



## AGENDA

### ACCESS JOINT COMMITTEE

**Monday, 6th September, 2021, at 11.00 am**

Ask for: **Joel Cook**

Westminster Room, Local Government Association, Telephone **03000 416892**  
18 Smith Square, Westminster, London, SW1P 3HZ

Any members of the press or public wishing to attend are asked to contact the Clerk at least two days prior to the meeting to allow for relevant arrangements.

#### **Membership**

**Chair: Cllr Mark Kemp-Gee** (Hampshire CC), **Vice-Chair: Cllr Susan Barker** (Essex CC), **Cllr Gerard Fox** (East Sussex CC), **Cllr Jeremy Hunt** (West Sussex CC), **Cllr Chris Jarman** (Isle of Wight), **Cllr Malcolm Longley** (West Northamptonshire), **Cllr Judy Oliver** (Norfolk CC), **Cllr Charlie Simkins** (Kent CC), **Cllr Karen Soons** (Suffolk CC), **Cllr Alison Whelan** (Cambridgeshire CC) and **Cllr Andrew Williams** (Hertfordshire CC)

#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

1. Election of Chairman
2. Election of Vice Chairman
3. Apologies and substitutes
4. Declaration of interests in items on the agenda
5. Chairman's remarks
6. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March (Pages 1 - 6)
7. Business plan, forecast outturn and risk summary (Pages 7 - 14)
8. Communications and Spokespeople (Pages 15 - 20)
9. Motion to Exclude the Press and Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 & 5 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**EXEMPT ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely to not be open to the public)*

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 10. Implementation Adviser procurement                      | (Pages 21 - 26) |
| 11. Scheduled BAU Evaluation                                | (Pages 27 - 46) |
| 12. Performance, Annual Report and MHCLG return - to follow |                 |
| 13. Review of Emerging Markets process                      | (Pages 47 - 66) |
| 14. Response to Emerging Markets Review                     | (Pages 67 - 70) |
| 15. Sub-fund implementation                                 | (Pages 71 - 74) |
| 16. Contract and Supplier Relationship Management           | (Pages 75 - 94) |
| 17. Risk Management   | (Pages 95 - 98) |

**Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 6 December 2021

Joel Cook  
Clerk to the Joint Committee  
03000 416892

**Thursday, 26 August 2021**



## ACCESS JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the ACCESS Joint Committee held Online on Monday, 8th March, 2021.

PRESENT: Cllr Mark Kemp-Gee - Chair (Hampshire CC), Cllr Vanessa Churchman (Isle of Wight), Cllr Gerrard Fox (East Sussex CC), Cllr Jeremy Hunt (West Sussex CC), Cllr Judy Oliver (Norfolk CC), Cllr Bill Parker (Northamptonshire CC), Cllr Mark Platt (Essex CC), Cllr Terry Rogers (Cambridgeshire CC), Cllr Ralph Sangster (Hertfordshire CC), Cllr Charlie Simkins (Kent CC) and Cllr Karen Soons (Suffolk CC).

ALSO PRESENT: Kevin McDonald (ASU), Mark Paget (ASU), Dawn Butler (ASU), Kate Cunningham (Engine MHP), Clifford Sims (Squire Patton Boggs) and John Wright (Hymans Robertson)

OFFICERS: Andrew Boutflower (Hampshire), Glenn Cossey (Norfolk), Jody Evans (Essex), Paul Finbow (Suffolk), Sian Kunert (East Sussex), Alison Mings (Kent), Sharon Tan (Suffolk), Jo Thistlewood (Isle of Wight), Patrick Towey (Hertfordshire), Paul Tysoe (Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire), Mark Whitby (Cambridge and Northamptonshire), Rachel Wood (West Sussex), Scott Crudgington, Section 151 Officer (Hertfordshire) and Joel Cook (Kent - Clerk).

### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

#### **246. Apologies & Substitutes.**

*(Item. 1)*

1. Apologies were received from Cllr Barker (Essex CC) and Cllr Axford (Isle of Wight), who were substituted by Cllr Platt (Essex CC) and Cllr Churchman (Isle of Wight).

RESOLVED that the apologies and substitutes be noted.

