



# Pensions Teach-in

7 July 2020

# Forward-looking statement caution

This presentation contains certain forward-looking statements which are made in reliance on the safe harbour provisions of the US Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements relate to analyses and other information which are based on forecasts of future results and estimates of amounts not yet determinable. These statements include, without limitation, those concerning: the potential impact of Covid-19 on our people, operations, suppliers and customers; current and future years' outlook; revenue and revenue trends; EBITDA and profitability; free cash flow; capital expenditure; return on capital employed; shareholder returns including dividends and share buyback; net debt; credit ratings; our group-wide transformation and restructuring programme, cost transformation plans and restructuring costs; investment in and roll out of our fibre network and its reach, innovations, increased speeds and speed availability; our broadband-based service and strategy; investment in and rollout of 5G; the investment in converged network; improvements to the customer experience; our investment in TV, enhancing our TV service and BT Sport; the recovery plan, operating charge, regular cash contributions and interest expense for our defined benefit pension schemes; effective tax rate; growth opportunities in networked IT services, the pay-TV services market, broadband, artificial intelligence and mobility and future voice; growth of, and opportunities available in, the communications industry and BT's positioning to take advantage of those opportunities; expectations regarding competition, market shares, prices and growth; expectations regarding the convergence of technologies; plans for the launch of new products and services; network performance and quality; the impact of regulatory initiatives, decisions and outcomes on operations; BT's possible or assumed future results of operations and/or those of its associates and joint ventures; investment plans; adequacy of capital; financing plans and refinancing requirements; demand for and access to broadband and the promotion of broadband by third-party service providers; improvements to the control environment; and those statements preceded by, followed by, or that include the words 'aims', 'believes', 'expects', 'anticipates', 'intends', 'will', 'should', 'plans', 'strategy', 'future', 'likely', 'seeks', 'projects', 'estimates' or similar expressions.

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# An introduction to today's speakers



## **Neil Harris – Director Tax, Treasury, Insurance & Pensions**

- Joined BT in 2015
- 30+ years' experience in corporate finance roles, including AstraZeneca, BHP Billiton, Cable & Wireless, Centrica & Serco
- Accountant



## **Paul Rogers – Pensions Risk Director**

- Joined BT in 2011
- 20+ years' experience in pensions
- Actuary



## **Shan Abdullah – Pensions Senior Manager**

- Joined BT in 2014
- 10+ years' experience in pensions
- Actuary



## **Bob Scott – LCP, Partner (Independent expert)**

- 40+ years' experience in pensions including 38 at LCP
- Actuary
- Past chair of the Association of Consulting Actuaries

# Agenda

Key messages	5	How the IAS 19 position changed over FY20	22
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## Key messages

We use two methods to calculate our pension deficit:

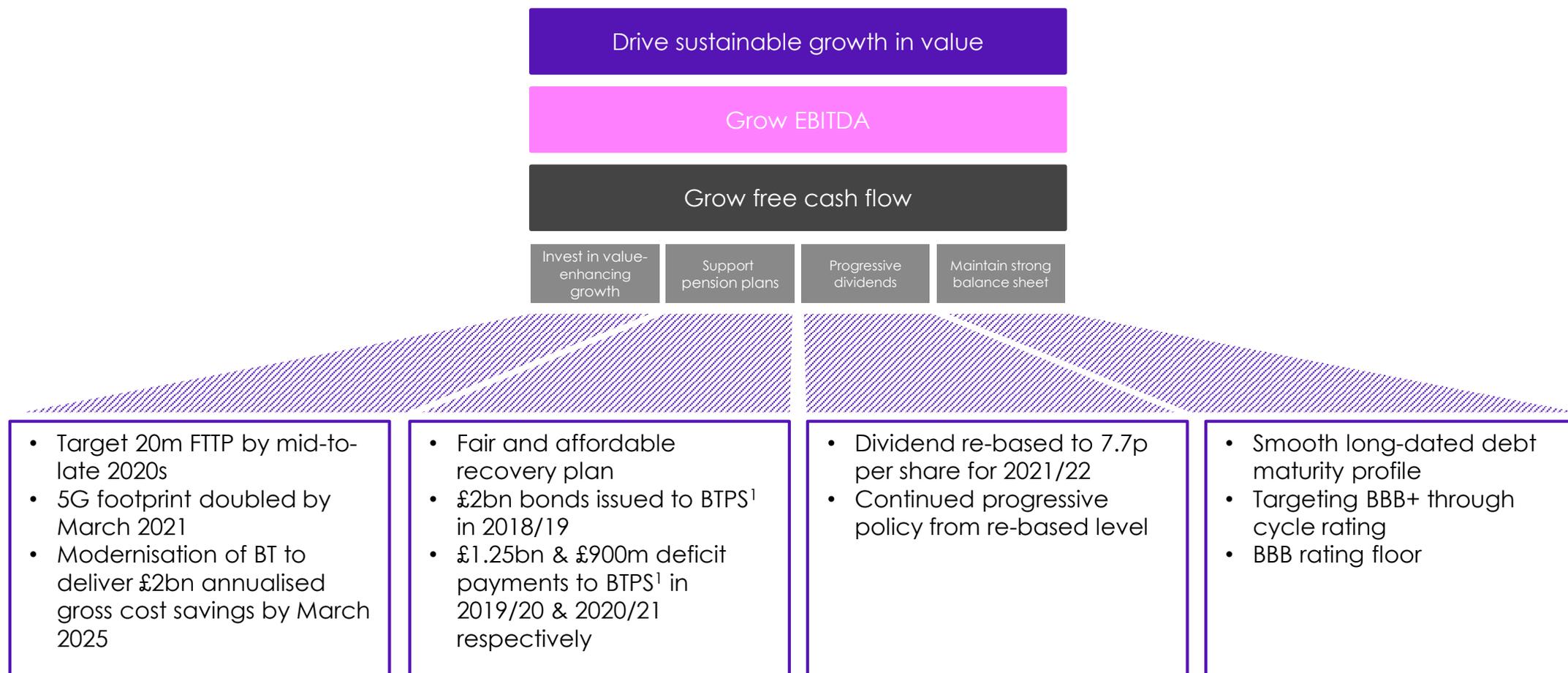
- IAS 19, to determine our balance sheet position, is measured on a “best-estimate” basis, but does not allow for the scheme’s investment strategy
- Funding, to determine our cash payments, reflects the scheme’s investment strategy, but is measured prudently

Our recent dividend decision and investment plans, including our FTTP programme, are positive for our covenant

The 2017 BTPS funding agreement provides a strong foundation on which to build our 2020 agreement, such as over what period we seek to pay off deficits

Covid-19 may reduce the pace and scale of any changes to the pension regulatory regime

# BT focused on sustainable growth in value, which includes supporting its pension plans



<sup>1</sup> BT Pension Scheme

# Overview of BT's pension plans

# What are the different types of pension plans?

## Defined Benefit (“DB”)

Benefits:

- determined by the plan rules
- dependent on factors such as age, years of service and pensionable pay
- not dependent on actual contributions made by the company or members

**BT exposed** to investment and other risks, leading to liabilities recognised on the balance sheet

## Defined Contribution (“DC”)

Benefits linked to:

- contributions paid
- the performance of each individual’s chosen investments
- the form in which individuals choose to take their benefits

**BT not exposed** to investment and other risks

# The Group's main plans are in the UK

## BT Pension Scheme (BTPS)

- DB
- Closed to future benefit accrual on 30 June 2018 for majority of members
- 286,000 deferred members and pensioners

## BT Retirement Saving Scheme (BTRSS)

- DC
- Contract-based arrangement operated by Standard Life
- 67,000 active members

## EE Pension Scheme (EEPS)

- DB section closed to future benefit accrual in 2014
- DC section open to new joiners with 9,000 active members

## BT Hybrid Scheme (BTHS)

- Combines elements of DB and DC
- Set up in April 2019 for non-management employees formerly in the BTPS
- Closed to new entrants on 30 September 2019
- 4,000 active members

- BT also has retirement arrangements around the world in line with local markets and culture

