

# Pensions Committee

## Friday 10 September 2021

### 10.00 am Luttrell Room, County Hall



To: The Members of the Pensions Committee

Cllr J Thorne (Chair), Cllr G Noel, Cllr S Coles, Cllr J Parham, Cllr Ross Henley, Gordon Bryant and Sarah Payne

Issued By Scott Wooldridge, Strategic Manager - Governance and Risk - 2 September 2021

For further information about the meeting, please contact [democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk) / 01823 357628 or

Guidance about procedures at the meeting follows the printed agenda.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

This agenda and the attached reports and background papers are available on request prior to the meeting in large print, Braille, audio tape & disc and can be translated into different languages. They can also be accessed via the council's website on [www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers)



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## **AGENDA**

Item Pensions Committee - 10.00 am Friday 10 September 2021

1 **Review of Investment Performance** (Pages 3 - 22)

To consider this report from the Funds & Investments Manager

## Review of Investment Performance

<i>Lead Officer:</i>	Jason Vaughan: Director of Finance
<i>Author:</i>	Anton Sweet: Funds and Investments Manager
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<i>Executive Portfolio Holder:</i>	Not applicable
<i>Division and Local Member:</i>	Not applicable

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The report attached as appendix A is to inform the committee about the performance of the Pension Fund's investments for the quarter ended 30 June 2021 and related matters.

### 2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1 The report is for information only unless the committee deems that action is necessary having reviewed the report.

### 3. Background

None

### 4. Consultations undertaken

None

### 5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Over time the performance of the pension fund investments will impact the amount that the County Council and other sponsoring employers have to pay into the fund to meet their liabilities. The fund actuary calculates these amounts every three years and sets payments for the intervening periods.

### 6. Background Papers

None

**Note** For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author.

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## **Review of Investment Performance** **for the Quarter to 30th June 2021**

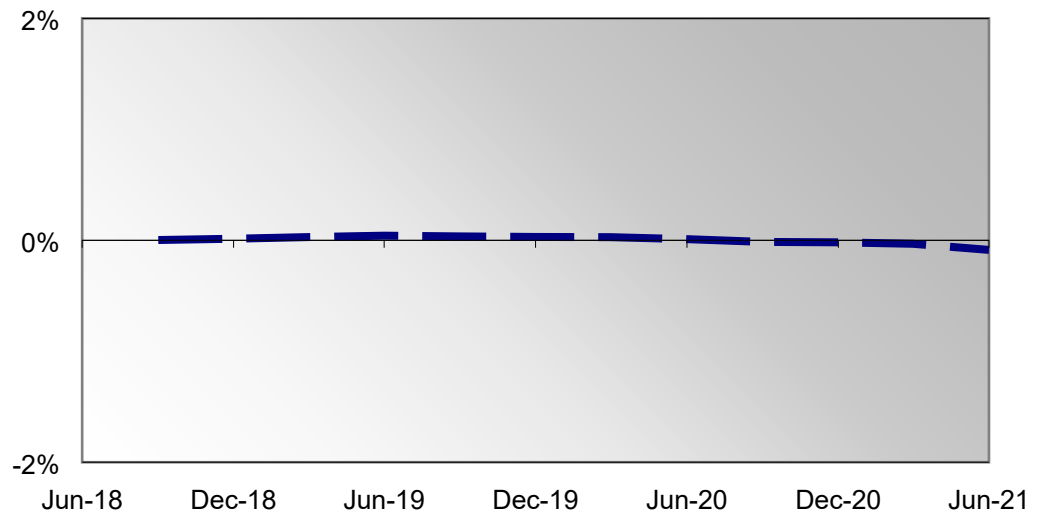
1. Somerset County Council (Passive Global Equity)
  - 1.1 The remainder (£0.4m) of this fund was liquidated during the quarter.
2. Brunel - LGIM (Passive Global Equity)
  - 2.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>				
<b>Value as at 30 June £m</b>		<b>Fund for quarter %</b>	<b>Performance Benchmark for quarter %</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark %</b>
<b>733.0</b>	<b>Global equities</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>+0.0</b>

- 2.2 The LGIM passive fund matched the performance of the benchmark for the quarter. Absolute performance was strongly positive.

