



Meeting	Scottish Firefighters' Pension Board
Meeting date	07 September 2023
Meeting time	14:00 - 17:00
Meeting location	Hybrid

Board members	William Littleboy	Chair
	Andy Marchant*	Vice Chair
	Steven Wright (SW)*	Board Member
	Nicola Hector (NH)*	Board Member
	Liz Barnes (LB)*	Board Member
SPPA attendees	Alan Paterson (AP)*	Risk & Control Officer
	Clare Moffat (CM)	Corporate Governance Manager
	David Gunner (DG)	Programme Director
	David Robb (DR)	Chief Executive
	Debbie Trafford (DT)	People Transformation Lead
	Garry Cossar (GC)*	Head of People, Strategy & Communications
	Jonathan Sharp (JS)*	Data Protection and Information Governance Manager
	Laura Pacey (LP)	Customer Service Manager
	Lorraine Spalding (LS)	Project Communications & Engagement Lead
	Núria Ruiz (NR)*	Senior User Researcher
	Phil McKibben (PM)*	Head of Finance
	Roderick Glass (RG)*	Business Partner
Apologies	Frances Graham (FG)	Chief Operating Officer
	Hannah Grout (HG)	Risk & Assurance Manager
	Scott McCabe (SM)	Board Member
	Simon Leroux (SL)	Board Member
	Gus Sproul (GS)	Board Member
Minute taker	Demi Ditchburn (DD)	SPPA Governance Delivery Lead

*Joined remotely

1. Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed all attendees and apologies were noted from FG, GS, SL, SM and HG. **[Please note:** This meeting was not quorate due to apologies from GS, SL and SM.]

1.2 The Chair expressed disappointment that there was no member representation at the meeting, encouraging member representatives to make stronger efforts to attend in future to ensure contribution to the sessions on behalf of scheme members.

1.3 There were no changes to Board members' Register of Interests nor were there any declarations of interest in the business to be conducted.

F0907.01	Chair/Vice Chair to contact member representatives and discuss attendance at meetings
----------	---

2. Previous Meeting

2.1 The Board agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 June 2023 were a true and correct record.

3. Review of Outstanding Actions

3.1 The action tracker was reviewed. The following actions were approved for closure, some of which were closed during the meeting:

F1122.02 F0601.01

3.2 The Board agreed to keep action F0323.01 open.

3.3 The group discussed member engagement and requested assurance that scheme members are able to access their pension scheme in a way that works best for them.

F0907.02 SPPA to provide the Firefighters' Pension Board with increased assurance that the majority of members can engage with their pension scheme the optimal way

4. Performance, Risk and Projects

Agency Performance

4.1 GC provided an overview of performance across the Agency over the last quarter noting:

- Pulse survey
- Automation work with core Scottish Government colleagues

Scheme Performance

4.2 DT provided an overview of scheme performance over the last quarter.

4.3 The Chair noted that metrics are trending in the right direction however the Board are interested in SPPA finding ways to validate the data with genuine customer feedback.

4.4 The Board noted a spike in self-service registrations in July/August 2022. SPPA confirmed this is due to annual benefits statements (ABS) being released during this period.

4.5 The Board queried how data is correlated with customer satisfaction and if SPPA have a way to understand trends of people registering for the system e.g. sending out intention to retire communications before an expected spike in the number of retiralts.

Customer Insights Dashboard

4.6 LP presented a newly created dashboard to the Board, highlighting a focus on qualitative measures that include customer feedback as well as quantitative measures of service. NR talked the Board through service in the spotlight insights.

4.7 The Vice Chair requested SPPA provide self-service portal data within the dashboard going forward.

4.8 The Board noted they would appreciate more commentary included in the dashboard however understand the time and effort that goes into the process currently.

4.9 The Board shared positive feedback for the dashboard and encouraged SPPA to focus more on customer insight driven data.

F0907.03 SPPA to include self-service portal data in dashboard for Firefighters' Pension Board meetings

Risk

4.10 AP provided an executive summary of the Risk Paper, noting no significant changes to the Scheme or Executive Team Register. It was noted an outdated version of the registers had been circulated to the Board. AP agreed to circulate the most up to date versions of the registers.

The meeting paused for a short break 15:41 – 15:51

4.11 JS asked the Board for feedback on the draft cyber security scorecard. The Vice Chair noted there are no actions stated to address gaps between target and current risk scores, and SPPA might want to consider how to link the scorecard and Board risk register.

4.12 The Board queried both internal and external actions that can be taken to minimise cyber security risk and how the scorecard can reflect that the correct measures are in place for this.

F0907.04 SPPA to circulate the most up to date version of risk registers to the Firefighters' Pension Board

Pension Platform Programme (PPP)

4.13 DG provided an executive summary of the PPP Paper, noting plans for migration are on track.

4.14 The Chair requested that DG update the Board after migration.

F0907.05 SPPA to circulate an update to the Firefighters' Pension Board after the migration step of the PPP project

2015 Remedy

4.15 DG provided an executive summary of the 2015 Remedy Paper, noting a temporary software setback for the project.

4.16 LB noted ministerial correspondence in relation to a scheme member and queried whether SPPA receive similar enquiries in relation to advice around 2015 Remedy regulations. IC noted SPPA do receive this type of correspondence but not often and offered SPPA's support to form a response.

