



Minutes – Scottish Teachers' Pension Board – 27 November 2019 (No. 18)

Attendees:

George Brechin (GB)	Chair
Ray Martin (RM)	Vice Chair
Drew Morrice (DM)	Board member
Debbie Walls (DW)	Board member
John Crichton (JC)	Board member
Cllr Charles Buchan (CB)	Board member
Brian Cookson (BCo)	Board member
Leah Franchetti (LF)	Board member
Sharon McKenzie (SMcK)	Board member
Peter Smith (PS)	Board Member
Dev Dey (DD)	SPPA Head of Customer Services
Tom Nash (TN)	SPPA Head of Business Affairs
Gerry McGarry (GMcG)	SPPA Customer Services Manager
Stuart MacArthur (SMcA)	SPPA Governance Manager
Sally Patterson (SP)	SPPA Customer Services Manager
Jim Preston (JP)	SPPA Senior Policy Manager
Viv Purves (VP)	SPPA Customer Services Manager (item 7)
Molly Wyllie (MW)	SPPA Governance - minutes

Apologies:

Penelope Cooper	SPPA Chief Executive
Peter Smith	Board member
Cllr David Illingworth	Board member
David McGinty	Board member

1. Welcome, introductions and conflicts of interest

GB welcomed everyone to the meeting. BG welcomed new SPPA colleagues, Tom Nash, Stuart MacArthur and Sally Paterson to the Board.

Apologies were as noted above. No conflicts of interest declared.

2. Board Changes

GB advised that there are currently two vacancies on the Board. GB also advised that SPPA would be advertising for a Chair to replace him from the beginning of April 2020.

GB asked if a copy of the new SPPA structure could be circulated to the board.

AP1	SPPA to circulate a copy of the SPPA structure to the Board
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3a, Draft minutes from meeting of 28 August 2019

Minutes from the meeting of 28 August 2019 were reviewed and a correction made. Page 5, item 9, Payslip Changes should be amended to include – existing pensioners would have the right to continue to receive paper payslips if they so wished.

3b. Action Points

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

- T8.11 23/5/17 – JP advised that the proposal regarding the Scheme Eligibility Review had not yet been submitted to Scottish Ministers. The Review is on the agenda for the January 2020 Scheme Advisory Board meeting. GB raised concern that the Board had not been kept fully involved and asked that when the Review is finalised, it is brought to the Board – action remains open
- T9.12 21/9/17 – JP advised that a survey was being drafted, however, the timeline was yet to be agreed. RM suggested that the survey would be of more value if it was done prior to the member receiving the outcome decision on their ill health application – action remains open
- T12.04 10/5/18 – action remains open
- T13.02 21/8/18 – member portal not available to view – action remains open
- T15.03 27/9/19 – action remains open
- T16.01 29/5/19 – GMcG advised that the difficulty lay in deciding the best approach to adopt with employers. BC commented that there are two groups involved – those who opt out and those members who are deferred, adding that SPPA would be aware of deferred members. BC also commented that the Board should be made aware of any significant changes to opt out figures. GMcG advised that the Opt Out form had recently been re-designed and provided information to members regarding the benefits of remaining in the scheme. Members then sign the form to confirm that they understand the impact of leaving the scheme. JP advised that following the re-design of the Opt Out form, which now included a free text area for members to provide their reasons for leaving, it had been agreed by the Scheme Advisory Board to conduct a 12 month review period to examine the responses received from members. GB asked that the outcome of the review period be shared with the Board – action closed and new action opened

AP2	SPPA to share outcome of 12 month review of Opt Outs with the Board when available
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- T16.03 29/5/19 – GB asked that the Board review the member GMP letter/s prior to issue. GMcG advised that the letters would not be available until next year. GB requested sight of the letters being drafted for the Police and Firefighter scheme members. JP reminded the Board that these would be fundamentally different from those issued to Teachers’ members – action remains open
- T17.07 28/8/19 – JP advised that in the case of medical cases, further information is sought prior to a decision being made. This information needs to be made available to members. GB advised that Board members are happy to get involved in member communication – action remains open
- T17.08 28/8/19 – information provided in the update paper – action closed
- T17.09 28/8/19 – information provided in the update paper – action closed

- T17.10 28/8/19 – to be discussed at the Working group meeting 27 November 2019 – action closed
- T17.11 28/8/19 - Return to Regulator’s Public Service Annual Governance Admin Survey on receipt of 2019 results.