# Closing the BTPS has significantly reduced the build-up of DB benefits & risk

## Changes to pension benefits in 2018

### BTPS (DB)

- Closed to future accrual for >99% of active members from 30 June 2018

Affected employees were:

- eligible to join:
  - BTRSS
  - BTHS, if non-management
- provided enhanced contribution rate from BT for a temporary period

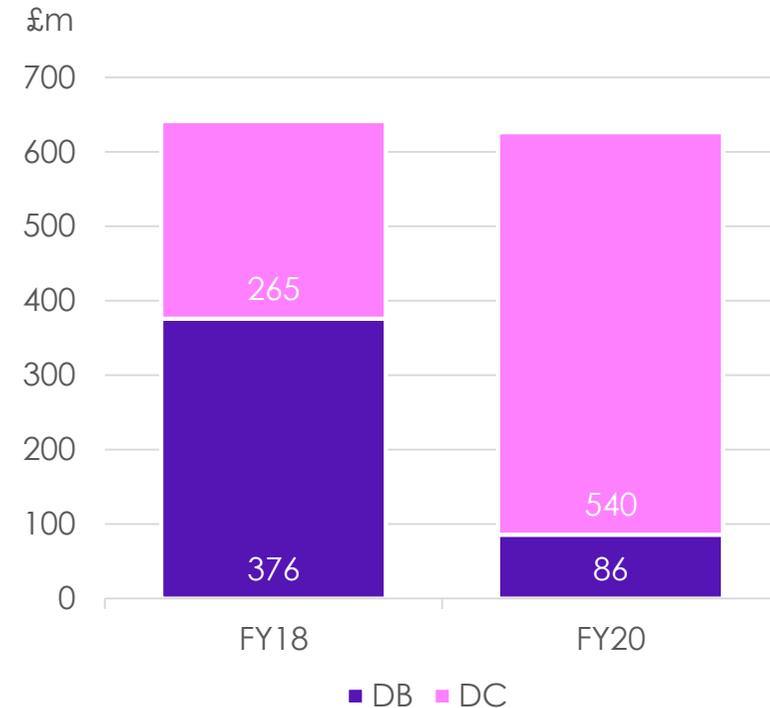
### BTRSS (DC)

- BT's standard contribution rate increased from around 8% to 10% from 1 June 2018

### BTHS (DB + DC)

- Set up in 2019 for non-management employees impacted by closure of the BTPS

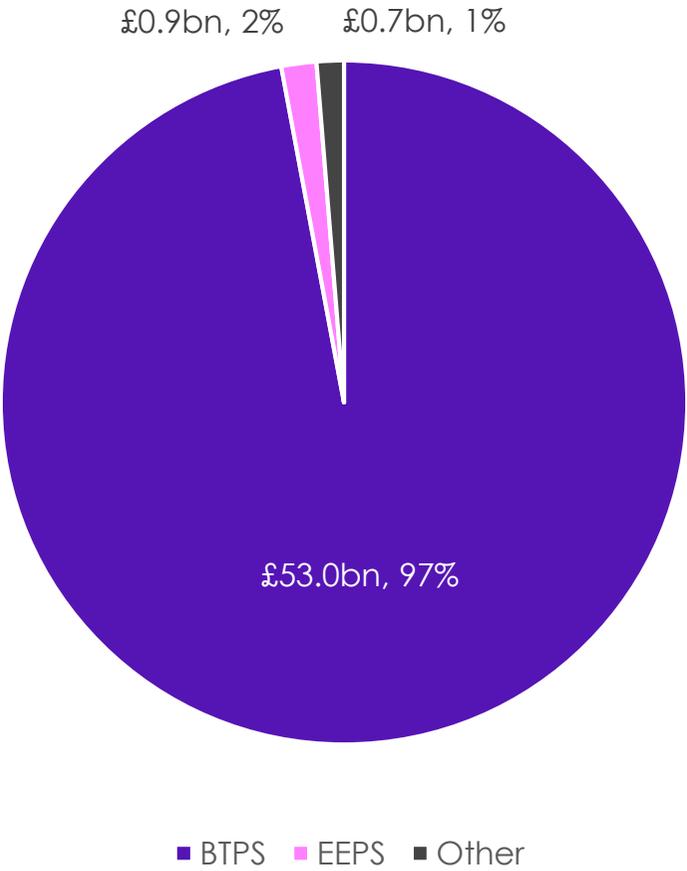
## Service cost (including administration expenses and PPF<sup>1</sup> levy)



Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 162

<sup>1</sup> Pension Protection Fund

# The BTPS represents over 97% of the Group's DB pension liabilities



Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 162



# Background to the BT Pension Scheme

# The BTPS is administered and managed by an independent Trustee

**Trustee**



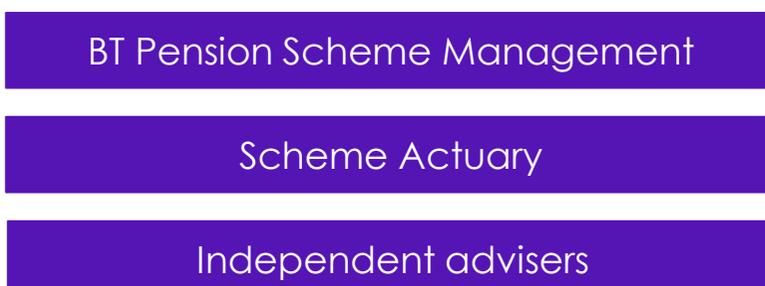
Chairman of the Trustees

Member nominated Trustees

Employer nominated Trustees

- Trustee duties include:
  - acting in the best interests of beneficiaries
  - administering the Scheme in line with Scheme rules
  - acting prudently, responsibly and honestly
- Nine Trustee directors, appointed by BT
- Usually appointed for a three-year term and eligible for re-appointment

**Trustee supported by**



BT Pension Scheme Management

Scheme Actuary

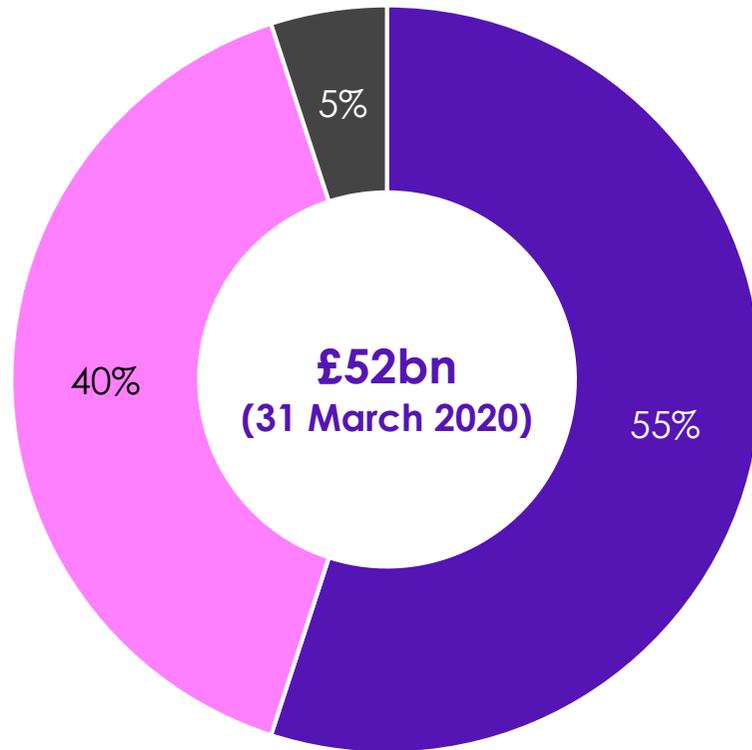
Independent advisers

- Executive arm of the Trustee and principal investment adviser
- Carries out number of statutory roles, including performing triennial valuation
- Across a range of specialisms, including legal, covenant and investment

**The Pensions Regulator (TPR)**

- Ensures scheme sponsors and pension schemes fulfil their duties to scheme members

