

## FAB INDEX

### The technical bit...

Since the previous update, the Pension Protection Fund (PPF) has published its latest report on key information about UK pension schemes - The Purple Book.

After taking the changes in the Purple Book on board, over the month to 30 November 2020, First Actuarial's Best estimate (FAB) Index kept broadly stable, with the surplus in the UK's 5,318 Defined Benefit (DB) pension schemes increasing slightly from £307bn to £310bn.

The deficit on the PPF 7800 Index improved during November 2020, decreasing from £168.2bn to £78.8bn, with the funding ratio increasing from 91% to 96%.

The underlying numbers used to calculate the FAB Index are as follows:

| FAB Index over the last 3 months | Assets   | Liabilities | Surplus | Funding Ratio | 'Breakeven' (real) investment return |
|----------------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| 30 November 2020                 | £1,799bn | £1,489bn    | £310bn  | 121%          | -1.7%                                |
| 31 October 2020                  | £1,753bn | £1,446bn    | £307bn  | 121%          | -1.6%                                |
| 30 September 2020                | £1,771bn | £1,454bn    | £317bn  | 122%          | -1.5%                                |

The overall investment return required for the UK's 5,318 DB pension schemes to be 100% funded on a best-estimate basis – the so called 'breakeven' (real) investment return – is now at minus 1.7% pa. This means the schemes need an overall actual (nominal) return of 1.6% pa for their assets to meet liabilities.

The assumptions underlying the FAB Index are shown below:

| Assumptions       | Expected future inflation (RPI) | Expected future inflation (CPI) | Weighted-average investment return |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 30 November 2020  | 3.3% pa                         | 2.8% pa                         | 2.6% pa                            |
| 31 October 2020   | 3.3% pa                         | 2.6% pa                         | 2.7% pa                            |
| 30 September 2020 | 3.1% pa                         | 2.5% pa                         | 2.6% pa                            |

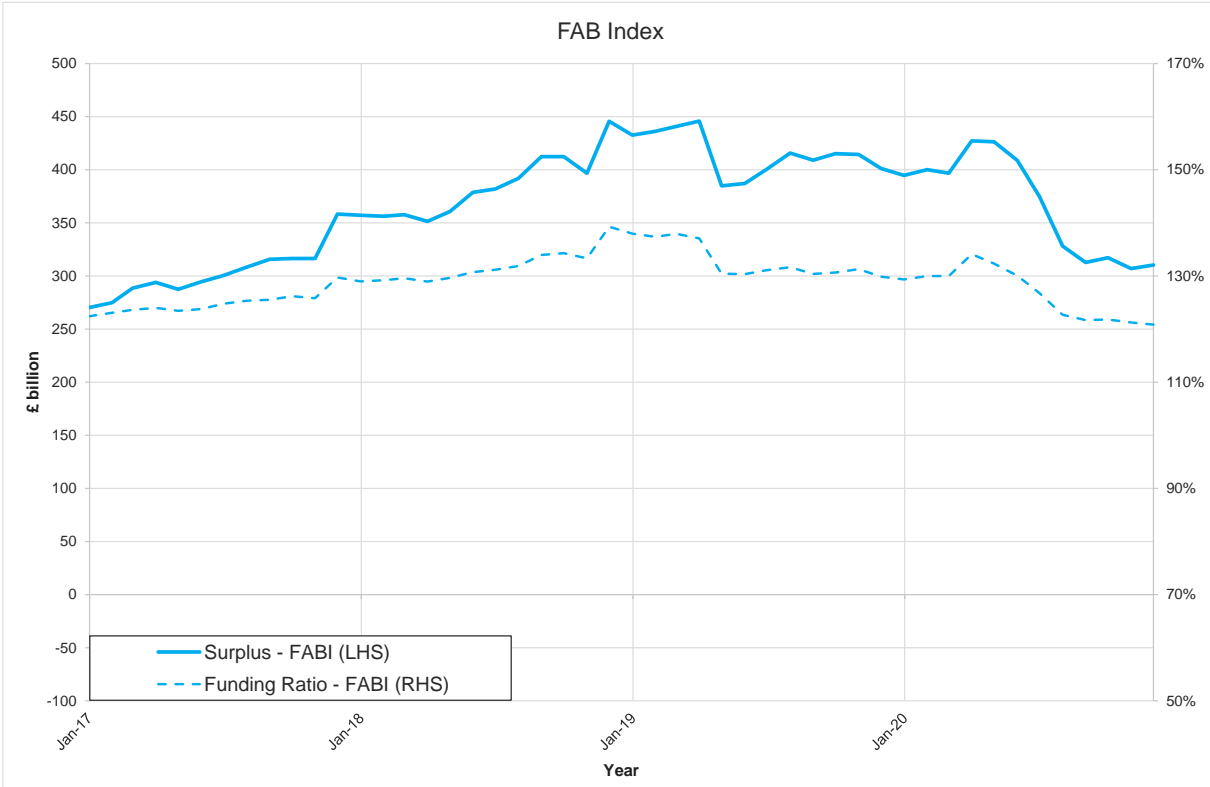
The weighted-average investment return is calculated assuming that schemes continue to invest in line with their current strategies indefinitely. In particular, we have not made any allowance for any changes that will be made to investment strategies to comply with The Pensions Regulator's future revised funding code.

**Whilst liabilities calculated on a best-estimate basis aren't suitable for scheme funding, we believe that trustees need this information, along with the buy-out solvency position, before they can arrive at a sensible value for funding.**

**Notes**

The FAB Index is calculated using publicly-available data underpinning the PPF 7800 Index – which aggregates the funding position of 5,318 UK DB pension schemes on a section 179 basis – together with data taken from The Purple Book, published jointly by the Pension Protection Fund (PPF) and The Pensions Regulator.

The FAB Index is updated on a monthly basis, providing a comparator measure of the financial position of UK DB pension schemes.



Rob Hammond is available for interview. Please contact:

Rob Hammond on 0161 348 7440 or [rob.hammond@firstactuarial.co.uk](mailto:rob.hammond@firstactuarial.co.uk), or  
Jane Douglas on 0161 348 7463 or [jane.douglas@firstactuarial.co.uk](mailto:jane.douglas@firstactuarial.co.uk).

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**About First Actuarial**

First Actuarial is a consultancy providing pension scheme administration, actuarial, investment and consultancy services to a wide range of clients across the UK.

We advise a mixture of open and closed DB schemes, with our clients concentrated in the small to medium end of the pension scheme market. Our client base covers diverse sectors, including manufacturing, financial services, not-for-profit organisations and those running services previously provided by the public sector.