers, custodians and bankers play their part in the effective investment and dis-investment of Fund assets in line with the ISS
- 3 auditors comply with standards, ensure Fund compliance with requirements, monitor and advise on fraud detection, and sign-off annual reports and financial statements
- 4 governance advisers may be asked to advise the administering authority on processes and working methods
- 5 internal and external legal advisers ensure the Fund complies with all regulations and broader local government requirements, including the administering authority's own procedures
- 6 MHCLG, assisted by the Government Actuary's Department and the Scheme Advisory Board, work with LGPS Funds to meet Section 13 requirements.

Appendix C – Glossary

Actuarial certificates

A statement of the contributions payable by the employer (see also rates and adjustments certificate). The effective date is 12 months after the completion of the valuation.

Actuarial valuation

An investigation by an actuary, appointed by an Administering Authority into the costs of the scheme and the ability of the Fund managed by that authority to meet its liabilities. This assesses the funding level and recommended employer contribution rates based on estimating the cost of pensions both in payment and those yet to be paid and comparing this to the value of the assets held in the Fund. Valuations take place every three years (triennial).

Administering Authority (referred to as ‘the Fund’)

A body listed in Part 1 of Schedule 3 of the regulations who maintains a Fund within the LGPS and a body with a statutory duty to manage and administer the LGPS and maintain a pension Fund (the Fund). Usually, but not restricted to being, a local authority.

Admission agreement

A written agreement which provides for a body to participate in the LGPS as a scheme employer

Assumptions

Forecasts of future experience which impact the costs of the scheme. For example, pay growth, longevity of pensioners, inflation, and investment returns,

Code of Practice

The Pensions Regulator’s General Code of Practice.

Debt spreading arrangement

The ability to spread an exit payment over a period of time

Deferred debt agreement

An agreement for an employer to continue to participate in the LGPS without any contributing scheme members

Employer covenant

The extent of the employer’s legal obligation and financial ability to support its pension scheme now and in the future.

Funding level

The funding level is the value of assets compares with the liabilities. It can be expressed as a ratio of the assets and liabilities (known as the funding level) or as the difference between the assets and liabilities (referred to as a surplus or deficit).

Fund valuation date

The effective date of the triennial Fund valuation.

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.

Local Pension Board

The board established to assist the Administering Authority as the Scheme Manager for each Fund.

Non-statutory guidance

Guidance which although it confers no statutory obligation on the parties named, they should nevertheless have regard to its contents

Notifiable events

Events which the employer should make the Administering Authority aware of

Past service liabilities

The cost of pensions already built up or in payment

Pension committee

A committee or sub-committee to which an administering authority has delegated its pension function

Pensions Administration Strategy

A statement of the duties and responsibilities of scheme employers and Administering Authorities to ensure the effective management of the scheme

Primary and secondary employer contributions

Primary employer contributions meet the future costs of the scheme and Secondary employer contributions meet the costs already built up (adjusted to reflect the experience of each scheme employer). Contributions will therefore vary across scheme employers within a Fund.

Rates and adjustments certificate

A statement of the contributions payable by each scheme employer (see actuarial certificates)

Scheme Manager

A person or body responsible for managing or administering a pension scheme established under section 1 of the 2013 Act. In the case of the LGPS, each Fund has a Scheme Manager which is the Administering Authority.

Appendix D – Risks and controls

D1 Managing risks

The administering authority has a risk management programme to identify and control financial, demographic, regulatory and governance risks.

The local pension board assists the Fund its managing its risks and the full role of the board is set out [here](#).

Details of the key Fund-specific risks and controls are below.