#### **247. Declaration of interests in items on the agenda.**

*(Item. 2)*

No declarations of interest were made.

#### **248. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2021.**

*(Item. 3)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 13 January 2021, subject to a minor clarification in paragraph 244 that 'the company' be replaced with 'the parent company,' were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **249. Chair's remarks.**

*(Item. 4)*

1. The Chair opened his remarks with an overview and acknowledgment of the progress made by the Joint Committee in the past three and a half years. A tribute was paid to Cllr Andrew Reid, the Joint Committee's former Chair. It was noted that the meeting marked the Joint Committee's last prior to the end of its first four-year meeting cycle.
2. The Chair gave his thanks to Cllr Rogers, Cllr Sangster and Cllr Axford for their contributions towards the Joint Committee as they would not be seeking re-election and would therefore not rejoin the Committee after May 2021. Cllr Rogers and Sangster thanked the ASU for their support and advice. The good governance of, and cooperation within, ACCESS and between individual authorities was highlighted. The Chair agreed to write personally to Cllr Axford to issue his thanks for his service to the Joint Committee.
3. Members thanked Mr McDonald for providing training and briefing sessions to their individual pension fund management committees.

RESOLVED that the Chair's remarks be noted.

**250. Business plan & risk summary.**  
*(Item. 5)*

1. Kevin McDonald provided an update on the governance manual, he confirmed that work had commenced, though noted that the manual would not be completed by the 31 March 2021 deadline recommended by audit. Members were informed that an update would be brought to the Joint Committee's next meeting.
2. It was confirmed by Mr McDonald that Minerva Analytics had begun providing ESG advice and engaged with multiple Authorities. Additional confirmation was given that Minerva Analytics would report to the Joint Committee at its June meeting.
3. Mr McDonald gave an overview of developments related to the expansion of the ASU. It was noted that an additional Support Officer had been appointed and that a Client Manager post would be advertised in the week following the meeting.
4. The intent to plan for quarterly Joint Committee meetings in the future committee cycle was disclosed by Mr McDonald. The Chair asked for the ASU to notify new pension fund Committee members of ACCESS's future meeting dates following the May 2021 local elections.
5. A Member requested an indication of the attendance level at Section 151 Officer pension fund meetings and for confirmation of whether minutes of the meetings were available to the Joint Committee. Scott Crudgington, Section 151 Officer - Hertfordshire, confirmed that average attendance at the meetings was 9, out of 11, and that arrangements could be made for the minutes to be circulated via the ASU.

6. Members discussed the difficulty faced when analysing data, evidence and policies related to the environmental aspect of ESG. ESG/RI recommendations from the Department for Work and Pensions were acknowledged.
7. Mr McDonald, responding to a Member question, confirmed that Link were working with the FCA to clarify arrangements for transition between sub-funds. Mark Paget added that the ASU had met and were due to meet further with Link and Eversheds Sutherland.

RESOLVED that the Business Plan update and summary risk register report be noted.

**251. Motion to Exclude the Press and Public.**  
*(Item. 6)*

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 & 5 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**252. Scheduled BAU Evaluation.**  
*(Item. 7)*

1. John Wright, Hymans Robertson, gave a verbal overview of the evaluation activity, in line with the review process agreed by the Committee at a previous meeting. This included exploring various Pool models, outlining timeframes and consideration of relevant governance steps and legal advice from Squire Patton Boggs.
2. Members discussed the evaluation, commenting on performance and experience with current business as usual arrangements. Questions were asked relating to comparisons between ACCESS and the national pooling landscape. The Committee was advised that ACCESS compared favourably at present.
3. Members were advised of the formal governance requirements and timescales in terms of required reviews and consideration of the Operator Agreement, in accordance with the Inter-Authority Agreement.

RESOLVED that;

- (a) the recommendations arising from the BAU evaluation be noted; and
- (b) the relevant next steps, with updates to come to the Committee later in 2021, be agreed.

