

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date:	13 February 2026
By:	Chief Financial Officer
Title of report:	Independent Auditor's Report to those charged with governance and the Annual Report 2024/25 of the East Sussex Pension Fund
Purpose of report:	To present the Independent Auditor's report on the 2024/25 East Sussex Pension Fund Accounts

RECOMMENDATION – The Audit Committee is recommended to note the Independent Auditor's (Grant Thornton - GT) report to those charged with governance of the East Sussex Pension Fund Accounts 2024/25

1. Background

1.1 This report summarises the draft key findings arising from GT's audit work in relation to the East Sussex Pension Fund (ESPF), in compliance with the requirement for administering authorities to deliver an audit of the pension fund separate from the Council's accounts.

1.2 The accounts for the Pension Fund are incorporated within the East Sussex County Council's Statement of Accounts, included earlier in the agenda.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 Accounting Requirements - The Pension Fund financial statements should be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices set out in the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK (the Code). The Code requires authorities to account for pension funds in accordance with IAS26 Retirement Benefit plans. IAS26 provides guidance on the form and content of the financial statements to be prepared by pension funds. It complements IAS19 Employee Benefits, which deals with the determination of the costs of retirement benefits in the financial statement of employers.

2.2 Under its terms of reference, it is the role of Audit Committee to "Review the annual statement of accounts and the external auditor's report to those charged with governance." The Audit Committee received the draft Audit Findings Report at its meeting on 19 September 2025, with the Pension Committee receiving the draft report at its meeting on 18 November 2025, at which it also approved the Pension Fund Statement of Accounts for 2024/25. The final Audit Findings Report for the East Sussex Pension Fund is now presented at Appendix 1.

2.3 The Audit Findings Report, page 47, identifies 1 management recommendation relating the omission of an HSBC bank account from the General Ledger. The account is used for very minor and infrequent foreign pension payments. The issue will be corrected with the account's inclusion on the balance sheet.

2.4 The Audit Findings Report, page 51, sets out the total audit fee of £106,515, this will be reviewed and confirmed by the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA).

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

3.1 The Audit Committee is recommended to note the 2024/25 Audit Findings Report for the East Sussex Pension Fund.

IAN GUTSELL
Chief Finance Officer

Contact Officer: Ian Gutsell, Chief Finance Officer
Tel. No.: 07825 523633
Email: ian.gutsell@eastsussex.gov.uk