# BTPS has a well-diversified investment strategy



■ Liability matching ■ Growth ■ Cash, derivatives and other

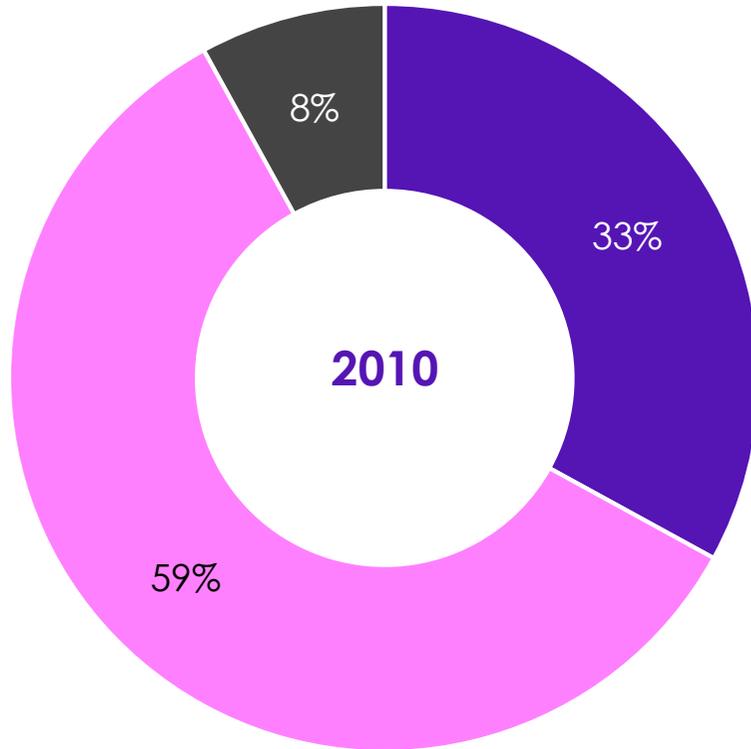
Category	Value at 31 Mar 2020 (£bn)
UK government bonds	13.9
Global investment grade credit	14.4
UK listed equity	0.3
Overseas developed listed equity	6.7
Emerging markets listed equity	1.0
Private equity	1.3
UK property	3.5
Overseas property	1.1
Absolute return	1.2
Non core credit	4.2
Mature infrastructure	1.5
Cash balances	2.3
Longevity insurance contract	(0.8)
Other <sup>1</sup>	1.6

<sup>1</sup> Includes collateral posted in relation to derivatives held by the BTPS, e.g. equity, interest rate, inflation and FX derivatives

Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 166

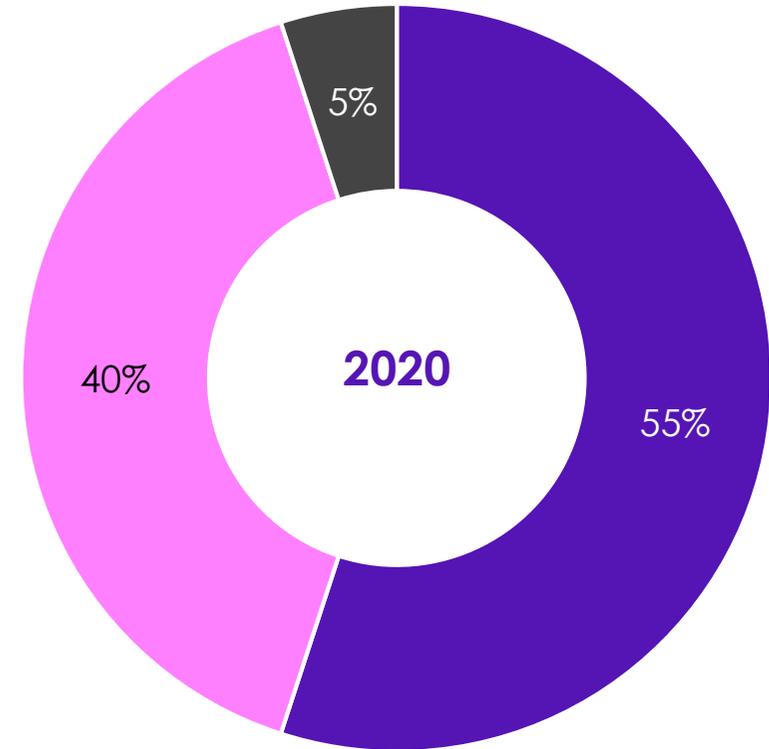


# BTPS assets today are better matched to movements in the liabilities



■ Liability matching ■ Growth ■ Cash, derivatives and other

Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2010, pg. 130

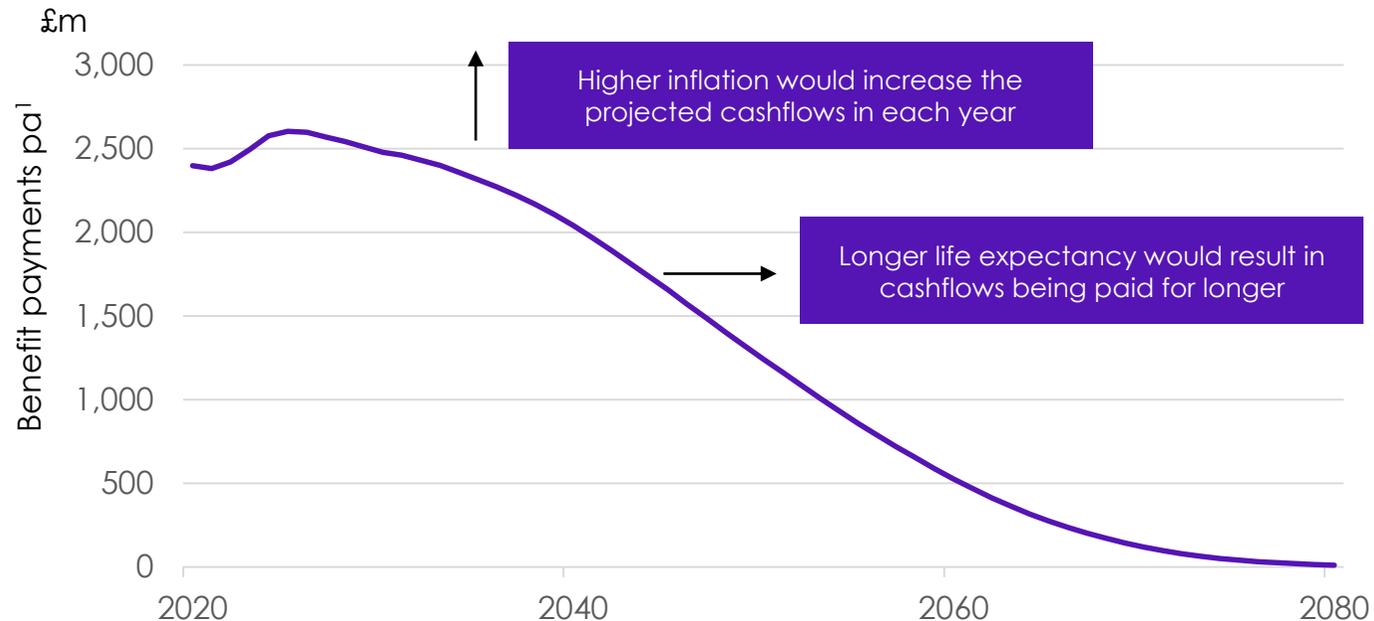


■ Liability matching ■ Growth ■ Cash, derivatives and other

Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 166

# Benefits from the BTPS are expected to be paid over more than 60 years

- Projecting future expected benefit payments requires a number of assumptions:
  - inflation, life expectancy, member behaviour (e.g. options at retirement; retirement patterns; existence of a spouse or dependant on death)



- Liabilities are the present value of the future estimated benefit payments

<sup>1</sup> Forecast benefits payable from the BTPS at 31 March 2020, based on IAS 19 assumptions  
Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 164