**253. Communications - Engine MHP.**  
*(Item. 8)*

*Kate Cunningham from Engine MHP was in attendance for this item.*

1. Ms Cunningham provided a verbal update on the development of the ACCESS progress report template, branding, website, spokesperson roles and media training. She reassured Members that spokespeople roles would be developed alongside media training following the May 2021 local elections.
2. Ms Cunningham confirmed that the press office had issued two ACCESS press releases to date, which addressed the launch of sub-funds and appointment of Minerva Analytics as ESG advisors.
3. A Member asked what impact the pre-election period would have on publications from the press office. Ms Cunningham reassured the Joint Committee that no proactive releases had been planned during the pre-election period. It was agreed that if a press release was required in the period, the ASU Director under delegated powers, in consultation with the Chair, would approve the release and that under no circumstances would a Member be directly mentioned in publications.
4. The Chair acknowledged the need for swift developments following the elections and asked Ms Cunningham for the optimum number of spokespeople. She confirmed that given the focuses of the Joint Committee as well as to strengthen the impact and distinction of spokespeople roles, 3-4 would be optimal.
5. Ms Cunningham confirmed that a draft progress report and overhauled website design had been modelled to improve public serviceability. It was noted that the Joint Committee's annual report had been used as content in the trial. Confirmation was given that a recommended library of images, site content and presentations would be issued to the Joint Committee for its consideration.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**254. Implementation Adviser Procurement.**  
*(Item. 9)*

1. Andrew Boutflower, Hampshire, gave a verbal overview of the Implementation Adviser Procurement report and confirmed the appointment of an illiquid asset implementation advisor. The role of Mr Sims in drafting the advisor specification was acknowledged. It was noted that due to the scale and complexity of the illiquid asset analysis, a final report to the 6 September 2021 Joint Committee meeting should be expected.
2. Mr Boutflower confirmed that procurement of an Implementation Adviser would be executed by Essex County Council on behalf of ACCESS and that prospective suppliers were to present to a panel including Joint Committee members and representation.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee agreed that:

- a) the report, including the revised timeline for the appointment of an Implementation Adviser be noted;
- b) Essex County Council be designated as the Procurement Lead Authority for the procurement of the Implementation Adviser; and
- c) the Joint Committee agree the proposed approach to supplier presentations.

**255. Performance Report.**

*(Item. 10)*

1. Sharon Tan, Suffolk, delivered a verbal overview of the Performance Report, it was noted that carbon benchmarking had not been included in the report as individual authorities were in the progress of expanding their carbon benchmarking information base. The volume of pooled assets, in the context of all assets managed by member funds, was outlined. Performance data and benchmarking were highlighted, Mrs Tan reminded Members that performance was reported on a quarterly basis, which explained the omission of recently launched sub-funds. The number of votes cast by fund managers, that did not fall in accordance with ACCESS policy, was confirmed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**256. Sub-fund implementation.**

*(Item. 11)*

1. Mr McDonald provided a summary of the progress made in launching sub-funds and assessing further options, he confirmed that Link, as the ACS operator, had selected sub-funds for consideration. Regarding the research of emerging markets, it was recognised that the process had contained shortcomings related to the scope of analysis. It was noted that the Section 151 Officers and Fund Managers of all member Authorities had received a copy of the emerging markets report.
2. Members discussed sub-fund criteria and the developments of this process since ACCESS moved from establishment phase to business as usual. In response to a specific question from a Member Mr McDonald confirmed that further information as to the sub-fund criteria and arrangements would be provided following the meeting to the Member concerned.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee agreed that:

- a) the events to date in the Emerging Markets search and absence of unanimous feedback be noted;
- b) a review of the process be conducted by an officer subgroup, sponsored by the ASU Interim Director and supported by Squire Patton Boggs, to include and highlight “lessons learnt” and to encompass input from each of the four Investing Authorities;
- c) the Joint Committee considers the outcome of that review along with proposals for the Emerging Markets part of the ACS at a future meeting;
- d) the developments related to the two sub-funds enabling West Sussex to execute its investment strategy be noted; and

- e) the developments related to a requested change in relation to the lower weighted average carbon intensity in respect of the ACCESS Global Alpha Equity Fund be noted.