D2 Financial risks

Risk	Summary of Control Mechanisms
Fund assets fail to deliver returns in line with the anticipated returns underpinning the valuation of liabilities and contribution rates over the long-term.	<p>Only anticipate long-term returns on a relatively prudent basis to reduce risk of under-performing.</p> <p>Assets invested on the basis of specialist advice, in a suitably diversified manner across asset classes, geographies, managers, etc.</p> <p>Analyse progress at three yearly valuations for all employers.</p> <p>Inter-valuation roll-forward of liabilities between valuations at whole Fund level.</p>
Inappropriate long-term investment strategy.	<p>Overall investment strategy options considered as an integral part of the funding strategy. Used asset liability modelling to measure key outcomes.</p> <p>Chosen option considered to provide the best balance.</p>
Active investment manager under-performance relative to benchmark.	<p>Quarterly investment monitoring analyses market performance and active managers relative to their index benchmark.</p>
Pay and price inflation are significantly more than anticipated.	<p>The focus of the actuarial valuation process is on real returns on assets, net of price and pay increases.</p> <p>Inter-valuation monitoring, as above, gives early warning.</p> <p>Some investment in bonds also helps to mitigate this risk.</p> <p>Employers pay for their own salary awards and should be mindful of the geared effect on pension liabilities of any bias in pensionable pay rises towards longer serving employees.</p>

Effect of possible increase in employer's contribution rate on service delivery and admission/scheduled bodies	An explicit stabilisation mechanism has been agreed as part of the funding strategy. Other measures are also in place to limit sudden increases in contributions.
Orphaned employers give rise to added costs for the fund	The fund seeks a cessation debt (or security /guarantor) to minimise the risk of this happening in the future. If it occurs, the actuary calculates the added cost spread pro-rata among all employers.
Effect of possible asset underperformance as a result of climate change	Covered in the fund's Investment Strategy Statement.

D3 Demographic risks

Risk	Summary of Control Mechanisms
Pensioners live longer, thus increasing cost to fund.	Set mortality assumptions with some allowance for future increases in life expectancy. The fund actuary has direct access to the experience of over 50 LGPS funds which allows early identification of changes in life expectancy that might in turn affect the assumptions underpinning the valuation.
Maturing fund – i.e. proportion of actively contributing employees declines relative to retired employees.	Continue to monitor at each valuation, consider seeking monetary amounts rather than % of pay and consider alternative investment strategies.
Deteriorating patterns of early retirements	Employers are charged the extra cost of non-ill-health retirements following each individual decision. Employer ill health retirement experience is monitored, and insurance is an option.
Reductions in payroll causing insufficient deficit recovery payments	In many cases this may not be sufficient cause for concern and will in effect be caught at the next formal valuation. However, there are protections where there is concern, as follows: Employers in the stabilisation mechanism may be brought out of that mechanism to permit appropriate contribution increases. For other employers, review of contributions is permitted in general between valuations and may require a move in deficit contributions from a percentage of payroll to fixed monetary amounts.

D4 Regulatory risks

Risk	Summary of Control Mechanisms
Changes to national pension requirements and/or HMRC rules e.g. changes arising from public sector pensions reform.	<p>The administering authority considers all consultation papers issued by the Government and comments where appropriate.</p> <p>Benefits are valued in line with the regulations in force at the time of the valuation.</p> <p>The government's long term preferred solution to GMP indexation and equalisation - conversion of GMPs to scheme benefits - was built into the 2019 valuation.</p>
Time, cost and/or reputational risks associated with any MHCLG intervention triggered by the Section 13 analysis.	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.
Changes by government to particular employer participation in LGPS Funds, leading to impacts on funding and/or investment strategies.	<p>The administering authority considers all consultation papers issued by the government and comments where appropriate.</p> <p>Take advice from fund actuary on impact of changes on the fund and amend strategy as appropriate.</p>