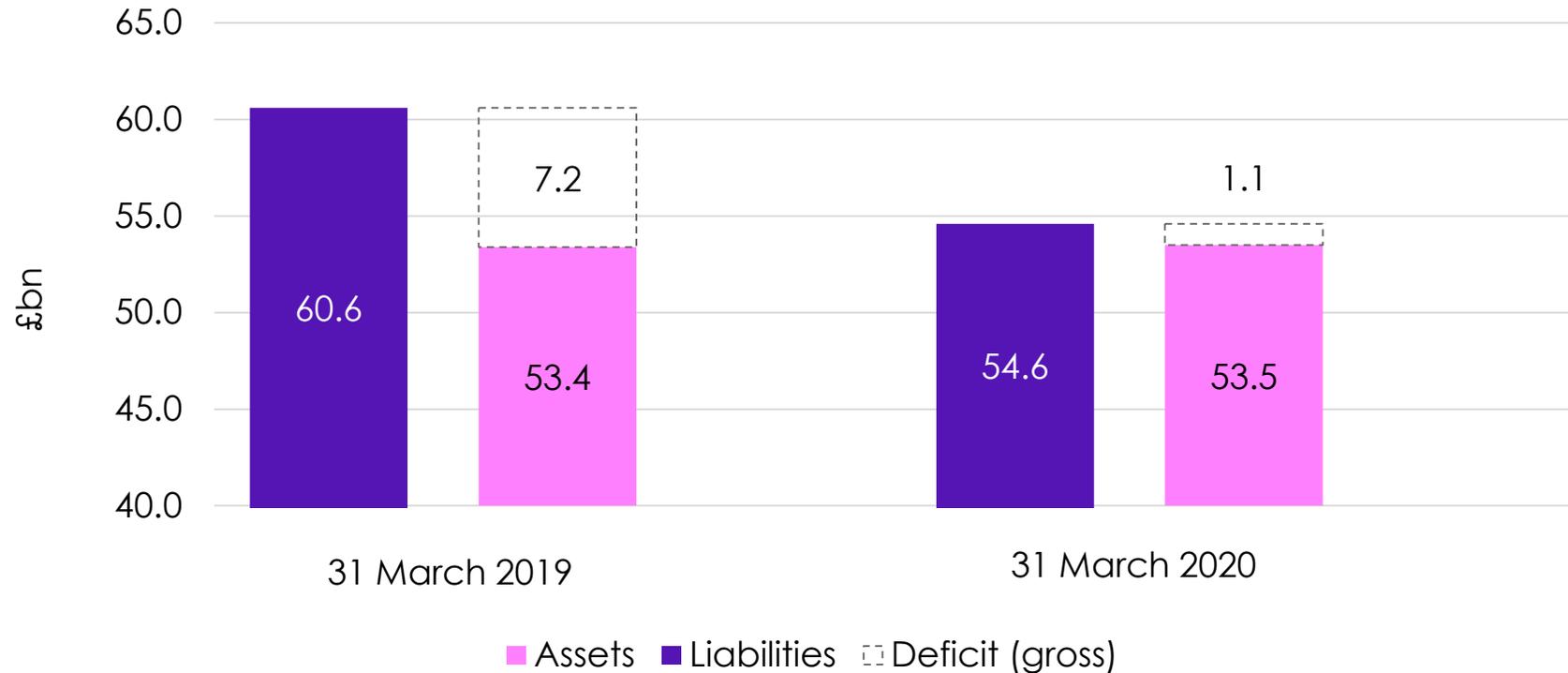
# Different approaches are used for IAS 19 and the funding valuation

	IAS 19	Funding
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Balance sheet in BT plc accounts</b>	<b>Setting cash payments</b>
Regulation	IFRS standards	2004 Pensions Act
Frequency	Semi-annually	At least every three years
<b>Key assumptions</b>		
Determined by	BT	BT and Trustee agreement
Discount rate	Yield curve based on AA corporate bonds	Yield curve reflecting prudent <sup>1</sup> return expected from BTPS assets
Inflation	Best estimate	Prudent overall approach <sup>1</sup>
Mortality	Best estimate	Prudent overall approach <sup>1</sup>
<b>Asset value</b>	BT's estimate of market value	Market value

<sup>1</sup> Prudence is not defined in legislation and is reviewed as part of each funding valuation. An increase in prudence would lead to higher liabilities and deficit

IAS 19 position at 31 March 2020 (all plans)

## Group IAS 19 deficit fell to £1.1bn at 31 March 2020



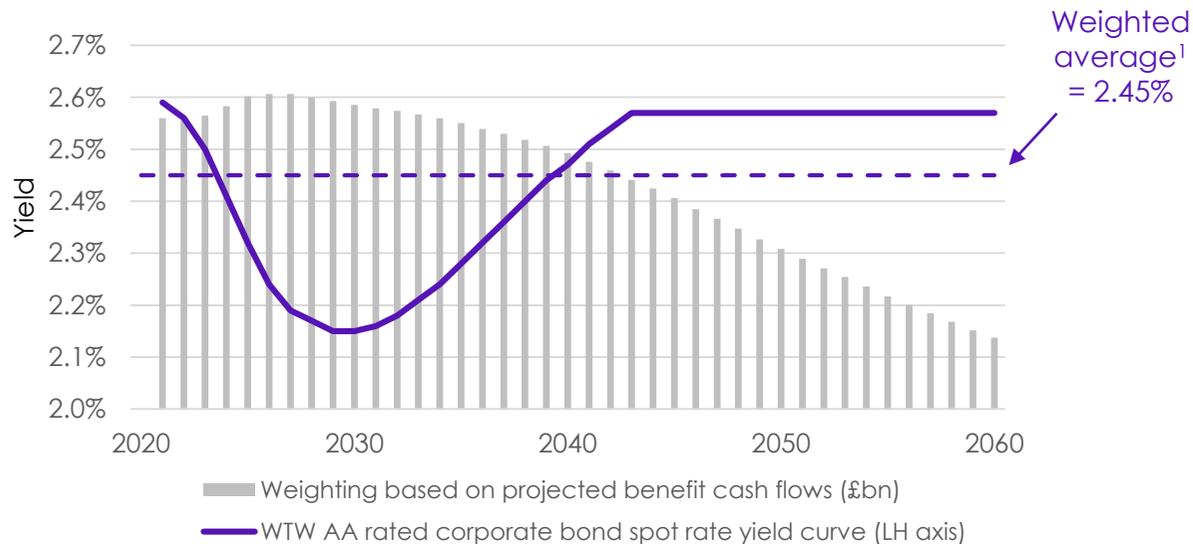
Note: We estimate our IAS 19 deficit materially worsened in April 2020 principally reflecting a reversion in credit spreads

Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 162

# 31 March 2020 IAS 19: Discount rate and RPI inflation

## Discount rate

- Uses **AA corporate bond yield curve** and projected benefit cash flows

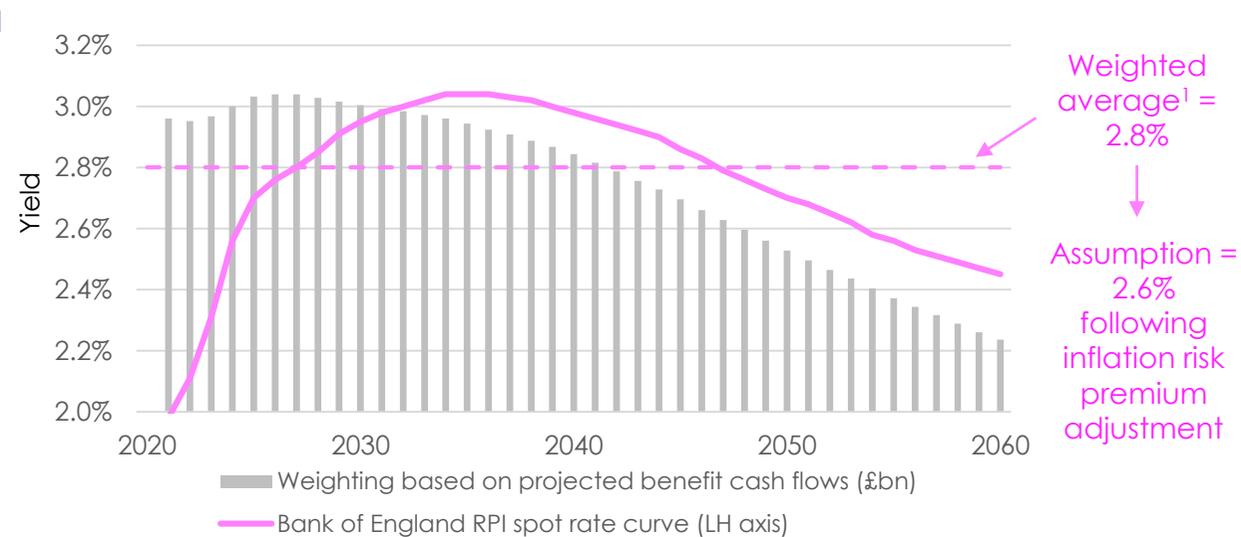


Source: Standard corporate bond yield curve derived by Willis Towers Watson (WTW)