4.17 The Chair noted that although there is risk within the project, they felt this was being managed effectively and would at this stage, not be of significant impact to the scheme.

Key Annual Events

4.18 The Board discussed annual benefits statements (ABS) and SPPA's obligations to provide these. IC confirmed that SPPA are obligated to provide statements to deferred members of each Firefighters' scheme. The Vice Chair noted the Board would like annual assurance that deferred members have received an ABS.

4.19 SPPA noted work with fire service colleagues to encourage members to provide personal email addresses so they can access communications outside of work.

4.20 The Chair noted the Board are looking for assurance that SPPA are making sufficient efforts to communicate with members outside of the self-service portal. The group discussed other ways of communicating with members who aren't signed up the self-service portal and how SPPA can encourage sign up.

4.21 NH noted that members of staff within the fire service on a leave of absence are provided with hard copies of ABS, and requested that SPPA provide active members who are on long term sick or leave of absence with a hard copy of their ABS as they may miss out on communications regarding this if they don't have access to internal communications or SFRS email while they are absent. SPPA confirmed deferred statements are sent by post, active are sent through email/member self-service and pensioners are alerted of increase provided by post.

F0907.06 SPPA to review the request to provide active members who are on long term sick or leave of absence with a hard copy of their Annual Benefit Statement

Data Improvement

4.22 DG provided an overview of the Data Improvement Project paper noting:

- Common data above 98%
- SPPA are looking at ways to improve this

4.23 The Chair queried how confident SPPA are that they are approaching adequate quality. DG noted the current percentage is in the “green” category, although there is a “blue” category above this which SPPA are looking to enter as there is always room for improvement.

5. Other Board Business

Corporate Governance

5.1 CM provided an executive summary of the Corporate Governance Paper, noting:

- An update on compliance with The Pensions Regulator Code of Practice
- Proposed amendments to the Board’s Terms of Reference
- A request for Board members to contact the Chair if they have not had the opportunity for an annual 1-2-1
- A request for Board members to complete annual governance tasks promptly (due to be circulated October/November 2023)

5.2 The Board agreed to the amendments proposed within the Terms of Reference.

5.3 The Chair agreed to provide outstanding overviews of 1-2-1 calls to the Corporate Governance team by mid-September.

F0907.07	The Chair to provide outstanding overviews of 1-2-1 calls to the Corporate Governance team
----------	--

External Engagement

5.4 LS noted thanks to members of the Board who attended a recent workshop for external communications, explaining some of the content that was covered.

5.5 LS provided an overview of the External Engagement Paper noting:

- 74 newsletters were circulated to employers
- Open rate was 71%
- Lowest click rate between 4 schemes
- Data shows visibility is high but engagement is low

6. Any Other Business

Pension Services

6.1 DT provided an overview of the Contingency Planning Paper noting the current workload position at the Agency and the scenarios that are under consideration.

6.2 The Vice Chair queried to what extent SPPA had considered backlog management in contingency planning. DT noted a lot of improvement work happening across the Agency that although currently stretches capacity, will hopefully show benefits in the near future. Contingency planning will be reassessed after the implementation of the 2015 Remedy project.

Ratification

6.3 CM confirmed that as the meeting was not quorate due to no member representatives being present, any decisions made will need to be ratified electronically.

F0907.08	SPPA to facilitate ratification of decisions made within 7 September meeting with member representatives
----------	--

7. Next meeting

7.1 The next meeting is on 7 December 2023.

7.2 The Chair thanked all in attendance and closed the meeting at 16:24.

Summary of new Actions

F0907.01	Chair/Vice Chair to contact member representatives and discuss attendance at meetings
F0907.02	SPPA to provide the Firefighters' Pension Board with increased assurance that the majority of members can engage with their pension scheme the optimal way
F0907.03	SPPA to include self-service portal data in dashboard for Firefighters' Pension Board meetings
F0907.04	SPPA to circulate the most up to date version of risk registers to the Firefighters' Pension Board
F0907.05	SPPA to circulate an update to the Firefighters' Pension Board after the migration step of the PPP project
F0907.06	SPPA to review the request to provide active members who are on long term sick or leave of absence with a hard copy of their Annual Benefit Statement
F0907.07	The Chair to provide outstanding overviews of 1-2-1 calls to the Corporate Governance team
F0907.08	SPPA to facilitate ratification of decisions made within 7 September meeting with member representatives

Version Control		Version number
Date minutes sent to chair	6 October 2023	1.0
Date approved by chair	24 October 2023	1.0
Date approved by Board/committee	7 December 2023	2.0
Date of publication	2 February 2024	2.0