



Minutes – Scottish Firefighters’ Pension Board – 04 December 2018

Attendees:

William Littleboy (WB)	Chair
Catherine Skinner (CS)	Vice Chair
Alan Duncan (AD)	Board Member
Stephen Wright (SW)	Board Member
Denise Christie (DC)	Board Member
Brian Cameron (BC)	Board Member
Penelope Cooper (PC)	SPPA CEO
Carole Johnston (CJ)	Interim Head of Customer Services
Gerry McGarry (GMcG)	Assistant Head of Customer Services
Donald Forbes (DF)	Senior Customer Services Manager
Ian Waugh (IW)	SPPA Chief Financial Officer
Viv Purves (VP)	Senior Customer Services Manager
Janet McDougall (JM)	Programme Manager for Altair
Sarah Butler (SB)	Senior Customer Services Manager
Jim Murray	Secretariat (minutes)
Deborah Sherlock	Secretariat

Apologies:

Iain Bushell	Board member
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1. Welcome and introductions (including declaration of conflict of interest)

1a. WB welcomed everyone to the meeting and as there were some new attendees invited all to introduce themselves. Apologies were noted as above.

1b. No conflicts of interest declared.

2a. Draft minutes from 28 August 2018

The minutes from the meeting of 28 August 2018 were reviewed and adopted

2b. Action points

The outstanding actions were reviewed and the following noted:

- F10.04 – GMcG has provided wording to SW – closed
- F12.04 – remains open
- F13.02 – report has been shared - closed
- F14.01 – update provided, with routine updates to be provided when available - closed
- F14.02 – provided in Board papers

- F14.03 – remains open

3. SPPA Update

3.2 Annual Benefit Statements (ABS)

GMcG advised that as at 31 August SPPA issued 100% of Annual Benefit Statements across all of Firefighters schemes. WL wished the appreciation of the Board to be noted

3.3 Annual Allowance (AA)

GMcG advised that staff had identified and issued 72 Annual Allowance statements to members by 6 October in accordance with legislation. 14 of these members were identified as liable for a tax charge.

3.4 Customer Contact Team (CCT)

GMcG advised that CCT are continuing to expand and perform well against KPI's with 95% of calls answered in 30 seconds and providing a first call resolution of 82% in quarter 3 with 3,418 emails received. The Firefighter's scheme is now expected to be included in to CCT from March 2019

3.5 Single Event Survey

GMcG advised the initiative was discussed at SLA review meeting on 20 November, with a sample of 10% of ABS and 20% of AA statements having been issued with the survey. The Board were asked if they had any other thoughts/ideas on topics for future consideration? DC suggested a hyperlink to survey could be added to ABS

AP1	SPPA to investigate possibility of adding single survey hyperlink to ABS
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3.6 GMP

VP provided a progress update advising that, out of a total of 34,285 records, 29.1% have been reconciled, 15.6% remain unreconciled and 55.3% have no liability or are out of scope. Work still continues across all schemes.

HM Treasury are due to further discuss turnaround times with HMRC. A reconciliation tool is to be made available shortly by ITM. WL commented that it is unlikely that the project will be wholly concluded. GMcG reminded the Board that assurances have already been given that the reconciliation process will not result in any detriment to members of the Firefighter's pension scheme. DC asked if a prediction on total reconciliation could be given – VP suggested that an approximation of 90% complete may be possible. WL asked if the Board could provide any help at this stage? GMcG advised that as all schemes Pension Board Chairs had written to HM Treasury on the matter previously, nothing further could assist at this stage. He then advised that as HMRC are now in a backlog situation with the return of data (with scheduled return now expected in 5 months rather than 3) updates on any progress will be provided to the Board as and when available.

3.7 Annual Review of Service Level Agreement

SLA review was held at Hamilton on 20 November and GMcG advised that this is an annual exercise to reconsider targets. WL asked that Board members are given sight of the output of the meeting

3.8 Scheme returns

GMcG confirmed that scheme returns were submitted to Pension Regulator on 06 November

3.9 Website Refresh

GMcG advised that the project is progressing and plans to be complete at the start of the next financial year. DC asked if this would be accessible with other mobile devices. GMcG advised that this was the intention.

3.10 Overpayments

GMcG talked through an analysis of overpayments in Firefighters schemes.

3.11 Employer Charter

GMcG advised that progress continues to be made with this initiative however the work on this is to be set aside for the moment until work on the Target Operating Model has been completed.

4. Firefighters' Dashboard

4.1 GMcG advised that Dashboard has been refreshed and talked through entries in particular red indicators which showed a target not met.

4.2 DF advised that since the Transfer In pack had been introduced delays in the gathering of information has been addressed and improved performance has resulted.

5. SPPA Altair Programme Update

JMcD gave brief update on progress within the Altair Improvement Project including the introduction of i-Connect for employers and member self-service functionality. AD stated he has seen i-Connect in Local Government Schemes and had been impressed by its functionality.

6. Participation Rates

GMcG advised that Participation Rates are reviewed by the Policy Team and information on this is provided to the Scheme Advisory Board. He invited any questions from the Board offering that they could then be addressed by the Policy Team themselves. CS stated it was comforting to see the low number of "opt out" rates

7. Risk Register

IW advised that the Risk Governance Group (RGG) meets regularly within SPPA. All matters raised by Pension Boards are then considered for action by the RGG.

In a recent round of meetings GMP was moved up in risk category with another risk being removed after it met its residual target. WL asked if the impact of Brexit should be added as a risks however IW advised that scheme risks registers are focused on services to members and stakeholders, confirming that Citibank had provided an

assurance that overseas pensioners can continue to expect their pension payments as normal.

8. Customer Interaction & Feedback Report

SB talked through paper and advised;

Complaints - 1 complaint had been received due to email sent to a member of staff who had omitted to put their out of office indicator on during a period of leave. No trend had otherwise been identified.

IDRP's – numbers on Firefighter's are very low with no trends arising. As this is controlled by Policy Team, SB asked that any queries should be forwarded on.

9. Public Service Administration Survey

SB advised that this year's survey is much more data focused rather than questions for Pension Board members. Any questions or concerns should be forwarded to SB. WL commented that he was unclear on the purpose of the survey.

10. Training Plan

CS asked if the training plan could be more relevant rather than a historical document. DC commented she would be interested in training on Risks

AP3	Board members to consider their development needs
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11. Any Other Competent Business

None

12. Dates of Future Meetings

Next meeting 19 February 2019 (Hamilton)

No other business was raised. WL thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.