**257. Contract Management.**  
*(Item. 12)*

1. Mr Paget provided an update on Contract and Supplier Relationship management which included: current insurance agreements; possible future insurance agreements and structures; monitoring and an overview of the market.
2. Members discussed the risk associated with the level of insurance available and noted the decreased supply within the market. Mr McDonald and Mr Sims informed Members that providers were aware of issue.
3. Mr McDonald was asked to provide reassurance that future insurance options were viable. He indicated to the Joint Committee that agreement from the operator to explore future insurance arrangements was realistic. It was acknowledged that the explored arrangement had the potential to be more cost effective.
4. Link's Key Performance Indicator reporting was addressed, it was noted that their attainment during the previous 12 months had been highly respectable. A Member discussed various elements of Operator performance and Mr Paget clarified the number of operator issues in the past quarter and reassured the Joint Committee that there had been no adverse financial consequences as a result.
5. Mr Paget updated Members on recent staff changes within Link.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**258. Risk Register.**  
*(Item. 13)*

1. Mr McDonald gave an overview of the Risk Register and noted the increase in Professional Indemnity Insurance risk. Cost transparency reporting deadlines were addressed.
2. A Member acknowledged the relevance of multiple risks in the register, when the concerns noted by Members during Item 11 of the meeting were considered.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## Business Plan, Budget & Risk Summary



### ACCESS Joint Committee

Date: 6 September 2021

Report by: Officer Working Group

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Business Plan, Budget &amp; Risk Summary</b>
<b>Purpose of the Report:</b>	To provide an update on the activities undertaken since the last Joint Committee, associated spend and risk summary.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>The Committee is asked to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Business Plan update;</li> <li>• the 2020/21 outturn;</li> <li>• the 2021/22 budget update; and</li> <li>• summary risk register.</li> </ul>
<b>Enquiries to:</b>	<p>Kevin McDonald</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:kevin.mcdonald@accesspool.co.uk">kevin.mcdonald@accesspool.co.uk</a></p>

## 1. Business Plan update

- 1.1. The Business Plan for **2021/22** (this year) was agreed by the Joint Committee (JC) in January 2021 prior to being referred to the ACCESS Authorities. At the same meeting the JC also determined the budget necessary to implement this year's plan and to be charged to the relevant Authorities.
- 1.2. Activities within this year's **2021/22** Business Plan (Annex A) that are also the subject of separate items on the Committee's agenda include:
- Communications
  - Responsible Investment
  - Implementation Adviser appointment
  - BAU evaluation next steps
  - Sub-fund performance and implementation
  - Contract Management

## 2. 2021/22 budget

- 2.1. At its January 2021 meeting the Committee determined a budget of £1,247,019 to support the 2021/22 business plan. Details are included within the table below.

	Agreed Budget 2021/2022 £	Actual Costs 06/08/2021 plus forecast 2021/2022 £	Overspend / (Underspend) 2021/2022 £
<b>ASU</b>			
ASU Salaries (incl. on cost)	460,261	413,597	(46,664)
ASU Operational	20,580	13,698	(6,882)
ASU Host Authority Recharge	64,087	30,000	(34,087)
Technical Lead Recharge Costs	40,000	40,357	357
<b>ASU Total</b>	<b>584,928</b>	<b>497,652</b>	<b>(87,276)</b>
<b>Professional Costs</b>			
JC Secretariat	21,761	16,500	(5,261)
Procurement	45,000	42,000	(3,000)
<i>Internal Professional Costs</i>	66,761	58,500	(8,261)
Strategic & Technical	433,000	384,667	(48,333)
Legal & Governance	162,330	151,510	(10,820)
<i>External Professional Costs</i>	595,330	536,177	(59,153)
<b>Professional Costs Total</b>	<b>662,091</b>	<b>594,677</b>	<b>(67,414)</b>
<b>Total Costs per 2020/2021</b>	<b>1,247,019</b>	<b>1,092,329</b>	<b>(154,690)</b>
<b>Cost Per Authority</b>	<b>113,365</b>	<b>99,303</b>	<b>(14,063)</b>

2.2. Current forecast variances against the planned budget are currently expected in the following areas:

- ACCESS Support Unit (ASU) salaries (incl. on cost): the new Client Manager joined the ASU part way through the current year. The budget reflects a full year's cost.
- ASU Operational: this reflects reduced instances of travel costs, particularly during the first half of the year.
- ASU Host Authority recharge: the overhead charged by Essex County Council has been reviewed and reduced.
- JC Secretariat: the budget includes contingency for an additional 5<sup>th</sup> JC meeting in the year.
- Strategic & Technical: the budget assumptions were set on a prudent basis prior to the finalisation of external advice appointments. The variance includes favourable procurement outcomes.