D5 Governance risks

Risk	Summary of Control Mechanisms
Administering authority unaware of structural changes in an employer's membership (e.g. large fall in employee members, large number of retirements) or not advised of an employer closing to new entrants.	<p>The administering authority has a close relationship with employing bodies and communicates required standards e.g. for submission of data.</p> <p>The actuary may revise the rates and adjustments certificate to increase an employer's contributions between triennial valuations.</p> <p>Deficit contributions may be expressed as monetary amounts.</p>
Actuarial or investment advice is not sought, or is not heeded, or proves to be insufficient in some way	The administering authority maintains close contact with its specialist advisers. Advice is delivered via formal meetings involving elected members, and recorded appropriately. Actuarial advice is subject to professional requirements such as peer review.
Administering authority failing to commission the Fund Actuary to carry out a termination valuation for a departing admission body.	<p>The Administering Authority requires employers with Best Value contractors to inform it of forthcoming changes.</p> <p>CABs' memberships are monitored and, if active membership decreases, steps will be taken.</p>

An employer ceasing to exist with insufficient funding or adequacy of a bond.	<p>The administering authority believes that it would normally be too late to address the position if it was left to the time of departure.</p> <p>The risk is mitigated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking a funding guarantee from another scheme employer, or external body, where-ever possible. • Alerting the prospective employer to its obligations and encouraging it to take independent actuarial advice. • Vetting prospective employers before admission. • Where permitted under the regulations requiring a bond to protect the fund from various risks. • Requiring new admission bodies to have a guarantor. • Reviewing bond or guarantor arrangements at regular intervals. • Reviewing contributions well ahead of cessation if thought appropriate.
An employer ceasing to exist resulting in an exit credit being payable	<p>The administering authority regularly monitors admission bodies coming up to cessation</p> <p>The administering authority invests in liquid assets to ensure that exit credits can be paid when required.</p>

D6 Employer covenant assessment and monitoring

Many of the employers participating in the Fund, such as admitted bodies (including TABs and CABs), have no local tax-raising powers. The Fund assesses and monitors the long-term financial health of these employers to assess an appropriate level of risk for each employer's funding strategy.

Type of employer	Assessment	Monitoring
Local Authorities	Tax-raising or government-backed, no individual assessment required	n/a
Academies	Government-backed, covered by DfE guarantee in event of MAT failure	Check that DfE guarantee continues, after regular scheduled DfE review
Admission bodies (CABs)	No change since 2022 valuation	Regular ongoing dialogue
Admission bodies (TABs)	No change since 2022 valuation	Regular ongoing dialogue
Designating employers	No change since 2022 valuation	Regular ongoing dialogue

Any change in covenant over the inter-valuation period may lead to a contribution rate review.

D7 Climate risk and TCFD reporting

The Fund has considered climate-related risks when setting the funding strategy. The Fund has carried out climate scenario analysis incorporating both stress testing, and narrative-based scenario analysis for the local authority employers at the 2025 valuation. The narrative approach explores the complex and interrelated risks associated with climate change by defining a specific extreme, downside risk (in this instance a food shock) and constructing narratives around potential policy and market responses, noting these may be sub-optimal. This approach allows consideration to be given to the impact of sudden, severe downside risks in the short term, the interdependencies that arise and potential immediate actions. Coupling this approach with stress testing (to better understand the impact of possible climate scenarios) has allowed the Fund to assess a range of outcomes that may arise, and assess the resilience of the Fund under these scenarios.

The results show that:

1. When considering climate scenario stress tests, the Fund appears to be generally resilient to different climate scenarios, with generally modest impacts versus the base case modelled
2. The results of the downside, narrative analysis suggest that the Fund is likely to be resilient in the face of some severe downside risk events (in comparison to the base case), but not all.

Climate scenario analysis helps assess risks and tests the resilience of current and long-term strategies under various scenarios. This helps to identify vulnerabilities across both assets and liabilities. Identification of these vulnerabilities can inform risk management processes (see figure 1), helping the Fund ensure appropriate controls and mitigations are in place. Scenario analysis therefore supports informed decision making, and may be used in future to assist with disclosures prepared in line with Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) principles.

