

OFFICIAL



SPPA

Scottish Public
Pensions Agency
Buidheann Peinnseanan
Poblach na h-Alba

Meeting	Scottish Police Pension Board
Meeting date	29 November 2023
Meeting time	14:00 – 16:30
Meeting location	MS Teams

Pension Board Members	Shirley Rogers (SR)*	Chair
	Steven Whalley (SW)*	Vice Chair
	Andrew Barker (AB)*	Pension Board Member
	Brian Jones (BJ)*	Pension Board Member
	Darren Paterson (DP)*	Pension Board Member
	David Christie (DC)*	Pension Board Member
	Sharon Dalli (SD)*	Pension Board Member
	Lorna Cunningham (LC)*	Pension Board Member
Other Attendees	David Robb (DR)*	SPPA Chief Executive Officer
	Frances Graham (FG)	SPPA Chief Operating Officer
	David Gunner (DG)	SPPA Programme Director
	Lorraine Spalding (LS)*	SPPA Project Communications & Engagement Lead
	Ian Coltman (IC)*	SPPA Head of Policy
	Laura Pacey (LP)	SPPA Head of Strategy & Communications
	Chris Nairns (CN)	SPPA Head of Service & Operational Delivery
	John Burns (JB)	SPPA Chief Finance Officer
	Anna Sowkron (AS)	SPPA Financial Controller
	Jonathan Sharp (JS)	SPPA Data Protection and Information Governance Manager
	Alan Paterson (AP)	SPPA Risk & Control Officer
	Kristine Hunter (KH)	SPPA Finance Business Partner
	Clare Moffat (CM)	SPPA Corporate Governance Manager
Apologies	Debbie Trafford (DT)	SPPA Head of People
	Darren Patterson (DP)	Pension Board Member
Minutes	Karen Hay	SPPA Corporate Governance Administrator

*joined remotely

1. Welcome, Apologies, Introductions and Declarations of interest

- 1.1 The Chair noted apologies from Darren Patterson and welcomed new member, Lorna Cunningham, Deputy General Secretary of Scottish Police Federation, to the Board.
- 1.2 The Chair advised the Board she had been appointed as Chair of the Scottish Qualifications Authority, and confirmed there was no conflict of interest to be managed in relation to continuing in the role as Chair of Scottish Police Pension Board.
- 1.3 No other new interests were declared.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 2.1 The Board noted discussions held to make Section 4.14 clearer – it was agreed the SPPA Governance team would update the document to reflect this and, subject to this change, the Board confirmed that the minutes of the previous meeting were a true and correct record.

3. Performance, Risk and Projects

3.1 DR provided an executive overview highlighting key performance updates in respect of:

- Remedy – with thanks to all teams working hard up to and through 1 October 2023 milestones.
- Personnel changes:
 - JB joined SPPA as Chief Finance Officer,
 - As Head of PSC has left SPPA to take up a new role, internal promotions for Debbie Trafford, Head of People and Laura Pacey, Head of Strategy and Communications, to cover this area of leadership.
- Budget announcement due on 19 December 2023.

3.2 The Chair provided a verbal update on engagement themes with SPPA since the last meeting, which included:

- Varied discussions on experiences of the other Pension Boards on Remedy and its impact on Customer Service - these suggested Police Scheme was in good order.
- Budget – challenging times ahead, with critical path of priorities to be addressed
- If/how the Board can help and support SPPA in the recruitment and retention of key staff.

3.3 DR thanked the Chair for the supportive comments and confirmed the operations team was strengthened by recruitment new Senior Manager appointments – Chris Nairns and Chris Gage recruited - and experienced staff moved to Remedy should return February/March 2024

P1123.01	SPPA to circulate revised Management Structure
P1123.02	SPPA to advise budget outcome as soon as more information available

Scheme Performance

3.4 FG presented new scheme-specific customer dashboard and highlighted:

- Quarterly data presented in arrears, giving useful indication of customer experience which was trending positively
- Email satisfaction score of 50% however it was noted from benchmarking workshops that SPPA was one of the few participants to gather customer satisfaction scores on email. Introduction of webform in quarter four should improve this score.

3.5 The new dashboard presentation was welcomed by the Board, who noted the clear layout of relevant information and insights.

3.6 The Board queried when a retirement estimate can be accessed – particularly at Superintendent rank and above with Annual Allowance (AA) and Lifetime Allowance (LTA) – and how might communications be promoted within the service. SPPA confirmed priority was given to estimates for those within 12 months of retirement, due to workloads and supporting remedy. As only a small number of senior officers affected by AA issues, these are looked at in isolation; this is the case across all schemes.