2.3

### Brunel (LGIM) performance Vs Benchmark



2.4

The table below shows annualised performance over a range of time periods:

	<b>Fund</b> <b>% p.a.</b>	<b>Benchmark</b> <b>% p.a.</b>	<b>Relative to</b> <b>Benchmark</b> <b>% p.a.</b>
<b>1 year</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>-0.1</b>
<b>3 years</b>			

Initial investment in July 2018

3. Brunel - (Global High Alpha Equity)

3.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

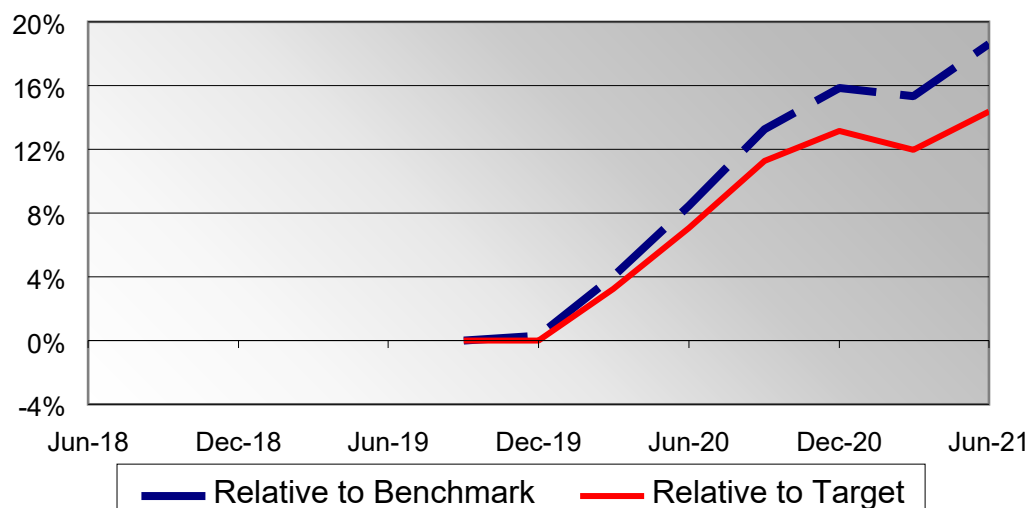
<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>			
<b>Value as at 30 June £m</b>	<b>Fund for quarter %</b>	<b>Performance Benchmark for quarter %</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark %</b>
<b>394.5 Global equities</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>+1.5</b>

3.2 The Brunel Global High Alpha portfolio is managed by a combination of Alliance Bernstein, Baillie Gifford, Fiera Capital, Harris Associates and Royal London Asset Management.

3.3 The fund outperformed during the quarter. Absolute returns were strongly positive.

3.4 The Brunel GHA Fund’s target is to outperform the benchmark by an annualised return of 2%-3% over continuous three to five-year periods after fees have been deducted. The graph below shows performance against 2%.

**Brunel performance Vs Benchmark & Target**



3.5 The table below shows annualised performance over a range of time periods:

	<b>Fund % p.a.</b>	<b>Benchmark % p.a.</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark % p.a.</b>
<b>1 year</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>+7.3</b>
<b>3 years</b>	Initial investment in November 2019		

4. Aberdeen Standard Investments (UK Equities)

4.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>			
<b>Value as at 30 June £m</b>	<b>Fund for quarter %</b>	<b>Performance Benchmark for quarter %</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark %</b>
<b>14.6 UK</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>+6.8</b>

4.2 The transfer of the majority of this mandate to the equivalent Brunel offering took place in November 2018. The residual holding is in a smaller companies fund and will be used as a source of cash as necessary.

4.3 Aberdeen Standard had an excellent quarter relative to their benchmark. Absolute returns were strongly positive. Smaller companies significantly outperformed during the quarter, and the Aberdeen Standard fund outperformed the smaller companies' benchmark.