### 3. Risk Summary

3.1. A summary of the risk profile is shown below, and a more detailed report, including the revised approach to risk scoring, appears elsewhere on this agenda.

	June 2021	Sept 21
Low	4	4
Medium	14	14
High	1	1
Elevated	2	2

### 4. Recommendations

4.1. The Committee is asked to note:

- the Business Plan update;
- the 2020/21 outturn;
- the 2021/22 budget update; and
- summary risk register.

Legacy milestones noted where applicable

Theme	Milestone	2021/22 activity	September 2021 comment
<b>Actively managed listed assets</b>	Launch remaining Tranche 4 sub-fund (legacy milestone)	One UK equity sub-fund	Launched July 2021 – an update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.
	Launch of Tranche 5b	Three fixed income sub-funds	An update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.
	Launch of Tranche 5c	One credit sub-fund, one global equity sub-fund, one fixed income sub-fund, one global emerging market sub-fund.	An update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.
	Determine, approval & launch of Tranche 6		An update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.
	<i>Ensure sub-funds meet Link's due diligence requirements and ACCESS Authorities' Value for Money criteria (including transition activity). Manager search and selection activity where required. Work with Link to submit application to the FCA for approval of the sub-fund set up. Launch.</i>		

Theme	Milestone	2021/22 activity	September 2021 comment
<b>Actively managed listed assets</b> continued	Establish a process for transitioning between sub-funds. (legacy milestone)  Scheduled BAU evaluation	Implementation of outcomes	An update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.  An update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.
<b>Alternative / non-listed assets</b>	Commence implementation of approach to pool illiquid assets	The initial implementation of pooled alternative assets will commence in 2020/21.	An update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.
<b>Passively managed assets</b>	Ongoing monitoring of assets managed on a passive basis.	Engagement with UBS will continue throughout the year.	Dialogue with those Authorities adopting passive management investment took place at an Investor User Group in July.
<b>Governance</b>	Meetings and oversight	Arrangements will be made to support meetings of the Joint Committee (usually each quarter).  Meetings of s151 Officers will also be held.	Remaining scheduled JC meetings for 2021/22 are: 6 December 2021 7 March 2022  A virtual meeting of s151 Officers was held on 20 August 2021. Further meetings will be held in advance of the JC meetings in 2021/22.

Theme	Milestone	2021/22 activity	September 2021 comment
<b>Governance</b> continued	Operational protocols	Further development of protocols around key processes associated with the pool's day-to-day operation will take place during 2021/22.	Following s151 agreement in June, a project is in progress focussing on areas of highest risk to the delivery of the ACCESS objectives and the governance, policies and procedures needed to achieve them. Governance protocols / decision pathways have been identified for the milestones noted below, and are reflected within the respective reports on these matters elsewhere on this agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementation Adviser appointment;</li> <li>- Scheduled BAU evaluation; and</li> <li>- Sub-fund implementation.</li> </ul>
	Engagement with HM Government	Participate in pooling related consultations. ACCESS will liaise with the Scheme Advisory Board as appropriate.	MHCLG consultations on Climate Related Disclosures and LGPS Pooling are expected during 2021/22.
		Periodic reports will be provided to MHCLG as required.	An update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.
	Agreement to Joint Policies & guidelines	The Joint Committee will review its Communications Policy.  Work will be undertaken to finalise joint guidelines on ESG / RI.	An update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.  An update on this matter appears elsewhere on this agenda.

Theme	Milestone	2021/22 activity	September 2021 comment
<b>ACCESS Support Unit (ASU)</b>	Review of ACCESS Support Unit	The outcomes of the size and scope review of the ASU will be reviewed.	Implementing the outcomes of the ASU review concluded with Paul Tysoe (formerly of Northants) commencing his role as Client Manager on 1 July.

