



Attendees:

George Brechin (GB)	Chair
Ray Martin (RM)	Vice Chair
Drew Morrice (DM)	Board member
Kathy Cameron (KC)	Board member
John Crichton (JC)	Board member
Cllr Charles Buchan (CB)	Board member
Brian Cookson (BC)	Board member
Leah Franchetti (LF)	Board member
Sharon McKenzie (SMcK)	Board member
Penelope Cooper (PC)	SPPA Chief Executive
Carole Johnston (CJ)	SPPA Interim Head of Customer Services
Gerry McGarry (GMcG)	Customer Services Manager
Jim Preston (JP)	SPPA Senior Manager (item 3b)
Jonathan Sharp (JS)	SPPA Head of Security (item 6)
Viv Purves (VP)	SPPA Senior Manager (item 5)
Molly Wyllie (MW)	SPPA Governance - minutes

Apologies:

Cllr David Illingworth	Board member
David McGinty	Board member
Peter Smith	Board member

1. Welcome, introductions and conflicts of interest

GB welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were as noted above. No conflicts of interest declared. RM advised the board that he had been appointed Chair of East Sussex Pension Fund.

GB asked that board members confirm their attendance at meetings in advance. GB also reminded members to complete the Pension Regulators Toolkit and submit their returns to the Governance team.

2. Board Changes

No changes to board members. A short discussion was held around ensuring vacancies are filled from the appropriate bodies.

3a, Draft minutes from meeting of 27 February 2019

Minutes from the meeting of 27 February 2019 were reviewed and adopted without change.

3b. Action Points

The board reviewed the outstanding actions and the following was noted:

- T8.11 23/5/17 - Scheme eligibility review – JP advised that this issue is with HM Treasury. The next step would be to go to Scottish Ministers – action remains open
- T9.12 21/9/17 - Member satisfaction with new IDRPs process – JP advised that consideration was being given to a member survey. Following further discussion it was agreed that the board would be kept up to date with progress – action remains open
- T12.04 10/5/18 – Communications strategy - CJ advised that a temporary member of staff had been engaged to review all Agency Strategies. The board asked to be kept updated of progress – action remains open
- T13.02 21/8/18 – Member portal - PC advised that a demonstration would be provided following Beta testing – action remains open for November meeting
- T15.01 27/2/19 – Membership figures - dashboard under review – action remains open
- T15.03 27/2/19 – Employer Charter - on hold under Target Operating Model (TOM) – action remains open
- T15.04 27/2/19 – McLoud / Sergeant - JP advised that the outcome of the appeal was not yet known. A remedy across schemes was currently under discussion and the board would be kept updated regarding communications – action remains open

4. Teachers' Dashboard

GMcG advised the board that revised membership figures were now available and were circulated to members. The revised figures showed an upward trend in active membership. LF asked if the Agency was able to identify why members are deferred. GMcG advised that there are a number of reasons members are deferred. This included leaving the scheme, opting out, leaving teaching etc. GB asked if further analysis could be undertaken to understand deferred member figures. RM commented that communications are important to ensure members understand the benefits of the scheme. PC advised that the new Partnership Team will pick this up.

AP1	SPPA Partnership Team to consider analysing the background to deferred members figures and report back.
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CJ advised that part of the TOM was to re-organise how complaints are handled. GMcG advised that response target time had been reduced from three months to two months and that performance had been affected. This should improve over the next quarter.

5. SPPA Update

Annual Returns

CJ advised that positive feedback had been received at recent employer seminars. Contact Groups would be set up for employers and future seminars would also take place out with Edinburgh if required. The Partnership Team will be responsible for outreach. GMcG advised that the deadline for annual returns was 31 May 2019. It was agreed that board members would be updated regarding the position at 31 May 2019. KC and SMcK stressed that they were ready to facilitate communication with suitably senior staff in local authorities and suggested it would be helpful for them to have a note of the employers who had yet to submit returns.