5. Brunel (UK Equities)

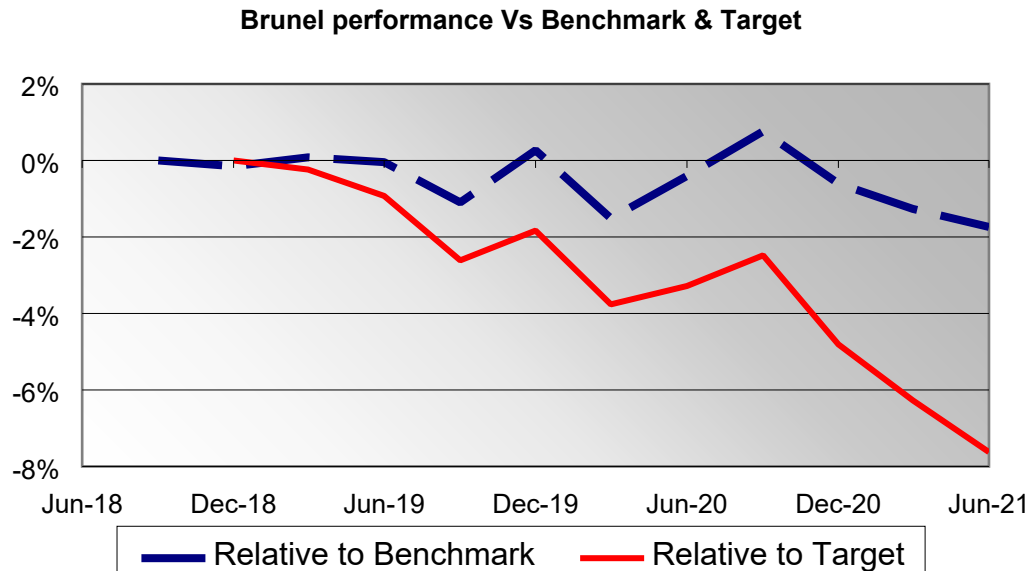
5.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>			
<b>Value as at 30 June £m</b>	<b>Fund for quarter %</b>	<b>Performance Benchmark for quarter %</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark %</b>
<b>473.8 UK</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>-0.3</b>

5.2 The Brunel UK portfolio is managed by a combination of Invesco and Baillie Gifford.

5.3 The portfolio underperformed the benchmark during the quarter. Absolute performance was strongly positive.

5.4 The Brunel UK Fund’s target is to outperform the benchmark by an annualised return of 2% over continuous three to five-year periods after fees have been deducted.



5.5 The table below shows annualised performance over a range of time periods:

	<b>Fund % p.a.</b>	<b>Benchmark % p.a.</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark % p.a.</b>
<b>1 year</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>-1.3</b>
<b>3 years</b>	Initial investment in November 2018		

6. Brunel (Global Smaller Companies Equity)

6.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>				
<b>Value as at 30 June £m</b>		<b>Fund for quarter %</b>	<b>Performance Benchmark for quarter %</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark %</b>
<b>196.3</b>	<b>Smaller Companies</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>+1.3</b>

6.2 The Brunel Smaller Companies Market portfolio is managed by a combination of Montanaro Asset Management, American Century and Kempen Capital Management.

6.3 The portfolio outperformed the benchmark during the quarter. Absolute performance was strongly positive.

7. Brunel (Emerging Market Equity)

7.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

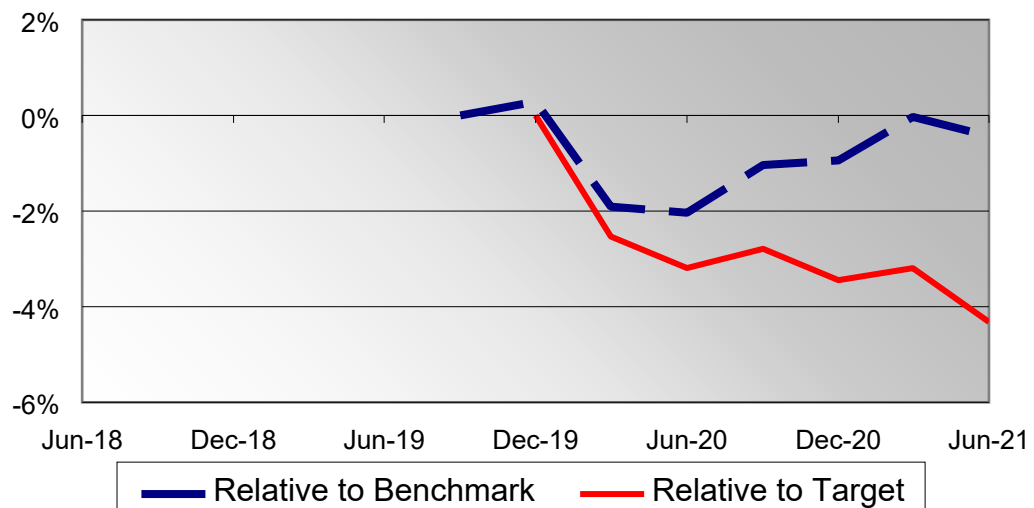
<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>			
<b>Value as at 30 June £m</b>	<b>Fund for quarter %</b>	<b>Performance Benchmark for quarter %</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark %</b>
<b>127.7 Emerging Market</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>-0.3</b>