3.7 SPPA outlined aspiration to enable self-service calculators for estimate information and acknowledged software issues with mobile phone compatibility.

3.8 The Board asked if any plans had been made to utilise the MSS portal to provide immediate choice RSS's for actives, deferred and retirees and the increased participation that this would bring. SPPA confirmed this was considered during in depth Remedy workshops – particularly for immediate choice retirees and it was the intention to automate as much of the process as possible, with support from Scottish Government.

3.9 The Chair noted the progress to date with the quality of the new dashboard and asked Board members to provide further feedback. It was suggested the risks box within the performance pack should clearly translate to the risk registers so further development could make the reports more cohesive.

3.10 SPPA confirmed a full risk review was planned during December 2023 which will consider risk identification and mitigation, and SPPA risk management as a whole.

3.11 FG introduced a Police Operations Resourcing plan which outlined key operational issues in the next few months running alongside forecasted BAU volumes, manual processes

and contingent decisions to be managed (currently six for Police scheme). Resources will be stretched to manage this, despite surge planning, in addition to delivery of existing proposition, due to unprecedented manual processing.

- 3.12 The Chair thanked FG for the clear explanation and outlined that this resourcing plan had been requested to inform timescales and restraints over the next six months; to help Boards understand when and how the Agency will be under intense pressure.
- 3.13 The Board echoed the Chair's thanks, and confirmed it was helpful to see this to enable the service and staff associations to support and manage messaging and expectations.
- 3.14 The Board noted the risks of manual processing, and need for appropriate levels of QA, and endorsed SPPA's intention to work towards maximum automation to alleviate some of the pressure.
- 3.15 The Board offered to do more to manage expectations of the membership at this time of intense pressure – perhaps around estimates processing times to reduce demand. SPPA confirmed Board reps could help with messaging, particularly on how to manage immediate detriment and immediate choice – which gives membership the impression that their case will be remediated quicker than the timeline SPPA can work to.
- 3.16 There is planned communications activity within the Joint Remedy Working Group to support messaging to membership
- 3.17 It was noted that NPCC feedback from Police forces in England and Wales highlighted that SPPA's ability to manage the issue of dual statements and timely awards payments since 1 October has been recognised as surpassing any other forces' experience and the Board requested this significant achievement was noted with thanks to the team involved with Joint Remedy working.
- 3.18 The Chair suggested joint messaging could be included within pre-retirement seminars or with webinars available online to address gaps identified from member engagement insights.
- 3.19 It was noted the pre-retirement sessions were currently managed through the force so officers can be actively rostered off their shift to attend. It is hoped future offerings will include SPPA offering online information which officers could attend in their own time.
- 3.20 LS outlined the valuable work ongoing with staff associations and subgroups on communications and the joint commitment to continue to collaborate to drive forward information with membership. A newsletter would be coming soon to support this work.
- 3.21 The Chair acknowledged the value of the partnership working to date and commitment to work collaboratively.

Finance

- 3.22 AS provided an insight on transactional finance volumes and monthly values which have increased due to Annual Pension Increase that was applied at the beginning of the financial year.
- 3.23 Revised Qtr. 1 numbers were provided for lump sum, as previous figures produced quoted monthly instead of quarterly results. Qtr. 1 and Qtr. 2 figures had been made available for comparison.
- 3.24 Plan to reduce pension payments after death - SPPA is part of the National Fraud Initiative and receive timely updates to allow quicker actions, in addition to our membership of the Tell Us Once scheme.

Data Protection & Risk

- 3.25 JS explained there had been changes to the risk management structure and he was now providing some strategic support while Risk & Assurance Manager was on maternity leave, however AP was managing most risk actions.
- 3.26 It was noted that supply chain security was an area of interest of Board Chairs at a recent session with CEO. JS confirmed SPPA's framework includes, but was not limited to:
 - Follows National Cyber Security Centre principles with assurance starting at procurement stage

- Ensures correct specifications for suppliers per SG terms and conditions, which includes requesting audits to test structures when we choose to
- building in elements within contracts to provide appropriate level of assurance, e.g. exit strategies
- additional assurances in alignment with existing frameworks – e.g. Crown Commercial Service list of reapproved suppliers
- gaining assurances and moving towards a mature supply chain management
- independent scrutiny of existing structure – e.g. recent deep dive with Audit & Risk Committee.

3.27 JS advised he aims to provide future supply chain assurance to the Board in the form of extra information on the dashboard which shows the range of key suppliers, gaps which have been challenged and reviewed, and assurances received.

