



Meeting	Scottish Firefighters Pension Board
Meeting date	09 November 2021
Meeting time	10:00 – 13:00
Meeting location	MS Teams

Attendees	William Littleboy (WL)	Chair
	Andy Marchant (AM)	Vice Chair
	Alan Duncan (AD)	Board Member
	Denise Christie (DC)	Board Member
	Ross Haggart (RH)	Board Member
Other attendees	David Robb (DR)	SPPA Interim Chief Executive
	Rachel Miller (RM)	SPPA Interim Head of Operational Excellence
	Dev Dey (DD)	SPPA Head of Customer
	Gary Cossar (GC)	SPPA Interim Head of Employee Engagement
	Phil Heywood (PH)	SPPA Interim Head of Pension Platform Procurement
	Hannah Grout (HG)	SPPA Risk and Assurance Manager
	Anne Walsh (AW)	SPPA Project Manager
	Alan Wilkinson (AWn)	SPPA Senior Policy Manager
	Stuart MacArthur (SMacA)	SPPA Governance Manager
	Donald Forbes (DF)	SPPA Partnership Manager
Apologies	Stephen Wright	Board Member
	Alexander Miller	Board Member
	John McKenzie	Board Member
Observers	Demi Ditchburgh	SPPA Governance Officer (observer)
	Pauline Lancombe (PL)	Pensions Regulator Supervision Representative (observer)
	Sara Dove (SD)	Pensions Regulator Supervision Representative (observer)
Minutes	Molly Wyllie	

1. Welcome and introductions (including declaration of conflict of interest)

WL opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. WL introduced Pauline Lancombe and Sarah Dove from the Pensions Regulator, who are working with the Agency as part of the Supervision Relationship currently taking place.

WL advised the Board that, with the apologies received, the meeting did not meet the quorum. Decisions would either be held over until the next meeting, or taken off line.

1.1 No conflicts of interest declared.

1.2 No changed to Board membership.

2.1 Draft minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from the meeting of 17 August 2021 were adopted without amendment.

2.2 Actions outstanding

The outstanding actions were reviewed and the following noted:

- F0821.01, F0821.02, F0821.03, F0821.05 – actions closed
- F0821.04 – remains open

3. Hybrid Working Arrangement

GC provided a background to working arrangements during the pandemic, noting that health, safety and well-being of staff had been a priority. The Facilities Team had worked with Scottish Government to develop a plan to re-open the premises at Tweedbank. GC described the changes that have been implemented and noted that the premises had been opened under phase one of the new hybrid working conditions from 1 November 2021. This would be reviewed before progressing to the next phase. Following discussion, the Board were assured that there had been no detrimental impact on the level of service provided and that this would continue through the phases of re-opening.

WL thanked GC for the update and congratulated the team on the work undertaken, in particular the commitment to inducting and training new staff. AM asked how the more informal collaboration across teams would be addressed. GC advised that 41 new staff had joined the Agency which had proved to be a challenge. A buddy system had been used to assist with integration and training. Regular interaction across teams had been encouraged throughout. A progress update would be provided at the next meeting.

F1121.01	SPPA to provide an update on the progress of hybrid working for the next meeting	15-02-22
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4. Operational Excellence

RM advised that significant progress had been made on the dashboard for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Management Information (MI). RM presented the current dashboard for Board members to view. A further demonstration would be provided when the dashboard was finalised.

RM advised that both the Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) and the Annual Allowance (AA) exercises had been completed within the statutory deadline and that Member Self Service (MSS) registrations had increased. DC asked that any further communications related to MSS could be shared to allow the Union side to add these to their media platforms.

F1121.02	SPPA to forward further communications to SFRU to add to their media platforms	When available
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RM advised that Net Promoter Score had been amended to Net Satisfaction Score. This would allow matrices to be developed related to customer feedback.