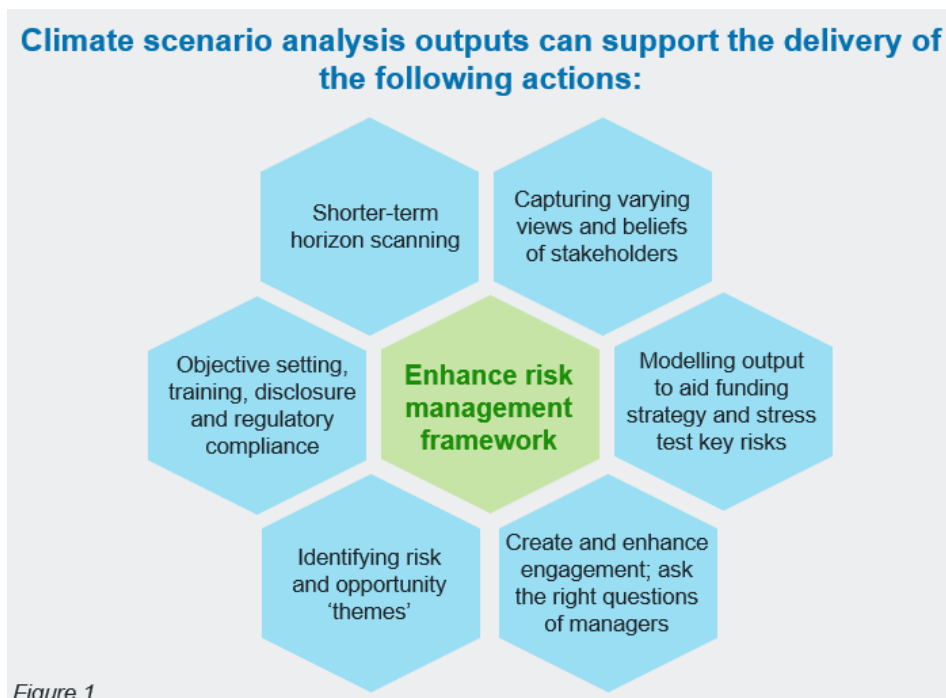


Figure 1.

This climate analysis was not applied to the funding strategy modelling for smaller employers. However, given that the same underlying model is used for all employers and that the local authority employers make up the vast majority of the fund's assets and liabilities, applying the climate analysis to all employers was not deemed proportionate at this stage and would not be expected to result in any changes to the agreed contribution plans.

The Fund's Responsible Investment beliefs are included in its Investment Strategy Statement.

Appendix E – Actuarial assumptions

The Fund's actuary uses a set of assumptions to determine the strategy, and so assumptions are a fundamental part of the Funding Strategy Statement.

E1 What are actuarial assumptions?

Actuarial assumptions are required to value the fund's liabilities because:

- There is uncertainty regarding both the timing and amount of the future benefit payments (the actual cost can't be known until the final payment is made). Therefore, to estimate the cost of benefits earned to date and in the future, assumptions need to be made about the timing and amount of these future benefit payments
- The assets allowed to an employer today are a known figure. However, the future investment return earned on those assets and future cashflows into the fund are uncertain. An assumption is needed about what those future investment returns will be

There are two types of actuarial assumptions that are needed to perform an actuarial valuation: **financial assumptions** determine the expected amount of future benefit payments and the expected investment return on the assets held to meet those benefits, whilst **demographic assumptions** relate primarily to the expected timing of future benefit payments (i.e. when they are made and for how long).

All actuarial assumptions are set as best estimates of future experience with the exception of the discount rate assumption which is deliberately prudent to meet the regulatory requirement for a 'prudent' valuation.

Any change in the assumptions will affect the value that is placed on future benefit payments ('liabilities'), but different assumptions don't affect the actual benefits the fund will pay in future.

E2 What funding bases are operated by the Fund?