3.28 The Chair reminded SPPA of the data security concerns, per breach in PSNI, and how investigation highlighted third party relationships and retention of data held by third party suppliers. The Board acknowledged previous assurances had been provided by SPPA that it had the right arrangements with those third parties. The Board now needed assurance that there was thorough due diligence around how those third parties retain sensitive information, such as around the movements of police officers.

3.29 The Vice Chair was encouraged by the serious consideration and encourage the analysis and report on third party supply chain management be produced and shared as quickly as possible.

P1123.03	SPPA to provide a detailed report on all third party suppliers and how they manage data risk
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3.30 JS summarised the information he would provide at future meetings articulating what has been asked for and reflects elements of supply chains, including:

- Customer risks, risk champions group and consolidate everything and ensure that the right risks get seen by the correct people
- Customer service workshop beginning of December – risk structures and escalations working effectively
- Risk dashboard in the pack - interested in further feedback
- Corporate risk register also included – improvement still being made WIP
- Risk flowing to the appropriate levels in the organisation.

3.31 The Board requested scheme-specific information be provided regularly in the style of the new corporate dashboard risk-highlighting slide and summary, and asked for the controls column reinstated on scheme specific register.

P1123.04	SPPA to provide scheme-specific risk dashboard and summary, and reinstate controls column into Police Specific Register
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Corporate Governance

3.32 The Chair noted the Board membership was at full complement following LC's appointment and reviews due were underway with extensions of tenure where outlined.

Break 15:10-15:20

Agency (incl. Annual Business Planning)

3.33 LP summarised the headlines and no questions were raised.

SPPA Annual Business Plan

3.34 SPPA will be setting up workshops with different sections of the business in December 2023 and in January 2024 there will be a collective opportunity for two members of each Board to be invited to participate in workshops to allow feedback on agency business plan for 2024.

3.35 The Chair encourage Board members to put names forward to participate and SPPA will forward dates at earliest opportunity.

Pension Platform Programme

3.36 DG summarised activity since the migration to the cloud and highlighted two issues which were encountered and resolved quickly:

- one day of outage due an issue with IP addresses
- MSS was lost for a very brief period due to a configuration error and we sought assurance and evidence that this will not happen again.

3.37 Police is in a relatively stable position overall, having moved across to the new platform and progressing as planned. It was highlighted that Java conversion – to move old calculations written in system with legacy cobalt code – will be a key enabler to looking forward and realise the true benefits to the members and the efficiency of the agency. Other possible service improvements were under consideration to digitise the retirement process.

Remedy

3.38 SPPA confirmed regulatory legislative objectives have been met and provided an overview of current status of project.

3.39 Deferred Choice – utilisation of functionality through Altair System did not work as hoped or envisaged, therefore a manual interim temporary solution has been put in place with an excel spreadsheet since October 2023. Since beginning of October SPPA have issued in excess of 200 dual RSS and we will continue in this way until a strategic solution is in place through the Altair system. This is expected to be in place by February 2024.

3.40 Immediate Choice – not actually immediate, as SPPA has 18 months to contact and action options of individuals that are retired now. As outlined earlier, SPPA is seeking an automated solution however, if this is not available, a manual alternative could be used for the 5500 retired remedy members who will get dual choice. This is likely to commence April 2024 for immediate choice and slightly earlier for immediate detriment, based on current timelines.

3.41 The Board queried the specific return to legacy issue noted in the paper which referred to functionality provided not matching records. SPPA confirmed that analysis had been undertaken with testing underway to compare data held by supplier before data is uploaded into the live system.

4. Other Board Business

Police Charter and Delivery Plan

4.1 LP shared the proposed Police Scheme Governance Schematic diagram which outlined how the elements that feed into the Annual Business Plan link to the corporate plan.

4.2 SPPA demonstrated how the deliverables were working in operations, what this all means for the customer experience and the clear links between the SPPA, the Employer and members on what needs to be achieved each individual customer journey.

4.3 The governance schematic showed relationships and LP highlighted this enabled earlier discussion of case queries at BAU level. It is intended from January 2024 the previous PIP, SLA Group or PETF would be replaced by the Scheme Charter which outlined responsibilities and a Technical Working Group (TWG) which would look at wider issues via partnership working.

4.4 Alongside, the delivery plan will be reviewed on a 6 monthly basis and engagement forums set up to review certain topics, e.g. complaints processes and lessons learned, on which updates will be provided to the Pension Board.