7.2 The Brunel Emerging Market portfolio is managed by a combination of Genesis Investment Management, Wellington Management and Investec Asset Management.

7.3 The Brunel portfolio underperformed during the quarter. Absolute performance was strongly positive.

7.4 The Brunel Emerging Market Fund’s target is to outperform the benchmark by an annualised return of 2%-3% over continuous three to five-year periods after fees have been deducted. The graph below shows performance against 2%.

**Brunel performance Vs Benchmark & Target**



7.5 The table below shows annualised performance over a range of time periods:

	<b>Fund</b> <b>% p.a.</b>	<b>Benchmark</b> <b>% p.a.</b>	<b>Relative to</b> <b>Benchmark</b> <b>% p.a.</b>
<b>1 year</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>+2.1</b>
<b>3 years</b>	Initial investment in November 2018		

8. Aberdeen Standard Investments (Fixed Interest)

8.1 The fund was moved into a transition account during May. Some assets remained in transition at the end of the quarter. The Brunel passive Gilt fund, Passive index linked fund and Multi-Asset Credit fund were initiated in June.

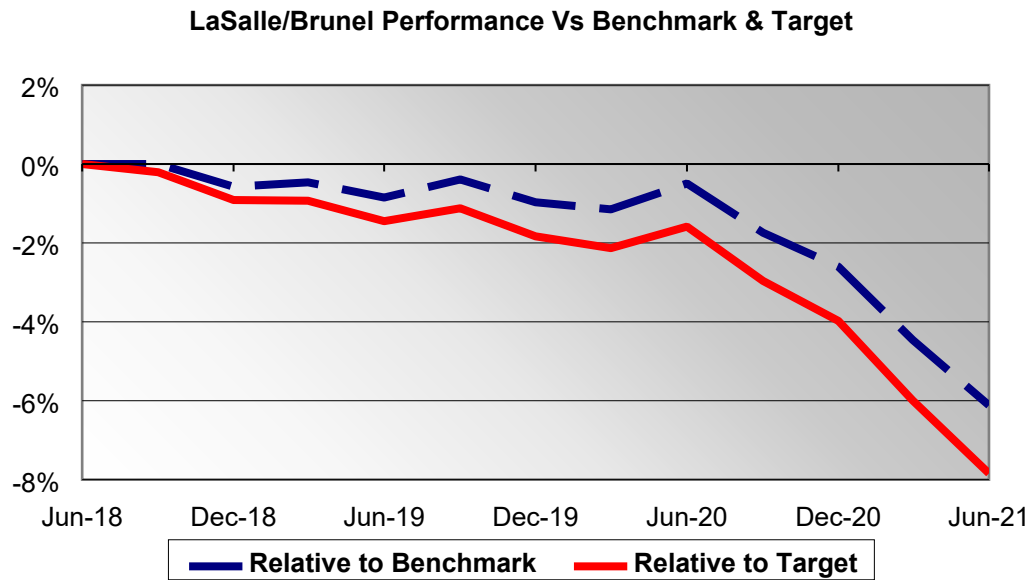
9. LaSalle/Brunel (Property Fund of Funds)

9.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>				
<b>Value as</b> <b>at 30 June</b> <b>£m</b>		<b>Fund for</b> <b>quarter</b> <b>%</b>	<b>Performance</b> <b>Benchmark</b> <b>for quarter</b> <b>%</b>	<b>Relative to</b> <b>Benchmark</b> <b>%</b>
<b>189.8</b>	<b>UK Property</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>-0.7</b>
<b>0.0</b>	<b>European Property</b>			
<b>26.8</b>	<b>Cash</b>			
<b>216.6</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>-1.2</b>

9.2 Management of the property portfolio moved from LaSalle to Brunel on 1st November 2020. Unlike other asset classes Brunel simply took over management with no underlying change in holdings. Going forward performance records will report the full history of this portfolio.