A *funding basis* is the set of actuarial assumptions used to value an employer's (past and future service) liabilities. The fund operates two funding bases for funding valuations: the *ongoing participation basis* and the *low-risk exit basis*. All actuarial assumptions are the same for both funding bases with the exception of the discount rate – see further details below.

E3 What financial assumptions are used by the fund?

Discount rate

The discount rate assumption is the average annual rate of future investment return assumed to be earned on an employer's assets from a given valuation date. The fund uses a risk-based approach to setting the discount rate which allows for prevailing market conditions on the valuation date (see 'Further detail on the calculation of financial assumptions') and the Fund's investment strategy.

The discount rate is determined by the *prudence level*. Specifically, the discount rate is calculated to be:

The average annual level of future investment return that can be achieved on the Fund's assets over a 20-year period with a x% likelihood.

The prudence level is the likelihood. The prudence levels used by the fund are as follows:

Funding basis	Prudence level
Ongoing participation	80%
Low-risk exit	90%

CPI inflation

The CPI inflation assumption is the average annual rate of future Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation assumed to be observed from a given valuation date. This assumption is required because LGPS benefit increases (in deferment and in payment) and revaluation of CARE benefits are in line with CPI.

The fund uses a risk-based approach to setting the CPI inflation assumption which allows for prevailing market conditions on the valuation date (see 'Further detail on the calculation of financial assumptions'). The CPI inflation assumption is calculated to be:

The average annual level of future CPI inflation that will be observed over a 20 year period with a 50% likelihood

Salary growth

The salary growth assumption is linked to the CPI inflation assumption via a fixed margin. The salary increases assumption is 0.3% above the CPI inflation assumption plus a promotional salary scale.

E4 Further detail on the calculation of financial assumptions

The discount rate and CPI inflation assumptions are calculated using a risk-based method. To assess the likelihood associated with a given level of investment return or a given level of future inflation, the fund actuary uses Hymans Robertson's propriety economic scenario generator; the *Economic Scenario Service* (or ESS). The model uses statistical distributions to project a range of 5,000 different possible outcomes for the future behaviour of different asset classes and wider economic variables, such as inflation.

The table below shows the calibration of the model as at 31 March 2025 for some sample asset classes and economic variables. All returns are shown net of fees and are the annualised total returns over 5, 10 and 20 years. Yields and inflation refer to the simulated yields at that time horizon.

Table: Summary of assumptions underlying the ESS, 31 March 2025

Time period	Percentile	Annualised total returns								Inflation/Yields		
		UK Equities	Global Equities (unhedged)	EM equities (unhedged)	Property	Infrastructure equity (unlisted)	Fixed interest gilt (24 yr maturity)	Multi Asset Credit (sub investment grade)	Private Lending	Inflation (CPI)	17 year real yield (CPI)	17 year yield
5 years	16 th	0.1%	-0.5%	-3.2%	0.2%	1.1%	1.7%	4.1%	4.5%	1.2%	1.5%	4.8%
	50 th	8.2%	8.2%	8.5%	6.8%	8.1%	4.2%	6.7%	8.2%	2.8%	2.4%	5.8%
	84 th	16.4%	16.9%	20.9%	14.1%	15.5%	6.7%	8.8%	11.4%	4.3%	3.3%	7.1%
10 years	16 th	2.5%	2.1%	0.2%	2.3%	3.1%	3.9%	5.8%	6.4%	0.8%	0.8%	3.9%
	50 th	8.6%	8.5%	8.8%	7.3%	8.4%	5.5%	7.4%	8.8%	2.5%	2.1%	5.3%
	84 th	14.6%	14.8%	17.5%	12.7%	13.8%	7.0%	8.9%	10.9%	4.1%	3.3%	7.1%
20 years	16 th	3.8%	3.7%	2.2%	3.5%	4.2%	5.0%	6.1%	7.0%	0.7%	-0.5%	1.6%
	50 th	8.4%	8.3%	8.5%	7.3%	8.3%	6.1%	7.6%	8.8%	2.3%	1.3%	3.6%
	84 th	12.9%	13.1%	15.1%	11.3%	12.4%	7.1%	9.1%	10.7%	3.9%	3.0%	6.2%
	Volatility (1 yr)	16.3%	18.6%	24.3%	15.2%	14.5%	6.6%	6.3%	9.3%	1.4%	-	-