<sup>1</sup> Represents a single-equivalent rate which provides the same present value as applying the full curve to each cashflow

## RPI inflation

- Uses **inflation curve derived from gilts** and projected benefit cash flows
- 0.2ppt adjustment for an inflation risk premium



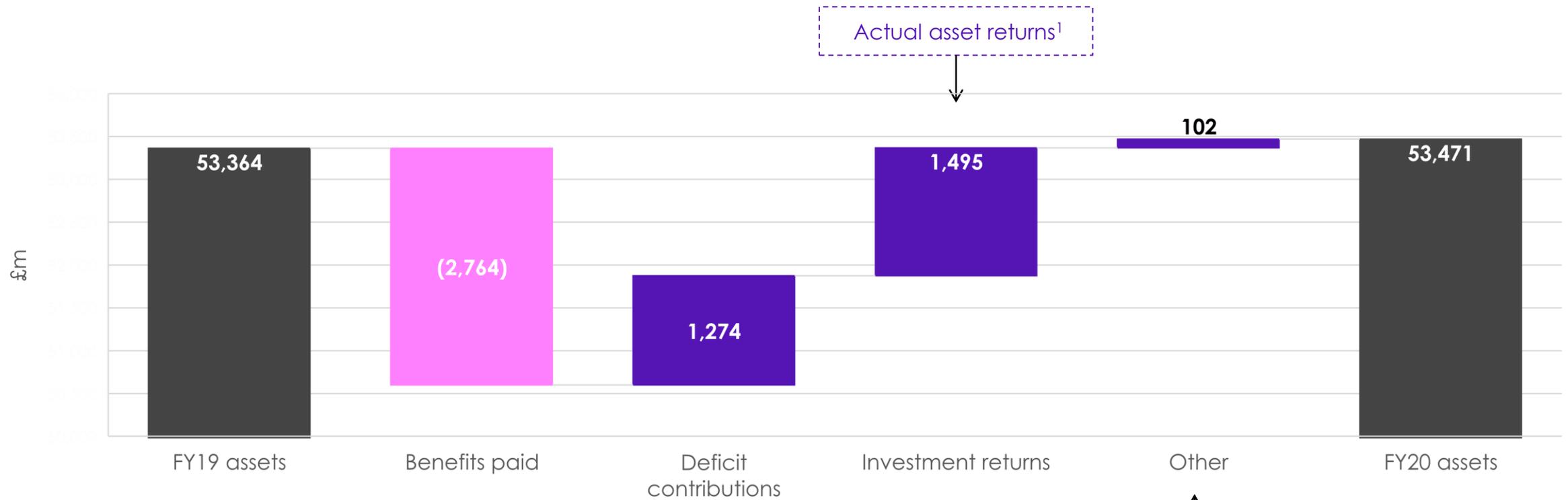
Source: RPI inflation spot rates, Bank of England (BoE) website

## 31 March 2020 IAS 19: mortality, CPI inflation and other assumptions

	Approach
Mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>current mortality rates</b>, based on experience of BTPS members</li> <li>– <b>future improvements</b> based on a model published by UK actuarial profession's Continuous Mortality Investigation (CMI 2018 Mortality Projections model)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Inflation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPI inflation set in relation to RPI inflation assumption</li> <li>• Consultation on the future of RPI creates <b>uncertainty around future expectations of RPI and CPI</b></li> </ul>
Other assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant number of other assumptions required to value liabilities based on scheme experience and actuarial input, such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– member behaviour (e.g. options chosen at retirement; retirement patterns; existence of a spouse or dependant on death)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

How the IAS 19 position changed over FY20

# The assets were broadly unchanged over FY20



<sup>1</sup> Under IAS 19, asset returns are partly recognised in the Income Statement (net interest expense on pensions deficit) and the balance in the Group Statement of Comprehensive Income

Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 163

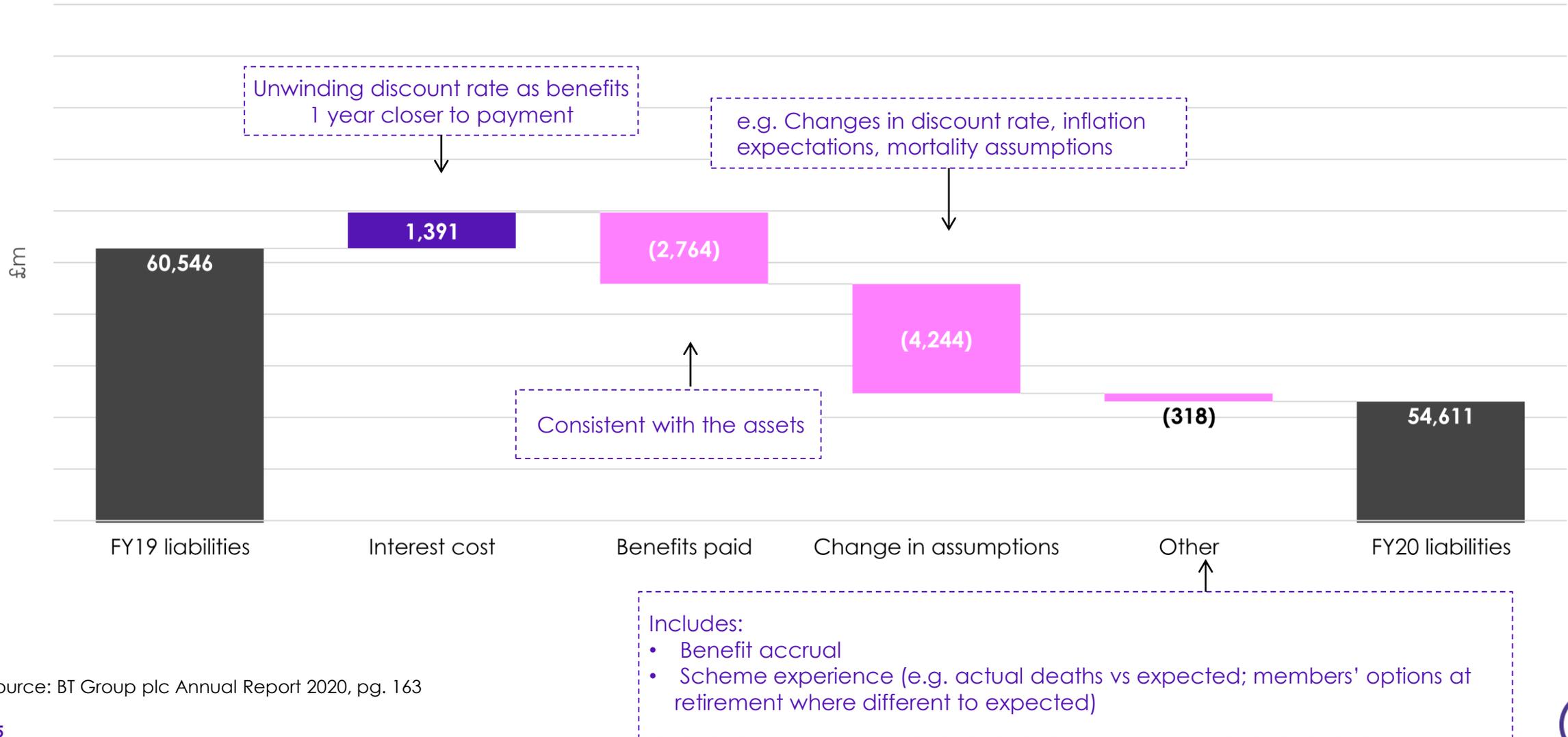
## Illustrative roll-forward of assets over FY20