AP2	SPPA to engage with appropriate board members on progress with Local Authority Annual Return figures at 31 May 2019.
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Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP)

VP advised that HMRC had secured funding to extend the timescale of their processing for this exercise, which is now likely to be end November/December 2019. BC asked if there was an agreed policy on recovery of overpayments. VP advised that the decision would be made by Scottish Ministers. BC asked if board members could have sight of, and if possible comment on, communications prior to issue, not least because queries would go to employers and union as well as to the Agency. GMcG accepted the point, advised that work was required to produce template letters and that the board would be updated as action progressed; he saw the benefit in getting input to ensure the letters were clear when received.

AP3	SPPA to provide board members with copy of draft letter templates for GMP in time if possible for comment
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6. Head of Security Annual Report

JS advised that following the introduction of GDPR, the Agency now had a Breach Management Plan. Two cases had been reported to the Information Commissioner. These cases had tested the plan and procedures. No action was recommended by the Commissioner.

DM asked if there were consequences for employers who fail to sign data sharing agreements. KC asked if the Agency could supply a breakdown of the employers who had not yet signed agreements. JS confirmed that SPPA were still in dialogue with the remaining employers.

AP4	SPPA to provide KC and SMcK list of employers who had not signed data sharing agreements
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GB noted that SPPA are one of the Scottish Government Cyber Resilience organisations participating in the Public Sector Catalyst Scheme.

BC asked if SPPA staff are sufficiently aware of the Business Continuity Plan. JS confirmed that the Plan is regularly tested and that 'grab bags' had been issued to 12 key members of staff. JS also confirmed that no sensitive data was contained in the bags.

7. Communications Strategy

This was covered under actions points at 3b above.

8. Customer Interaction and Feedback Report

GMcG advised that complaints were consistent with figures recorded last year. Standard of service and error being the main category of complaint. No trends were identified. Lessons learned were shared, where appropriate, across the Agency. Customer Survey response figures were low, therefore 'single event surveys' would be used going forward to improve insight into customers views and suggested topics for this included ABS, Summer Retirals.

GB asked if further information on Teachers' Medical IDRP's could be supplied.

AP5	SPPA to clarify reasons for Medical IDRP cases
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9. Risk Register

GMcG advised the board that amendments to the Risk Register were noted in red. Also noted that Risk 1 was now rated 'black' and Risk 7 was now Annual Allowance. RM asked about the impact of the McCloud/Sargeant appeal. PC advised that the impact was not yet known, however, work was being done within the Agency to identify ways to mitigate the risks.

RM pointed out that the difficulty recruiting senior staff was not reflected in the register. PC confirmed that this had been discussed at the Management Advisory Board and that a full recruitment plan was now in place. A number of senior posts were being advertised. GB asked that the boards concern be noted and that recruitment be added to the Pension Board risk register.

AP6	SPPA to add recruitment to the Pension Board Risk Register
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10. Pension Board Self-Assessment

GB thanked everyone who had participated in the self-assessment. This had confirmed the need for further training for board members and that specific issues and suggestions for training would be welcomed. SMcK suggested that it would be helpful to combine training with other boards.

11. Pension Board Responsibilities Update

The Board noted the revised paper. GB advised that the paper was designed to remind all parties of their roles. RM had agreed to review the paper further.

12. Pension Board Annual Report/Member Appraisal

GB advised that the Annual Report was now due along with Appraisals. Discussion followed regarding succession planning.

13a. Liaison with the Pension Regulator, Scheme Advisory Board minutes etc

GB advised that as mentioned earlier, the Regulator was satisfied with progress made on ABS in 2018.

13b. Any other Competent Business

13b1. KC asked if members could, on occasion, dial in to board meetings. GB agreed that there might be one-off occasions when this would be acceptable.

13b2. GB asked if dates for 2020 meetings could be re-circulated to the board along with a note of tenure dates.

AP7	SPPA to circulate suggested 2020 pension board dates. Also include member tenure dates
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13b3. PC stated that individual pension board groups would be added to Knowledge Hub.

13b.4 PC advised that the Auditor General Section 23 Report (covering “Project 17”) was expected soon and Pension Boards would be kept up to date.

AP8	SPPA to advise board members when Auditor General Section 23 Report published
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13b.5 PC advised that the SPPA Annual Report and Accounts were being finalised.

14. Arrangements for Future Meetings

Meetings have been arranged at Tweedbank as follows:

- 28 August 2019
- 27 November 2019

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