9.3 Brunel’s target is to outperform the benchmark by an annualised return of 0.5% over continuous three-year periods after all fees have been deducted.



9.4 The table below shows annualised performance over a range of time periods:

	<b>Fund</b> % p.a.	<b>Benchmark</b> % p.a.	<b>Relative to</b> <b>Benchmark</b> % p.a.
<b>1 year</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>-5.3</b>
<b>3 years</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>-1.9</b>
<b>5 years</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>-1.7</b>
<b>10 years</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>-1.6</b>

10. Neuberger Berman (Global Private Equity)

10.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>			
<b>Value as at 30 June £m</b>	<b>Fund for quarter %</b>	<b>Performance Benchmark for quarter %</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark %</b>
<b>77.7 Private Equity</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>+10.9</b>

10.2 The return indicated above is significantly affected by currency movements, specifically the change in the value of the US dollar against GBP.

10.3 There is a delay in the reporting of returns on private equity of about a quarter and this needs to be considered when looking at returns on individual funds.

10.4 The 2010 fund continues to make good progress. The underlying return on this fund for the quarter, excluding currency movements, was 1.9%. This fund is due to wind up within the next year or so.

10.5 The Neuberger Berman Crossroads XX fund is also making good progress. The underlying return on this fund for the quarter, excluding currency movements, was 15.6%.

10.6 The Crossroads XXI fund is also making good progress. The underlying return on this fund for the quarter, excluding currency movements, was 13.1%.

10.7 The Crossroads XXII fund is still very young. The return for the quarter, excluding currency movements, was 10.3%.

10.8 The table below shows annualised performance over a range of time periods, unlike in the table above a broad global equity index has been used as the benchmark as over long time periods this is more appropriate:

	<b>Fund</b> <b>% p.a.</b>	<b>Benchmark</b> <b>% p.a.</b>	<b>Relative to</b> <b>Benchmark</b> <b>% p.a.</b>
<b>1 year</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>+7.7</b>
<b>3 years</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>+6.7</b>
<b>5 years</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>+1.7</b>
<b>10 years</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>+1.9</b>

11. Brunel (Global private equity)

11.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>			
<b>Value as</b> <b>at 30 June</b> <b>£m</b>	<b>Fund for</b> <b>quarter</b> <b>%</b>	<b>Performance</b> <b>Benchmark</b> <b>for quarter</b> <b>%</b>	<b>Relative to</b> <b>Benchmark</b> <b>%</b>
<b>1.0 Private Equity</b>	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-1.5</b>

11.2 Brunel have invested in a number of private equity funds on the Fund's behalf and a small amount of money has been drawn. The portfolio is still very immature.