4.5 SPPA outlined issues could be directed to FG if not resolved at BAU level, . Transition from PIP will be managed going towards changeover, with proper governance and escalation routes, with SPA Deputy Chief Executive sign off planned for January 2024 with support from stakeholders.

4.6 SPPA and the Board thanked LP for her work to date and it was noted that recruitment was underway to continue the customer journey work in partnership with stakeholders with CN's oversight.

4.7 The Board recognised that as the existing SLA and related commitments under the PIP are between SPPA and SPA, the proposed transition away from this is subject to approval by the respective parties to this agreement.

4.8 It was noted the employer was committed to working with SPPA on the proposed transition away from the SLA and PIP to seek assurance that the intended outcomes of the PIP are embedded into the Delivery Plan, the detail of the SLA is included into the Charter, and on the details of the revised governance framework.

4.9 Prior to the next meeting between the SPPA COO and SPA Deputy CE, scheduled in January 2024, the employer will continue to engage with SPPA to understand the impact of this approach:

- To the existing SLA governance framework in place for the Police scheme, in providing assurance to both the PPB and the AO
- To ensure there is no dilution of the intended outcomes of the PIP and specific commitments from the Police SLA
- For SPA, as a single scheme employer, where there is greater opportunity for collaborative working in partnership; and where the SPA has AO responsibility for the Police scheme.

4.10 The Board cautioned that continued assurance should be sought to ensure that significant progress made via SLA and PIP should not be lost, with opportunities made available for the employer and member representatives to contribute and reminded that the Board could provide corporate memory, due to the long tenure of some Board members.

4.11 The Board recognised SPPA's requirement for consistent management across all the schemes it administered, whilst noting concerns with framework change, and the need for new TORs for any new forums, and protecting the fundamental relationship already in place. SPPA acknowledged these views and confirmed meetings between parties had been scheduled to discuss the read across of PIP goals to new schematic, with intention to minimise disruption during any transition. These conversations will be led by CN and his team.

External Engagement

4.12 LS presented a strategic overview, in addition to the paper provided, highlighting;

- Rationale for external engagement
- Visual representation of Inter-relationships
- External engagement communications plan
- SPPA priority to improve external engagement

4.13 SPPA outlined its intention to continue partnership working with policing partners to support the delivery of the plan, with subgroup forums to champion communications where required.

4.14 The Board were fully supportive of the proposals, highlighted the value of the lined-up approach and outlined commitment to adapting this approach to fit in with new governance model, noting the huge benefits of the jointed communications LS has led.

Horizon scanning

4.15 **The Chair highlighted this was** an opportunity where colleagues can think of things that are coming down the line useful for the board agenda for the next two or three meetings

4.16 It was noted there were 2024/25 Police budget option proposals to SPA, for awareness, and the Board noted these proposals were unlikely to affect administration volumes.

4.17 BJ confirmed the Staff Association routinely modelled retirement numbers, insights from which could be shared with SPPA.

5. Review of outstanding actions

5.1 SW outlined the action review was now at the end of the meeting, once the information provided has been discussed, to fully consider the actions.

5.2 List of actions agreed for closure:

P0523.03	Workforce Planning
P0523.04	Exec Updates
P830.01	Auto enrolment – work on comms to provide scheme benefits – SAB will review participation rates with additional PS payroll analysis
P830.02	Death in Service – complex cases/issues Highlighted that SPPA always available for discussion/feedback on individual cases
P830.04	Quality Assurance
P830.05	Risk - Circulated Risk register – circulated prior to meeting
P830.06	RSS
P830.07	Governance – Meeting arranged for Chair, VC & Board Members before next meeting
P830.08	Data Protection – document on security - circulated
P830.03	Finance - Clarification on Lump Sum comparisons
P1122.08	PPP - Review of communication around PPP project

5.3 It was agreed action P1122.07 would remain open with a new date to be forecast to update the risk documentation.

5.4 The Board thanked SW for leading on actions and all contributors to the efficient management, noting the quick review.

Any Other Business

5.5 The Chair highlight the next meeting is scheduled to be in person at SPPA on 21 February 2024 and expressed delight with Board participation and progress, and highlighted the quality of work by SPPA has been exceptional.

Summary of new actions

P1123.01	SPPA to circulate current management structure
P1123.02	SPPA to advise budget outcome and impact on SPPA as soon as information available
P1123.03	SPPA to provide a detailed report on all third party suppliers and how they manage data risk
P1123.04	SPPA to provide scheme-specific risk dashboard and summary, and reinstate controls column into Police Specific Register

Version Control		Version number
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