2015 Remedy

AW advised that a 2015 Remedy communication would be issued to members. This would be a generic communication notifying members that there was nothing for them to do and also the

dual calculations were not possible at this point. This would also point members to visit the Agency’s website and FAQs which contained the most accurate and up to date information. A draft of the letter would be shared with the Board.

FI121.03	SPPA to share 2015 Remedy member letter with the Board	30-11-21
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AW advised that processes were in place to deal with Immediate Detriment cases, however, the full impact on processing and rectification was not yet known. Additional staff resource had been secured for this part of the project.

Following discussion, it was agreed that Board members would forward any questions received could be forwarded to the Agency to include in the FAQs.

FI121.04	Board members to forward 2015 Remedy questions to SPPA to include in website FAQs	When available
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5. Customer Services

DD advised that as previously noted, 41 new staff had joined the Agency. DD noted that an increase in retirals and supporting the ABS and AA projects had had an impact on performance. Telephone waiting times had been impacted, however, moving staff to the Contact Team would show improved results in quarter three. Additional resource had also been move to the Transfers Team. DD also advised that a full telephone service would commence from 1 December 2021. This would be supported by new recruits, following appropriate training. Planning was underway to address enquiries as a result of the 2015 Remedy communication due to be issued soon.

6. Pension Platform Programme Update

PH advised that the Business Case had been approved by the Scottish Minister and Cabinet Secretary. This allowed the Agency to go ahead with procurement in early December as planned.

DR noted that the Agency transformation was a key consideration and priority. Changes to how the Agency works and changes to the service provided would be supported by a Transformation Director.

AM commented that work had been undertaken to de-risk and have contingency around timeframes, however, was there a ‘fall back’ position. PH confirmed that this would involve extending the current supplier contract. WL also asked if the 2015 Remedy had been taken into account. PH confirmed any tender would include 2015 Remedy and Pensions Dashboard.

7. Risk Update

HG commented that work was underway to embed risk into the culture at the Agency. The Firefighters Risk Register was an honest reflection but work was required to tailor this further. Following discussion it was agreed that Board members would contact HG directly if they wished to assist with this.

AM asked if system faults and manual processing produced a higher level of errors for members and how the Board could be assured that this was not an issue. RM advised that workarounds and manual calculations had been reviewed early in the Pension Platform Programme and that this had been taken into account and continued to be reviewed with the current supplier. RM also confirmed that 100% quality assurance checking and authorising was in place.

8. Policy Update

AW advised that he had recently joined the Agency as Senior Policy Manager for Police, Firefighters and Local Government.

9. Governance Update

SMacA advised that approval of the Firefighters Pension Board 2020-21 Annual Report had been agreed. The report from the Pensions Regulators Supervision Relationship would be shared with the Board. The Terms of Reference would be updated and refreshed taking account of recommendations from this report. The Governance team were working with Internal Audit and SLT to take forward actions from the Corporate Governance Review.

WI advised that the Corporate Governance Review had highlighted that the Agency Strategy had not been refreshed for some time. SMacA confirmed that the Agency's Management Advisory Board would review the Strategy. RM confirmed that meetings had been aligned with the Corporate calendar and that the Planning and Performance Manager would take this forward.

DC raised concern regarding the tenure for member representatives. Following discussion, it was agreed to follow this up off-line.

10. Any other competent business

No other business raised.

11. Date of next meeting

Next meeting scheduled for 15 February 2022 (virtual).

WL thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Summary of new actions:

No	Action	Due date
F1121.01	SPPA to provide an update on the progress of hybrid working for the next meeting	15-02-22
F1121.02	SPPA to forward further communications to SFRU to add to their media platforms	When available
F1121.03	SPPA to share 2015 Remedy member letter with the Board	30-11-21
F1121.04	Board members to forward 2015 Remedy questions to SPPA to include in website FAQs	When available

Version Control		
		Version number
Date minutes sent to Board	17-11-21	V0.01
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