12. South West Ventures Fund

12.1 The fund continues to make reasonable progress.

13. Combined Fund

13.1 The performance for the quarter to 30th June 2021 is summarised in the following table:

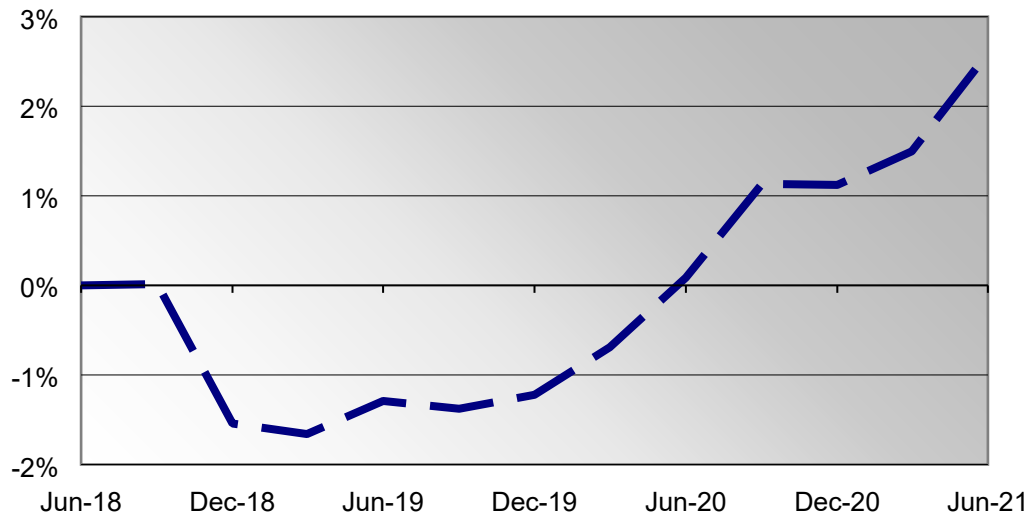
<b>Quarter to 30 June 2021</b>				
<b>Value as at 30 June £m</b>		<b>Fund for quarter %</b>	<b>Performance Benchmark for quarter %</b>	<b>Relative to Benchmark %</b>
<b>733.0</b>	<b>Brunel (Passive GI Eq)</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>+0.0</b>
<b>394.5</b>	<b>Brunel (GHA Eq)</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>+1.5</b>
<b>14.6</b>	<b>ASI (UK Eq)</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>+6.8</b>
<b>473.8</b>	<b>Brunel (UK Eq)</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>-0.3</b>
<b>196.3</b>	<b>Brunel (Small Cap Eq)</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>+1.3</b>
<b>127.7</b>	<b>Brunel (EM Eq)</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>-0.3</b>
<b>213.4</b>	<b>Transition (FI)</b>			
<b>69.2</b>	<b>Brunel (Passive Gilts)</b>			
<b>80.1</b>	<b>Brunel (Passive I-L)</b>			
<b>78.5</b>	<b>Brunel (MAC)</b>			
<b>216.6</b>	<b>LaSalle/Brunel (Prop)</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>-1.2</b>
<b>1.6</b>	<b>SWRVF</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>+0.0</b>
<b>77.7</b>	<b>Neuberger Berman</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>+10.9</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Brunel (Private Eq)</b>	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-1.5</b>
<b>0.8</b>	<b>Brunel (holding in Co)</b>			
<b>88.5</b>	<b>Cash</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>+0.0</b>
<b>2,767.3</b>	<b>Whole Fund</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>+0.8</b>

13.2 The fund, as a whole, outperformed its benchmark during the quarter. The level of absolute return was strongly positive.

13.3 Outperformance was caused by a positive from asset allocation, being underweight fixed income and property. Overall stock selection by managers was also positive.



