

AON Agenda - Pension Conference Series 2025

Making Better Decisions: New Perspective on Familiar Themes

Birmingham/Bristol/Edinburgh/London/Manchester

Timings		Session	Synopsis
9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.		Registration Open	
9:45 a.m.	15 min	Chair's Opening	Introduction and welcome
10:00 a.m.	25 min	Long-Term Value Beyond DC Costs	Value is a key topic in DC. Recent consultations from TPR and FCA are looking to move value assessments beyond just costs. This shift to a broader understanding of long-term value aims to improve retirement savings and outcomes. This session will delve into the elements that define 'value' in relation to investment and guide attendees to ensure their DC scheme offers it.
10:25 a.m.	45 min	Navigating the DB Endgame	The latest Funding Code highlights the necessity for all DB schemes to define an endgame. Many pension schemes now find themselves in surplus on their solvency funding position or heading towards this, presenting trustees and sponsors with challenging decisions regarding their next steps. This table discussion exercise encourages you to examine a realistic scenario, helping you to understand both running-on and buying-out and the factors to consider as you navigate the scheme's endgame process.
11:10 a.m.	25 min	Morning Coffee Break	
11:35 a.m.	30 min	The New DB Funding Code	The new Funding Code came into effect for valuations on or after 22 September 2024. The Code represents a shift in the way DB pension schemes will run and key changes for trustees and sponsors to get to grips with. Aon experts will share insights from their initial experiences under the new regime. A panel will discuss how schemes are meeting the new requirements and lessons learned from funding investment and covenant to help the audience understand potential impacts on their own schemes.
12:05 p.m.	25 min	Tailoring Your Investment Strategy to Achieve Your Objectives	Better funding positions and a broader range of endgame options mean schemes are now contemplating their next steps. The Strategic Zone Framework is designed to help you fine-tune your investment strategy and monitoring approach to align with your objectives. This session will provide an overview of the Aon Framework, focusing on the "Protection Zone" (where maintaining a strong funding level is key, but a focus on de-risking rather "de-returning" is needed). Investment experts will discuss real-life examples and some key investment choices schemes are considering.
12:30 p.m.	60 min	Lunch Break	

Timings		Session	Synopsis
1:30 p.m.	10 min	Chair's Update	A brief topical look at the other main areas of changes to pensions that we don't have time for elsewhere on the agenda.
1:40 p.m.	25 min	Investment Economics Outlook	With inflation decreasing, major central banks have started cutting interest rates. Governments face significant challenges due to large deficits and mounting debts, complicating efforts to boost economic growth. Geopolitics and climate change make the situation even more complex for investors. This session will explore what these trends mean for financial markets, highlight opportunities, and offer strategies to achieve portfolio targets, with insights from market experts.
2:05 p.m.	10 min	Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Your Members	In the modern tech environment, AI-powered tools are gaining traction with pension scheme members. This session will explore the different types of information, guidance, and advice offered by AI tools like ChatGPT. Attendees will learn both the benefits and possible downsides to understand how AI can improve the member experience, while being mindful of potential issues.
2:15 p.m.	15 min	Member Options and Support	Pension schemes have traditionally focused on funding and investments when setting their long-term strategy. There is now a growing emphasis on enhancing member experience and retirement options. Through real-life case studies, we'll show how member experience has been optimised under two different strategies – with one aiming to run-on, and the other targeting full buy-out in the shorter term.
2:30 p.m.	20 min	Afternoon Coffee Break	
2:50 p.m.	20 min	What's New in Risk Settlement	This packed session will leave no stone unturned for those schemes considering buyout as their endgame, covering the latest developments in the risk settlement market for schemes large and small. Hearing from insurers and investment risk settlement specialists, case studies will bring these market trends to life.
3:10 p.m.	45 min	Cyber Risk and Operational Resilience	In uncertain times, pension schemes need robust risk management. Issues like COVID-19, the LDI crisis, cyber-attacks, and the CrowdStrike IT disruption show trustees and sponsors must rethink how they handle operational risks. This session will examine risk management frameworks and through a table discussion exercise allow you to delve into managing and understanding the financial and operational impacts of cyber incidents.
3:55 p.m.	10 min	Chair's Closing Remarks	
4:05 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	55 min	Drinks and Networking	

Agenda session and timings are subject to change.