	Change in illustrative market indicator	Sensitivity <sup>1,2</sup>	Example calculation	Implied impact (£bn)
<b>Assets at 31 March 2019</b>				<b>53.4</b>
Benefit payments			From FY19	(2.6)
Deficit contributions				1.3
Investment returns				
- bond yields	Bank of England: 0.7% fall	£9.1bn increase for 1.1% fall	= (0.7)% x £9.1bn / (1.1)%	5.8
- inflation	Bank of England: 0.6% fall	£4.2bn increase for 0.7% increase	= (0.6)% x £4.2bn / 0.7%	(3.6)
- equities	MSCI world (GBP): 6% fall	£2.8bn fall for 30% fall in equities	= (6)% x £(2.8)bn / (30)%	(0.6)
- life expectancy	CMI paper: 0.5 years fall	£0.7bn increase for 1.25 years increase	= (0.5) x £0.7bn / 1.25	(0.3)
<b>Est. assets at 31 March 2020</b>				<b>53.4</b>
Other (e.g. FX, property returns, credit spreads)				0.1
<b>Assets at 31 March 2020</b>				<b>53.5</b>

<sup>1</sup> The sensitivities represent the impact of each event in isolation - in practice a combination of events could arise and the impact may differ, e.g. due to changes in the market value of the assets, the investment strategy, or if the shape of the bond/inflation curves change

<sup>2</sup> Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2019, pg. 152

# The IAS 19 liabilities reduced over FY20



Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 163

## Illustrative roll-forward of liabilities over FY20

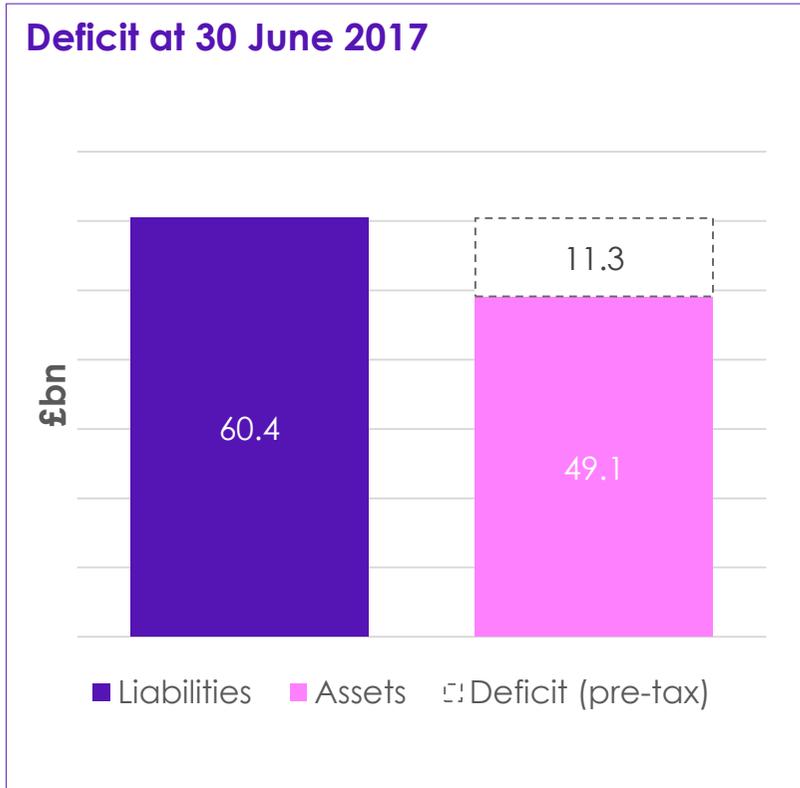
	Change in illustrative market indicator	Sensitivity <sup>1,2</sup>	Example calculation	Implied impact (£bn)
<b>Liabilities at 31 March 2019</b>				<b>60.5</b>
Interest on liabilities			60.5 x 2.35%	1.4
Benefit payments			From FY19	(2.6)
Change in assumptions:				
- bond yields	iBoxx £ AA 15+ index: 0.05% fall	£11.4bn increase for 1.1% decrease	(0.05)% x £11.4bn / (1.1)%	0.5
- inflation	Bank of England: 0.6% fall in RPI inflation	£5.4bn increase for 0.7% increase	(0.6)% x £5.4bn / 0.7%	(4.6)
- life expectancy	CMI paper: 0.5 years fall	£2.9bn increase for 1.25 years increase	(0.5) x £2.9bn / 1.25	(1.2)
<b>Est. liabilities at 31 March 2020</b>				<b>54.0</b>
Other changes (e.g. RPI reform, experience)				0.6
<b>Liabilities at 31 March 2020</b>				<b>54.6</b>

<sup>1</sup> The sensitivities represent the impact of each event in isolation - in practice a combination of events could arise and the impact may differ, e.g. due to changes in the value of the liabilities, or if the shape of the corporate bond/inflation curve changes

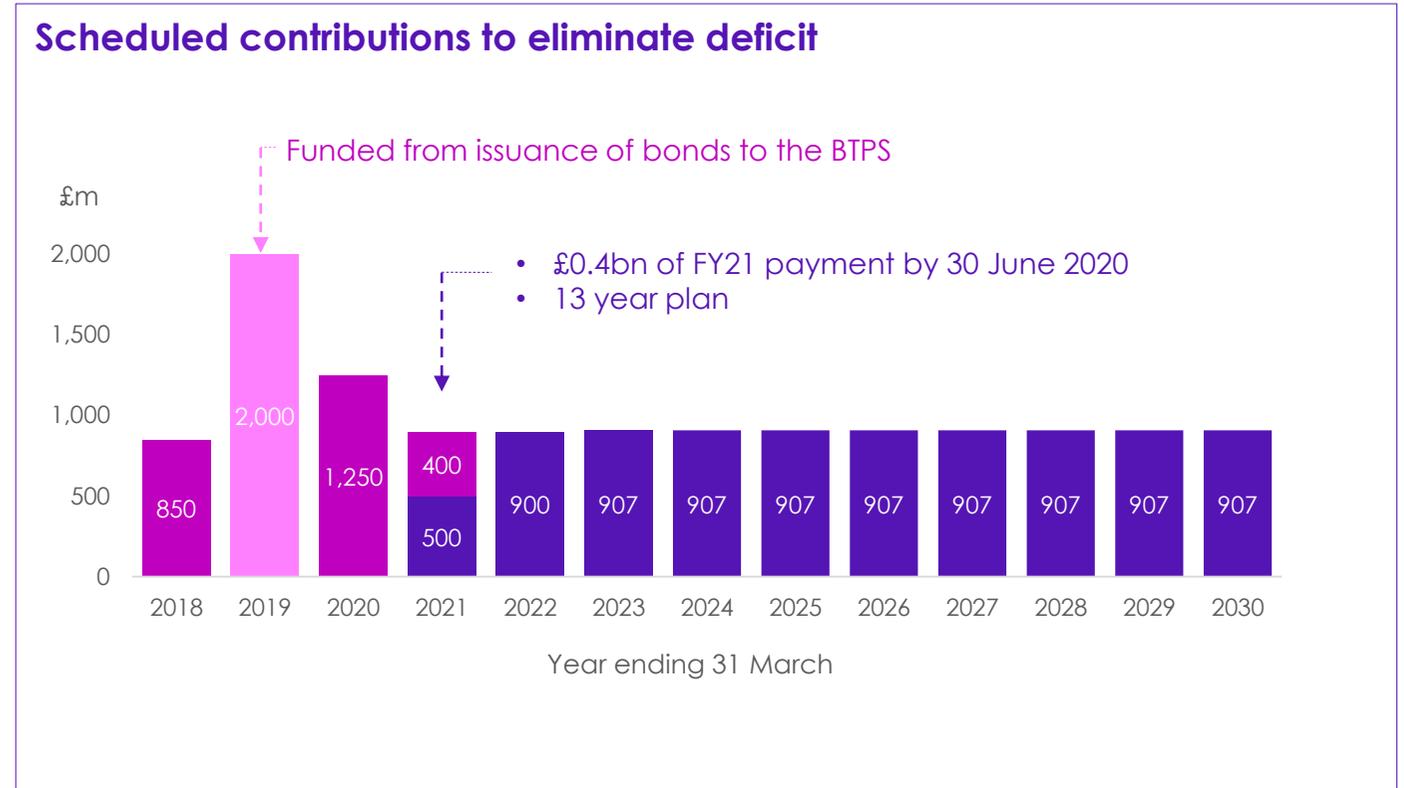
<sup>2</sup> Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2019, pg. 152