The ESS model is recalibrated monthly. The fund actuary uses the most recent calibration of the model (prior to the valuation date) to set financial assumptions for each funding valuation.

E5 What demographic assumptions were used?

The Fund uses advice from Club Vita to set demographic assumptions, as well as analysis and judgement based on the fund's experience.

Demographic assumptions vary by type of member, so each employer's own membership profile is reflected in their results.

Life expectancy

The longevity assumptions are a bespoke set of VitaCurves produced by detailed analysis and tailored to fit the fund's membership profile.

Allowance has been made for future improvements to mortality, in line with the 2024 version of the continuous mortality investigation (CMI) tables published by the actuarial profession. The starting point has been adjusted by +0.25% to reflect the difference between the population-wide data used in the CMI and LGPS membership. A long-term rate of mortality improvements of 1.5% p.a. applies.

Other demographic assumptions

Retirement in normal health	Members are assumed to retire at the earliest age possible with no pension reduction.
Promotional salary increases	Sample increases below
Death in service	Sample rates below
Withdrawals	Sample rates below
Retirement in ill health	Sample rates below
Family details	A varying proportion of members are assumed to have a dependant partner at retirement or on earlier death. For example, at age 65 this is assumed to be 55% for males and 54% for females. The dependant of a male member is assumed to be 3.5 years younger than him and the dependent of a female member is assumed to be 0.6 years older than her.
Commutation	80% of maximum tax-free cash
50:50 option	0% of existing members will opt to change schemes

Females

Age	Salary Scale	Death Before Retirement	Withdrawals		III Health Tier 1		III Health Tier 2	
			FT & PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT
20	105	0.10	281.94	299.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
25	117	0.10	189.71	201.24	0.10	0.07	0.02	0.01
30	131	0.14	159.02	168.67	0.13	0.10	0.03	0.02
35	144	0.24	137.25	145.52	0.26	0.19	0.05	0.04
40	151	0.38	114.23	121.07	0.39	0.29	0.08	0.06
45	159	0.62	106.60	112.97	0.52	0.39	0.10	0.08
50	167	0.90	89.87	95.14	0.97	0.73	0.24	0.18
55	173	1.19	67.06	71.06	3.59	2.69	0.52	0.39
60	174	1.52	54.04	57.20	5.71	4.28	0.54	0.40
65	174	1.95	25.76	27.25	10.26	7.69	0.00	0.00

Males

Age	Salary Scale	Death Before Retirement	Withdrawals		III Health Tier 1		III Health Tier 2	
			FT & PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT
20	105	0.17	355.79	487.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
25	117	0.17	235.01	322.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
30	131	0.20	166.75	228.58	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
35	144	0.24	130.28	178.58	0.10	0.07	0.02	0.01
40	151	0.41	104.89	143.73	0.16	0.12	0.03	0.02
45	159	0.68	98.53	134.98	0.35	0.27	0.07	0.05
50	167	1.09	81.22	111.14	0.90	0.68	0.23	0.17
55	173	1.70	63.96	87.56	3.54	2.65	0.51	0.38
60	174	3.06	57.00	78.01	6.23	4.67	0.44	0.33
65	174	5.10	34.99	47.88	11.83	8.87	0.00	0.00

Appendix F – Contribution review policy

The Fund may amend contribution rates between valuations for a ‘significant change’ to the liabilities or covenant of an employer. Such reviews may be instigated by the fund or at the request of a participating employer. Any review may lead to a change in the required contributions from the employer.