### Whole Fund Performance Vs Benchmark



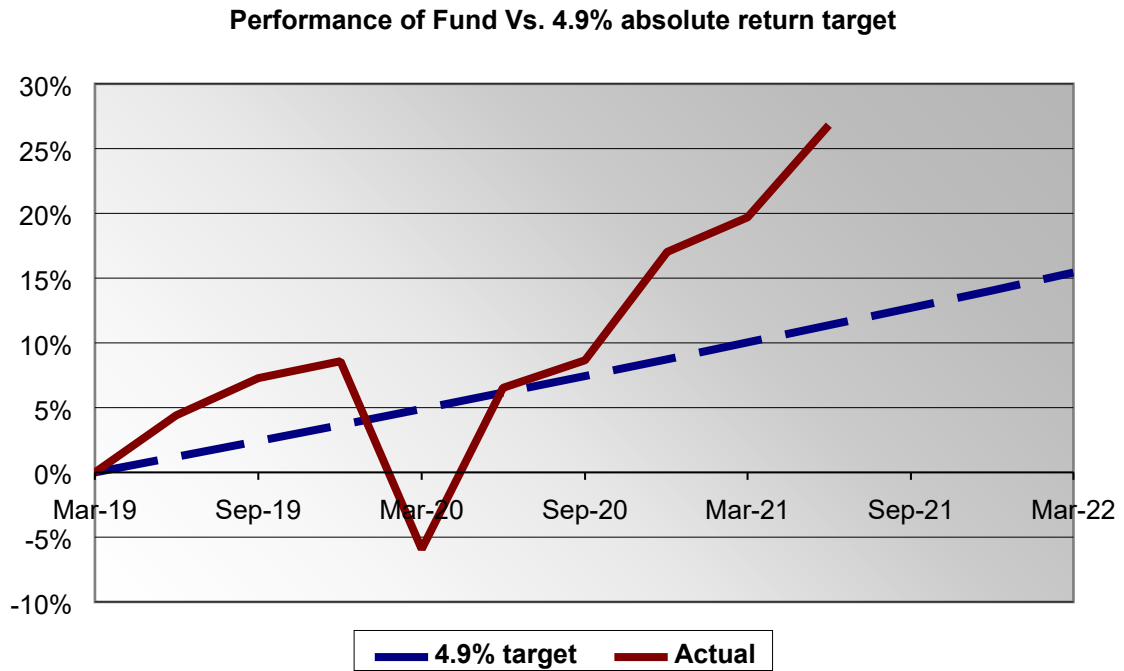
13.4

The table below shows annualised performance over a range of time periods:

	<b>Fund</b> <b>% p.a.</b>	<b>Benchmark</b> <b>% p.a.</b>	<b>Relative to</b> <b>Benchmark</b> <b>% p.a.</b>
<b>1 year</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>+2.3</b>
<b>3 years</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>+0.7</b>
<b>5 years</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>+1.0</b>
<b>10 years</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>+0.4</b>

13.5

At the June 2020 committee meeting the committee adopted an absolute return target of 4.9% for the fund as this is consistent with the fund becoming fully funded within the timescales indicated by the actuary as part of the 2019 valuation. Progress against this target for the 2019 to 2022 actuarial cycle is shown in the graph below.



13.6

The movement in the value of the fund over the quarter is summarised in the table below.

	Value as at 31 Dec		Value as at 31 Mar		Strategic
	£m	%	£m	%	Weighting
<b>In-House (Global Eq)</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Brunel (Passive GI Eq)</b>	<b>681.9</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>733.0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Brunel (GHA Eq)</b>	<b>360.9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>394.5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>ASI (UK Eq)</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Brunel (UK Eq)</b>	<b>450.5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>473.8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Brunel (Small Cap Eq)</b>	<b>185.0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>196.3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Brunel (EM Eq)</b>	<b>122.1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>127.7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ASI (FI)</b>	<b>401.8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Transition (FI)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>213.4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Brunel (Passive Gilts)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>69.2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Brunel (Passive I-L)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80.1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Brunel (Corp bonds)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Brunel (MAC)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Brunel/LaSalle (Prop)</b>	<b>210.1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>216.6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>SWRVF</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Neuberger Berman</b>	<b>69.4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>77.7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Brunel (Private Eq)</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Brunel (holding in Co)</b>	<b>0.8</b>		<b>0.8</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Cash</b>	<b>112.7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>88.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Whole Fund</b>	<b>2,610.8</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,767.3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

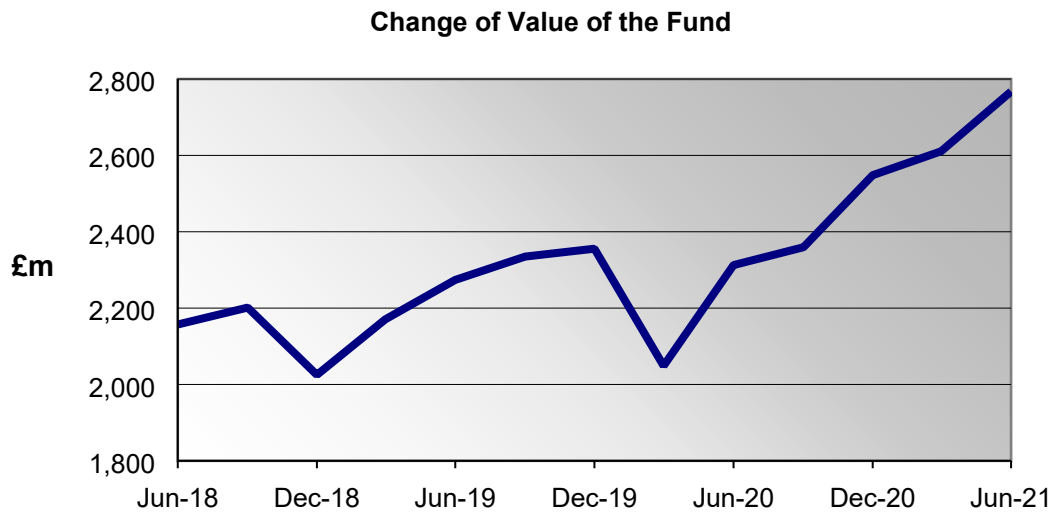
13.7

During the quarter the following movements of cash between funds took place:

