



ACCESS JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the ACCESS Joint Committee held at Bevin Hall, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ on Monday, 1st September, 2025.

PRESENT: **Chairman:** Cllr Susan Barker (Essex CC), **Vice-Chairman:** Cllr Gerard Fox (East Sussex CC), Cllr Vanessa Churchman (Isle of Wight), Cllr Sarah Emberson (Kent CC), Cllr Jeremy Hunt (West Sussex CC), Cllr Mark Kemp-Gee (Hampshire CC), Cllr Scott Packer (West Northamptonshire), Cllr Greg Peck (Norfolk CC), Cllr Geoffrey Seeff (Cambridgeshire CC) Cllr Colin Kreidewolf (Suffolk CC) and Cllr Tim Williams (Hertfordshire CC)

LOCAL PENSION BOARD OBSERVERS: Phillip Reynolds (Hampshire), Cllr Liz Needham (Hampshire) and Martin Doyle (Isle of Wight)

ALSO PRESENT: Kevin McDonald (ASU), Richard Smith (ASU), Alistair Coyle (ASU), Sallie Wilson (ASU), Chris Harper (Squire Patton Boggs), John Wright (Hymans Robertson) and Felix Western (Squires).

OFFICERS: Andrew Boutflower (Hampshire), Nick Buckland (Kent), Glenn Cossey (Norfolk), Patrick Towey (Hertfordshire), Tomasz Wardzala (West Northamptonshire / Cambridgeshire), Tracey Woods (Suffolk), Rachel Wood (West Sussex), Susan Greenwood (East Sussex), Steve Harrison (Isle of Wight), Amanda Crawford (Essex), Sharon Tan (Suffolk), Louise Ansley (s151 Officer representative), Jody Evans (Essex), Joel Cook (Kent - Clerk), and Georgia Humphreys (Kent).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

13. Apologies/Substitutes.
(Item. 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr Soons (Suffolk), for whom Cllr Kreidewolf was present as substitute.

14. Declaration of interests in items on the agenda.
(Item. 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

15. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2025.
(Item. 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes from the meeting held on 16 June 2025 be approved as a correct record.

16. Chair's Remarks.

(Item. 4)

- The Chair emphasised the importance of the ACCESS JC authorities working collaboratively in a proactive manner.
- The Chair reminded Members to review the previously circulated Annual Report and send any feedback to Mr McDonald (ASU) by Wednesday 3rd September so it could be published.

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.

17. Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2025.

(Item. 5)

RESOLVED that the exempt minutes from the meeting held on 16 June 2025 be approved as a correct record.

18. Project Castle.

(Item. 6)

1. Mr McDonald (ASU) introduced the report and advised that there had been a number of developments since the last meeting.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- noted the report; and
- noted the conclusions i to iv, as detailed in the report.

19. Contract Management.

(Item. 7)

1. Mr Smith (ASU) introduced the report and provided an update to the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- noted the matters highlighted within the report, the activity that has taken place and forthcoming plans.
- Recommended the relevant contract management actions as detailed in the report, subject to business plan and budget approval.

20. Interim Business Plan.

(Item. 8)

2. Mr McDonald (ASU) introduced the report and provided an update on the Business Plan since the last meeting of the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- noted the report;
- agreed to recommend the Interim Business Plan (as detailed in section 9) to ACCESS Authorities;
- requested that individual administering authorities undertake the range of approvals and related governance processes to agree the necessary activity envisaged within Project Connect and the wider business plan; and
- requested that the ASU, in collaboration with the OWG and s151 Officer Group / Programme Board, provide a detailed overview of the programme of work in order to assist administering authorities in scoping the required governance arrangements as soon as practicable.

21. Interim Budget.

(Item. 9)

Advisors left the room for the duration of this item.

1. Mr McDonald (ASU) introduced the report and provided an update on the 2024/25 budget. The budget had been revised in view of updated circumstances and was proposed at £2,721,883.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- noted the 2025/26 budget update;
- accepted the recommendation of the Section 151 Officers to agree the revised interim budget for 2025/26 totalling £2,721,883.

22. Risk Register.

(Item. 10)

1. Ms Wilson (ASU) introduced the report, gave an update on progress and highlighted the updates to the reported quarter's risk register

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the matters highlighted within the report.

23. Investment Performance.

(Item. 11)

1. Ms Tan introduced the paper and provided the Committee with an overview of the progress of pooling assets, the performance of the sub-funds and UBS against benchmark, income generated by stock lending and voting by the investment managers.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the performance report.