4. Annual Benefit Statements (ABS)

GMcG advised that as at 27 November 2019, the Scottish Teachers’ Superannuation Scheme had achieved 100% of statements issued to members by the deadline. This, however, included 2,198 members who received a statement based on 2018 data. Work continued to rectify this and at 27 November, a further 936 member records had been updated. The team were working to resolve the remaining 1,262 member records. GMcG advised that issues concerning the receipt of accurate data from employers had contributed to this situation and would be discussed with the Sub-group later that day. JC asked if, in the case of statements where 2018 data was used, it was clearly stated. DD confirmed that a global message had been added to the member portal which makes it clear what year is used. DM asked if there had been an increase in enquiries from members regarding statements. DD advised that the information would be provided by the Contact Team and an analysis done to compare with figures from last year’s exercise.

AP3	SPPA to provide an analysis of the number ABS enquiries between 2018 and 2019 exercise to the Board
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RM commented that it would be useful to get a view on the accuracy of data for deferred members as this would highlight what was required to bring records up to date. JP confirmed that there is no regulated requirement to provide statements for deferred members.

JC stated that he was concerned about a statement made in the minutes of the last meeting on 28 August 2019 regarding the use of out of date data on statements. It was agreed that a post meeting note be added to clarify that the Board are not supportive of, in the absence of current year data, using data from a previous financial year as a way to meet the statutory requirement. DD stated that the Agency was working with employers to obtain accurate data and would provide the Pension Regulator with details of members who did not receive a statement this year and the steps taken to rectify this.

5. Working Group on Improving Employer Data Submissions

GB thanked RM for setting up the Working Group and Terms of Reference. A meeting had been arranged for the afternoon of 27 November 2019. SMcA advised that the Terms of Reference should be amended to include members from SPPA.

6. Teachers’ Dashboard

6.1 Customer Contact

DD advised that to ensure quality of first contact, the time to answer calls would be amended from 30 seconds to 60 seconds. DM asked how this would be measured. DD advised that this was included in the role of the Quality Support Coaches within each team. LF commented that the average time to answer calls was already good, but asked how peak times, such as Monday morning, affected this figure. DD confirmed that the performance indicator measure average speed over the period of measurement. GB commented that the Board were supportive of measures taken to improve customer service.

6.2 Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP)

JC asked if the figures provided could be clarified eg: six medical cases had been carried forward from the previous quarter and seven cases remained outstanding. Following discussion it was agreed that more information would be provided in future.

AP4	SPPA to clarify figures provided, regarding IDRP cases processed quarterly, and bring back to the Board at the next meeting
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6.3 Membership

RM asked if membership could be analysed to provide a breakdown of members under 'status 2' (undecided leaver). This should include the number of status 2 cases at the end of each quarter, with a breakdown of how long they have been in that status, ie less than 1 month, up to 3 months, up to 6 months, up to a year, greater than 1 year.

AP5	SPPA to update the Dashboard to include the number of status 2 cases at the end of each quarter with a breakdown of how long they have been in that status
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6.4 Customer Survey

CB commented that the customer survey showed a 66.67% satisfaction rate. GMcG advised that this information was drawn from feedback from 0.04% of membership. GMcG advised that 1,485 emails had been issued to members who had retired from the scheme this year and that the team were now reviewing the survey to ensure it provided value.

6.5 Estimates

GB asked why estimates had failed to meet the performance target. GMcG advised that summer retirements had had an impact. This would now be addressed by the implementation of a team specifically focussed on processing estimate requests.

7. SPPA Update

7.1 Annual Allowance (AA)

GMcG advised that all AA letters had been issued within the statutory timescale. An end of project report would be provided and shared with the Board.