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## Communications



### ACCESS Joint Committee

Date: 6 September 2021

Report by: Officer Working Group

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Communications</b>
<b>Purpose of the Report:</b>	To propose Elected Member spokespeople for the ACCESS pool and provide an update on associated training arrangements.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>That the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• note the report;</li> <li>• agree to the proposed Elected Members spokespeople as detailed in paragraph 3.1 of this report; and</li> <li>• note the associated training arrangements.</li> </ul>
<b>Enquiries to:</b>	<p>Kevin McDonald</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:kevin.mcdonald@accesspool.co.uk">kevin.mcdonald@accesspool.co.uk</a></p>

## 1. Background

- 1.1. At its meeting of 7 September 2020, the Joint Committee (JC) considered a communications paper from Hymans Robertson. The recommendations agreed by the JC included:
  - that external support be sought to implement the pool's communication plan;
  - that the ACCESS Support Unit (ASU) Director be confirmed as spokesperson for ACCESS "in the first instance".
- 1.2. Subsequently, a procurement process was undertaken and a recommendation to appoint Engine MHP to provide external communication support for a period of 2 years was agreed by the JC at its meeting on 12 November 2020.
- 1.3. At its meeting on 8 March 2021, the JC noted a report from Engine MHP including an outline of media training arrangements for spokespeople.
- 1.4. A draft of this paper was also shared at the informal virtual Elected Member ACCESS briefing on 25 June 2021 enabling the matter to be socialised and initial discussion to take place.

## 2. Elected Member Spokespeople

- 2.1. In discussions during the JC meetings on both 13 January 2021 and 8 March 2021, JC Chairman Cllr Kemp-Gee outlined his thoughts on how individual JC Members may undertake the role of spokesperson on certain matters.
- 2.2. This approach would establish a profile of areas of ACCESS activity, each of which would have a spokesperson or spokespeople. The suggested profile would include:

Activity	Covering
Responsible investment	The political and implementation aspects of the work currently being undertaken by Minerva.
Governance	To include work alongside legal advisers Squire Patton Boggs where appropriate.
Media strategy	To focus on the strategic aspects of communications and media engagement.
Political, Governmental Relations, Parliamentary, Inter-Pool, Overall Strategy	To include media dialogue in and around pooling structures and Government consultation.

2.3. In outlining this profile, two principles, are underlined:

- that the ASU Director remains the spokesperson “in the first instance”, directing lines of enquiry where appropriate and covering any public comment required in relation to the ACS Operator; and
- that there are political dimensions to aspects of the pool’s media engagement which are appropriate for Elected Members to undertake, rather than officers.

### **3. Proposed Elected Member Spokespeople**

3.1. Cllr Kemp-Gee’s proposals on fulfilling the roles of Elected Member Spokespeople are set out below:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Suggested JC Member</b>
Responsible investment	Cllr Fox (East Sussex)
Governance	Cllr Oliver (Norfolk)
Media strategy	Cllr Soons (Suffolk)
Political, Governmental Relations, Parliamentary, Inter-Pool, Overall Strategy	Cllr Kemp-Gee, JC Chairman (Hampshire) Cllr Barker, JC Vice Chairman (Essex)

### **4. Media training**

4.1 The Annex to this report from Engine MHP includes background to the role of spokesperson, details the media training to be made available and an outline of the support provided by the press office function.

4.2 At the time of writing dates for training were being finalised.

### **5. Conference activity**

5.1 At the LAPFF Strategic Investment Forum on 5 July, ASU Director Kevin McDonald participated in a panel discussion on Multi Asset investing.

5.2 At the forthcoming LGC Investment Summit on 9 September in Leeds, Kevin McDonald will chair an officer session on partnership working.

### **6. Recommendations**

6.1 That the Committee:

- note the report;
- agree to the proposed Elected Members spokespeople as detailed in paragraph 3.1 of this report; and
- note the associated training arrangements.

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## Annex

### ACCESS spokespeople

With the local elections complete, we are now moving to the next phase of the ACCESS communications programme involving selection of spokespeople, media training and ultimately proactive press office work.

#### What does an ACCESS spokesperson role involve?

Spokespeople for ACCESS are the public face of the pool. They should be knowledgeable, able to confidently answer questions relating to their subject areas [see below] and the pool's progress, and across most of the latest developments. They also need to be willing and able to speak to media.