F1 Guidance and regulatory framework

[Regulation 64](#) of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended) sets out the way in which LGPS funds should determine employer contributions, including the following:

- Regulation 64 (4) – allows the Fund to review the contribution rate if it becomes likely that an employer will cease participation in the Fund, with a view to ensuring that the employer is fully funded at the expected exit date.
- Regulation 64A - sets out specific circumstances where the Fund may revise contributions between valuations (including where a review is requested by one or more employers).

This policy also reflects [statutory guidance](#) from MHCLG on preparing and maintaining policies relating to the review of employer contributions. Interested parties may want to refer to an accompanying [guide](#) that has been produced by the Scheme Advisory Board.

F2 Statement of principles

This statement of principles covers review of contributions between valuations. Each case will be treated on its own merits, but in general:

- The Fund reserves the right to review contributions in line with the provisions set out in the LGPS Regulations.
- The decision to make a change to contribution rates rests with the Fund, subject to consultation with employers during the review period.
- Full justification for any change in contribution rates will be provided to affected employers.
- Advice will be taken from the Fund Actuary in respect of any review of contribution rates.
- Any revision to contribution rates will be reflected in the Rates & Adjustment certificate.

F3 Circumstances for review

The Fund would consider one or more of the following circumstances as a potential trigger for review:

- in the opinion of the Fund there are circumstances which make it likely that an employer (including an admission body) will become an exiting employer sooner than anticipated at the last valuation;
- an employer is approaching exit from the Fund within the next two years and before completion of the next triennial valuation;
- there are changes to the benefit structure set out in the LGPS Regulations which have not been allowed for at the last valuation;
- it appears likely to the Fund that the amount of the liabilities arising or likely to arise for an employer or employers has changed significantly since the last valuation;
- it appears likely to the Fund that there has been a significant change in the ability of an employer or

employers to meet their obligations (e.g. a material change in employer covenant, or provision of additional security);

- it appears to the Fund that the membership of the employer has changed materially such as bulk transfers, significant reductions to payroll or large-scale restructuring; or
- where an employer has failed to pay contributions or has not arranged appropriate security as required by the Fund.

F4 Employer requests

The Fund will also consider a request from any employer to review contributions where the employer has undertaken to meet the costs of that review and sets out the reasoning for the review (which would be expected to fall into one of the above categories, such as a belief that their covenant has changed materially, or they are going through a significant restructuring impacting their membership).

The Fund will require additional information to support a contribution review made at the employer's request. The specific requirements will be confirmed following any request and this is likely to include the following:

- a copy of the latest accounts;
- details of any additional security being offered (which may include insurance certificates);
- budget forecasts; and/or
- information relating to sources of funding.

The costs incurred by the Fund in carrying out a contribution review (at the employer's request) will be met by the employer. These will be confirmed upfront to the employer prior to the review taking place.

F5 Other employers

When undertaking any review of contributions, the Fund will also consider the impact of a change to contribution rates on other Fund employers. This will include the following factors:

- The existence of a guarantor.
- The amount of any other security held.
- The size of the employer's liabilities relative to the whole Fund.

The Fund will consult with other Fund employers as necessary.

F6 Effect of market volatility

Except in circumstances such as an employer nearing cessation, the Fund will not consider market volatility or changes to asset values as the basis for a change in contributions outside a formal triennial valuation.

F7 Documentation

Where revisions to contribution rates are necessary, the Fund will provide the employer with a note of the information used to determine these, including:

- Explanation of the key factors leading to the need for a review of the contribution rates, including, if appropriate, the updated funding position.
- A note of the new contribution rates and effective date of these.

- Date of next review.
- Details of any processes in place to monitor any change in the employer's circumstances (if appropriate), including information required by the Fund to carry out this monitoring.

The Rates & Adjustments certificate will be updated to reflect the revised contribution rates