# BT Pension Scheme: triennial funding valuation

# At the 2017 valuation, BT agreed to eliminate the £11.3bn deficit by 2030



Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 169



Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 170, BT RNS announcing valuation agreement

## A number of protections were agreed as part of the 2017 valuation

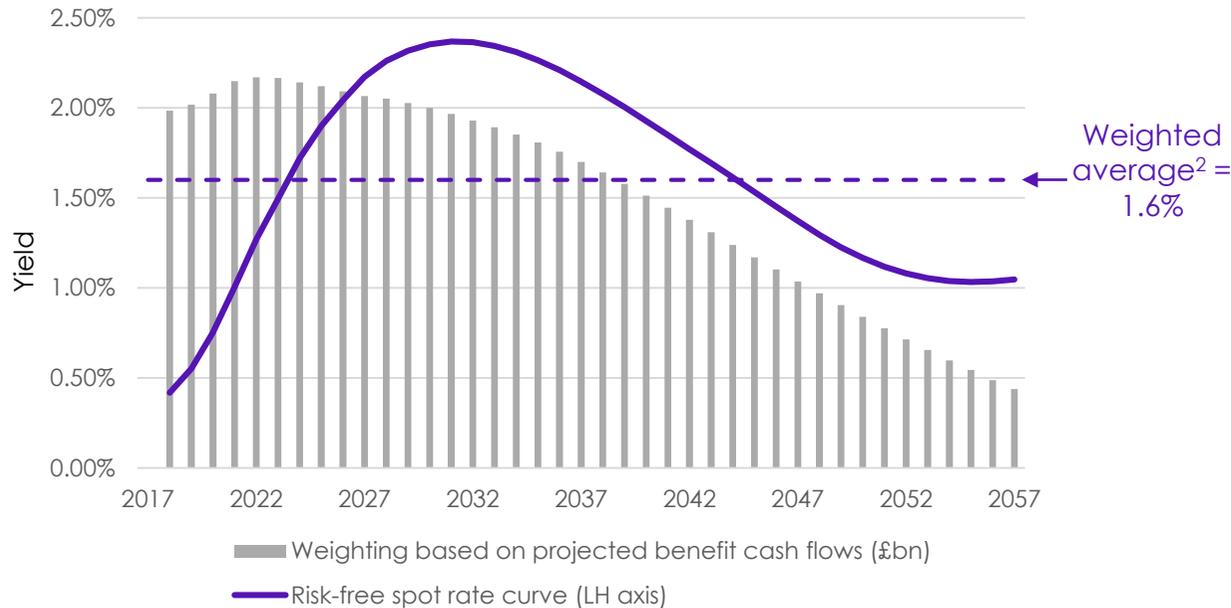
Feature	Detail
Shareholder distributions	<p>Additional contributions where shareholder distributions exceed a threshold which allows for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10% pa dividend per share growth; plus</li> <li>• £200m per year of share buybacks on a cumulative basis</li> </ul>
Material corporate events	<p>Additional contributions where net cash proceeds &gt;£1.0bn from disposals (net of acquisitions):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• additional contributions payable to the BTPS equal to one third of those net cash proceeds</li> </ul>
	<p>BT will consult with the Trustee if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acquisitions / disposals &gt;£1.0bn</li> <li>• it considers making a Class 1 transaction (acquisition or disposal) which will have material impact on BTPS</li> <li>• it is, or is likely to be, subject to a takeover offer</li> </ul>
	<p>BT will advise the Trustee if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• other material corporate actions which would materially impact BT's covenant to the BTPS</li> </ul>
Negative pledge	<p>Future creditors will not be granted superior security to the BTPS in excess of a £1.5bn threshold</p>

Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 171

# The valuation used an average discount rate of 2.6%

## Risk-free curve

- Yield curve based on **gilt and swap rates**<sup>1</sup>
- Equivalent to: 1.6% pa<sup>2</sup> at 30 June 2017



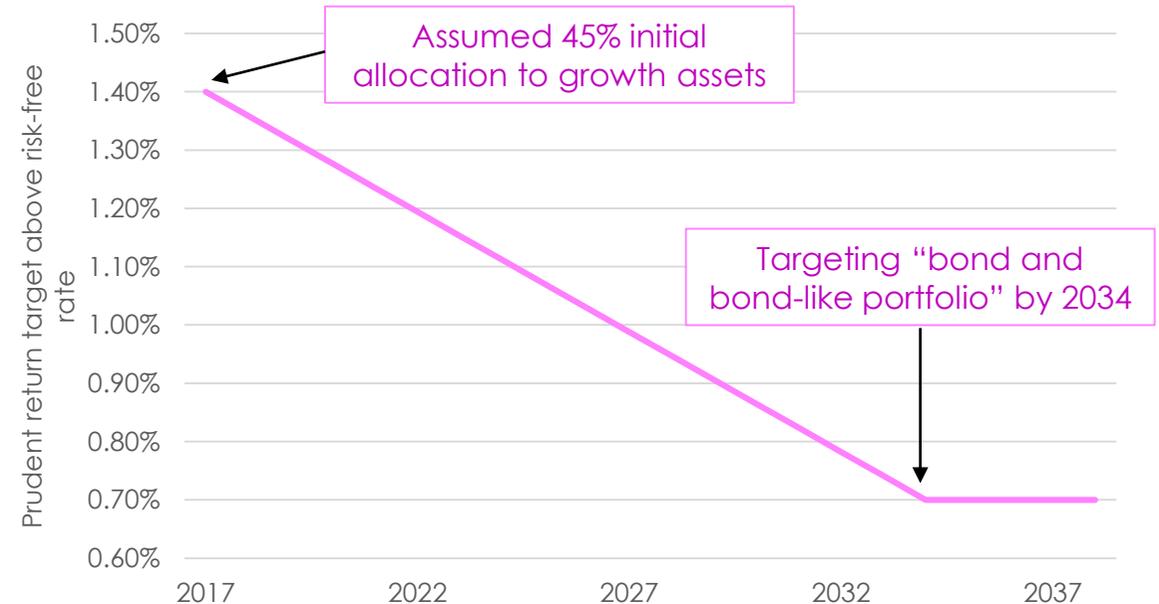
<sup>1</sup> Chart illustrates average of spot rates on nominal UK government bonds (source: Bank of England) and zero coupon swap rates (source: Bloomberg)

<sup>2</sup> Assumption represents a single-equivalent rate which provides the same present value as applying the full curve to each cashflow  
Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 170



## Prudent investment return (above risk-free)

- Takes account of: **future asset strategy; expected returns; prudent margin (allowing for covenant)**
- Reviewed at each valuation
- Equivalent to: 1.0% pa<sup>2</sup> at 30 June 2017