A spokesperson does not necessarily have to be able to talk about all aspects of ACCESS: often, a good spokesperson is specialist, or passionate about a particular area and this is the theme they own in media. For example, we may have spokespeople to cover the below:

- ACCESS's overall strategy i.e. ACCESS as a whole, and topics around politics, governmental relations, parliamentary activity, inter-pool and any issues – see below, 'issues management'
- Responsible Investment i.e. the political and implementation aspects of the work with Minerva Analytics, ACCESS' ESG stance, broader ESG themes
- Investment i.e. overall investment strategy, sub fund structure, performance
- Governance i.e. fiduciary duty and the working structure of the organisation including ACCESS Support Unit, Joint Committee, authority autonomy and collaboration

ENGINE MHP would work with ACCESS to select spokespeople who feel comfortable and willing to own these themes. Themes could be grouped under the responsibility of one spokesperson, for example, governance and investment could be owned by one person – with the intention of having a core group of spokespeople.

#### Media training

Once ACCESS spokespeople have been selected, we will take forward the media training. This will be two three-hour sessions hosted by ENGINE MHP's Media Unit, and will cover general media awareness, interview techniques and practice exercises tied to the ACCESS narrative. The focus will be on the role that spokesperson has within ACCESS, ACCESS' own key messages and also cover their chosen themes. A guide agenda is included in the appendix of this document and can be adapted based on requirements.

#### Press office

Once media training is complete, we would make the daily press office support more proactive – not only waiting for natural news (like the Minerva Analytics appointment or sub-fund launch), but setting up media meetings with relevant journalists and looking to comment on the news agenda. This would be supported by a forward planner including targets, conferences/events and news hooks.

For every media meeting, ENGINE MHP would support with a media briefing note outlining the journalist's background, detail on the publication, possible questions and suggested talking points.

Spokespeople would also be on hand should we receive in-bound requests from media to comment on certain topics. This may be a request for a specific spokesperson, or a general request – in which case we would help decide who should take it on.

*Issues management:* in the rare instances where there is an issue already in the press that may reflect negatively on ACCESS, a journalist gets in touch to request comment on a potentially negative story, or there is an internal issue identified that we need to manage before it reaches media, ENGINE MHP would be on hand to support the 'corporate' spokesperson – with the response entirely dependent on the specific situation.

## APPENDIX: MEDIA TRAINING AGENDA

<b>1</b>	<b>Introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Media trainer background and training approach</li> <li>B. Spokesperson experience and objectives</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Your media opportunity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Your role and remit as a spokesperson, the stories you want to tell and the media opportunities you may receive</li> <li>B. Risks for interviews including off-topic questions that you may be asked</li> <li>C. Rules of media engagement including on and off record, conduct and relationship building with journalists</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b><i>Exercise: Elevator pitch</i></b> Deliver a prepared elevator pitch. Objective is to test ability to speak in a clear and concise manner
<b>4</b>	<b>Preparing for an interview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Understanding the journalist, audience and interview scope in order to prepare your strategy</li> <li>B. Planning your key messages, proof and colour</li> <li>C. Principles for effective message delivery and honing your key messages into quotable soundbites</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<b>Interview techniques</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Getting off to a strong start, keeping an interview on track and controlling the narrative</li> <li>B. Bridging, sign posting</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<b>Handling difficult questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Techniques for responding when under pressure</li> <li>B. Side stepping and alternatives to 'no comment'</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	<b><i>Exercise: Mock interview 1</i></b> Brief interview, low difficulty. You will be asked simple questions relating to your role and ACCESS. The objective is to test ability to deliver a key message within succinct and compelling answers
<b>8</b>	<b><i>Exercise: Mock interview 2</i></b> Brief interview, medium difficulty. You will be asked direct questions relating to your areas of specialism. Objective is to test quality of key messages and alignment to business objectives, compelling story telling and succinct delivery
<b>9</b>	<b><i>Exercise: Mock interview 3</i></b> Brief interview, high difficulty. You will be asked challenging questions on your area of specialism and ACCESS. Off-topic questions and combative techniques will be used. Objective is to test ability to control the interview, respond effectively and deliver key messages while under pressure
<b>10</b>	<b>Final feedback and questions</b>

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