- £0.4m was withdrawn from the in-house passive fund to fully wind this up.
- £227m was withdrawn from the ASI fixed income portfolio.
- £25.3m of cash was provided to the fixed income transition.
- £67m was provided to the Brunel passive Gilts portfolio.
- £81m was provided to the Brunel passive Index-Linked Gilts portfolio.
- £79m was provided to the Brunel Multi Asset Credit (MAC) portfolio.
- £0.6m was withdrawn from the property fund.
- £0.5m was provided to the Neuberger Berman's Private equity mandate.
- £0.5m was added to the Brunel private equity fund as the underlying investments started to drawdown on commitments.

13.8

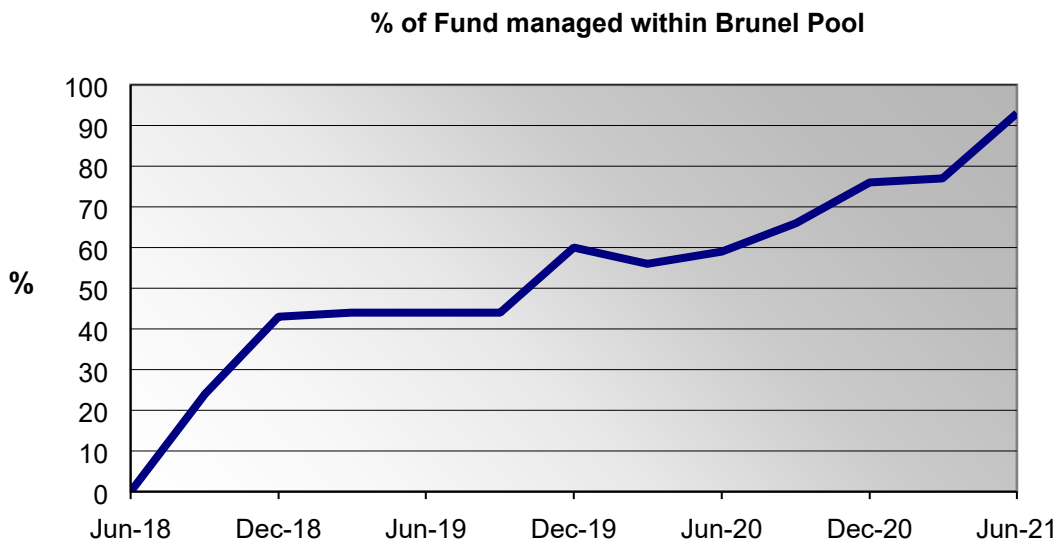
The change in the value of the investment fund over the last three years can be seen in the graph below.



13.9

Progress on moving to pooling can be seen in the table and graph below

	Value as at 31 Dec		Value as at 31 Mar	
	£m	%	£m	%
<b>Pooled assets</b>	<b>2,011.1</b>	77	<b>2,584.1</b>	93
<b>Retained assets</b>	<b>599.7</b>	23	<b>183.2</b>	7
<b>Whole Fund</b>	<b>2,610.8</b>	100	<b>2,767.3</b>	100



13.10

The Fund's Actuary, Barnett Waddingham, have provided the following update.

"The results of our assessment indicate that:

- The current projection of the smoothed funding level as at 30 June 2021 is 86.6% and the average required employer contribution would be 29.7% of payroll assuming the deficit is to be paid by 2039.
- This compares with the reported (smoothed) funding level of 85.7% and average required employer contribution of 24.3% of payroll at the 2019 funding valuation.

It should be borne in mind that the nature of the calculations is approximate and so the results are only indicative of the underlying position."