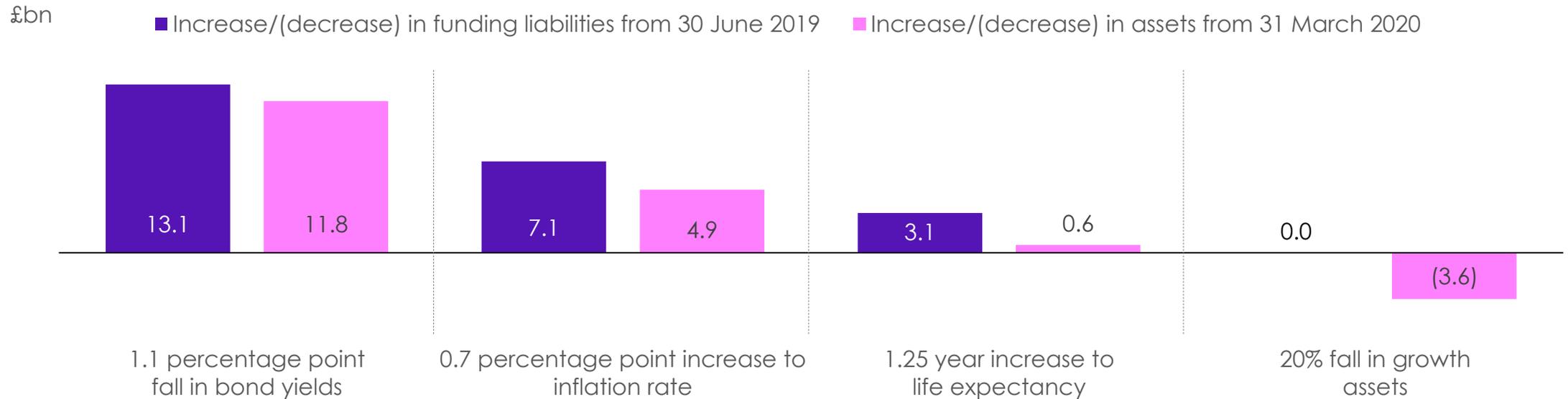


## 2017 funding valuation: other assumptions

	Approach
Mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>current mortality rates</b>, based on experience of BTPS members</li> <li>– <b>future improvements</b> based on a model published by UK actuarial profession's Continuous Mortality Investigation (CMI 2016 Mortality Projections model)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Inflation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RPI set using inflation curve derived from gilts and swaps, weighted by projected BTPS benefit cash flow</li> <li>• CPI inflation set in relation to RPI inflation assumption</li> <li>• Consultation on the future of RPI creates <b>uncertainty around future expectations of RPI and CPI</b></li> </ul>
Other assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant number of other assumptions required to value liabilities based on scheme experience and actuarial input, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– member behaviour (e.g. options chosen at retirement; retirement patterns; existence of a spouse or dependant on death)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# The BTPS's investments provide a hedge to movements in the funding liabilities

- Changes in external factors, such as interest rates, can impact the assumptions and the measurement of BTPS liabilities
- These factors can also impact the scheme assets and derivatives

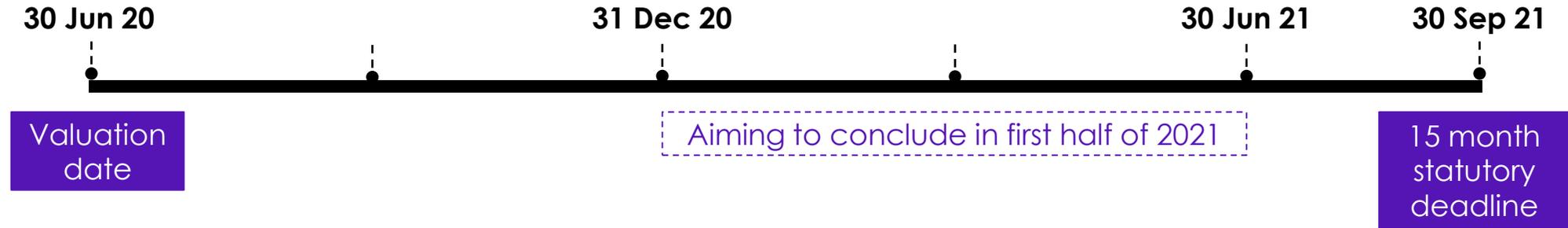


**Illustrative scenario which might occur no more than once in every 20 years<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>The impact shown will vary as the size of the assets/liabilities changes. The impact shown under each scenario looks at each event in isolation – in practice a combination of events could arise.

Source: BT Group plc Annual Report 2020, pg. 169 (assets, 31 March 2020), 170 (funding liabilities, 30 June 2019)

## Looking ahead to the 2020 valuation



The funding valuation has a number of steps that take time to complete:

- collate and check membership data at 30 June 2020
- review company covenant
- determine any changes to assumptions / prudence level / approach
- member-by-member actuarial calculations using updated assumptions
- agree contribution schedule and any other legal protections
- valuation documents submitted to Pensions Regulator

# Pensions landscape

# Funding valuation: a budgeting exercise carried out every three years

How much does the company need to pay in future:

- to recover a prudent estimate of the deficit
- to provide for ongoing benefits (if applicable)
- after taking appropriate account of future investment returns?



# Key facets of a covenant assessment

Covenant assessors take account of a range of factors to inform their conclusions

Factor	Positive indicator	Adverse indicator
Legal structure	Parent company support / Employers are key group entities	Small insignificant employer within a wider group
Historic trading & cash flow trends	Stable / Growing	Volatile / Declining
Trading & cash flow forecasts	Growth / Supportable assumptions	Decline / Unreasonable assumptions
Sector prospects	Growing sector	Declining sector
Scheme creditor position	Scheme ranks ahead of or at least equal to other creditors	Scheme ranks behind prior ranking creditors
Balance sheet assets	High proportion having value independent of the Employer (eg property)	High proportion tied to the continued success of the employer (eg goodwill)
Relative size of Employer to Scheme	Profits, cash flows and net assets <b>high</b> vs Scheme deficits and investment volatility	Profits, cash flows and net assets <b>low</b> vs Scheme deficits and investment volatility
Covenant leakage	No / low dividends and other leakage vs contributions to the Scheme	High dividends and other leakage vs contributions to the Scheme
Recovery plan length	Short	Long

# Current considerations in funding valuations

What pension scheme trustees are thinking about in current unpredictable market conditions

## External environment

- **A Regulator that wants to be “Clearer, Quicker, Tougher”**
- Consultation on a new statutory funding regime – originally planned for 2021
- But...Government focused on economic recovery and helping UK plc

## Contributions

- Emphasis on pension schemes being treated equitably
- Particularly in the context of dividends paid to shareholders
- TPR<sup>1</sup> sanctioning contribution holidays, where appropriate

<sup>1</sup> TPR – The Pensions Regulator

# Current considerations in funding valuations

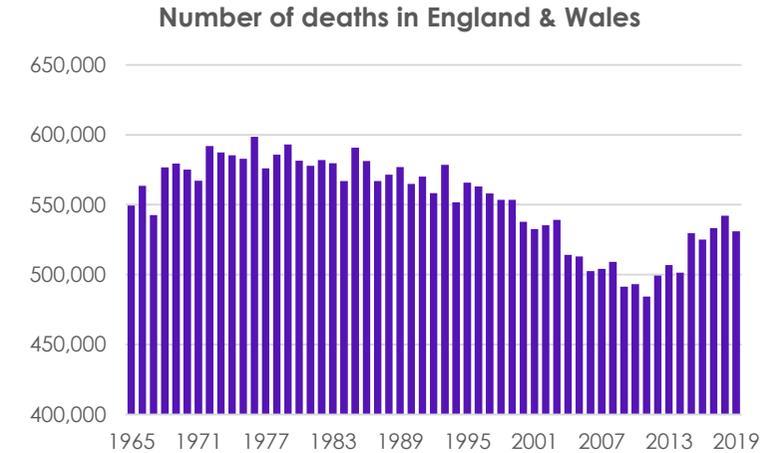
What pension scheme trustees are thinking about in current unpredictable market conditions

## Assumptions

- Continuing low gilt yields – possibility of negative inflation
- RPI reform changing future increases and asset values
- Slowing life expectancy improvements (even before Covid-19)

## Long-term

- Schemes very focused on endgame planning
- Increased use of insurance to remove pensions risk
- Further solutions and products emerging



## Key messages and Q&A

## Key messages

We use two methods to calculate our pension deficit:

- IAS 19, to determine our balance sheet position, is measured on a “best-estimate” basis, but does not allow for the scheme’s investment strategy
- Funding, to determine our cash payments, reflects the scheme’s investment strategy, but is measured prudently

Our recent dividend decision and investment plans, including our FTTP programme, are positive for our covenant

The 2017 BTPS funding agreement provides a strong foundation on which to build our 2020 agreement, such as over what period we seek to pay off deficits

Covid-19 may reduce the pace and scale of any changes to the pension regulatory regime

# Q&A