AP6	SPPA to share the AA End of Project Report with the Board when available
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7.2 Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP)

An update on the current position of the project was provided. GB asked if reporting on the future progress of GMP could include specific information about how pensioners would be impacted.

7.3 Sargeant/McCloud

JP advised that a summary report had been circulated to the Board on 26 November regarding progress of the appeal case. A Scheme Advisory Board had been arranged for January 2020 to discuss the proposed remedy. The Pension Board would be able to participate in the consultation. TN commented that the Board would be kept updated as information was known.

7.4 Customer Service Model (CSM)

DD advised that the Customer Service Model had been implemented from 28 October 2019. This is an ongoing process and the driver behind the model is to put out customers first. To this end, the team would be investing time in training.

8. McCloud/Sargeant

This was covered in item 7.3.

9. Risk Register

TN advised that the SPPA Head of Business Management and the Head of Business Affairs would review the Risk Registers from across the Agency to ensure that risk is relevant and is being managed by the right people. GB commented that it is understood that the Pension Board does not hold risk, but reviewing the register provides the Board with the assurance that the risks impacting the Teachers' scheme are mitigated. TN confirmed that a Risk team would be responsible for the oversight of all risk across the Agency. SMcA commented that the intention would be to develop a risk framework. BC stated that the level of responsibility for the Board and the requirements of the Pension Regulator should also be discussed. GB suggested that Risk be included as part of the training plan for next year.

10. Pension Regulator Public Service Governance and Administration Survey 2019

GB advised that the Survey had been received by SPPA and would be circulated to the Board for consideration. Comments to be returned to the Governance team by deadline date.

11. Training Report

GB advised that the Vice Chair of the Police Pension Board had created a short report to highlight the training suggested requirements across all Boards. RM suggested that the role of the Board be one of the topics in a training session. SMcA advised that he would be liaising with Pension Board Chairs/Vice Chairs to discuss what the Boards priorities are and what can be provided. DW commented that as a new member training as such had been limited to self-learning and more information about the role and responsibility as board member would be helpful. BC commented that the Pension Regulator Toolkit should be completed by new members and refreshed by existing members annually. Following discussion it was agreed that new Board members would complete the Toolkit within the first 6 months of joining and then on annual basis.

12. Pension Board Responsibilities Update

RM advised that the report had been updated since the last meeting. There are three items still in red which included vacancies, training and valuations. Discussion followed regarding the scheme valuations and JP advised that due to the appeal case, work related to the cost cap had been paused. GB commented that the Board should consider the valuation process, in that the 2016 process had not yet been fully completed and the 2020 would commence next year. GB noted that the wording around the quorum needed to be corrected.

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

DW advised that the request to share the draft Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) minutes had met with a mixed response. DM stated that it would be helpful to have a schedule of meetings for the SAB and also a summary of the meeting. JP advised that the SAB, unlike the Pension Board, did not have a regular schedule of meetings.

GB referred to the action which had requested a method of referring relevant items from the SAB to the Pension Board. A pro-forma had been developed and a copy provided to the Board. The item raised at the SAB involved related to Phased retirement. JP advised that the regulation related to phased retirement had been discussed by the SAB and the minutes had advised that as the regulation was not in question, the issue of communicating to members would be an area for the Pension Board to consider. GB asked that the issue be officially referred to the Pension Board for discussion at the next meeting.

AP7	SPPA to refer the item from the SAB related to the Pension Board considering the wider awareness/communication of Phased retirement provisions to members
AP8	Pension Board to consider the wider awareness and communication of Phased retirement for members at the next meeting.

13b. Any other Competent Business

GB advised that he had attended the Pension Regulator Public Service Pensions Consultative Group meeting the previous week and was awaiting the minutes which he would be passing to SPPA colleagues.

AP9	Chair to circulate the minutes from the Pension Regulator Public Service Pensions Consultative Group to SPPA colleagues when available.
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14. Arrangements for Future Meetings

Meetings have been arranged at Tweedbank as follows:

- 25 February 2020
- Have we not got further dates?

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