

Meeting	Management Advisory Board
Meeting date	03 February 2026
Meeting time	10:00-12:15
Meeting location	SPPA Tweedbank (Hybrid)

Members in attendance	Paul Gray	Chair
	Norman McNeil	Non-executive Board Member
	Mark Tarry	Non-executive Board Member
	Alan Wright	Non-executive Board Member
	Darren Curry	Non-executive Board Member
	Deborah Smith	Non-executive Board Member
	Victoria Bell	Non-executive Board Member
	Andrew Reynolds	Non-executive Board Member
		Chief Executive Officer, SPPA
		Deputy Chief Executive Office, SPPA
	Chief Operating Officer, SPPA	
	Head of People and Place, SPPA	
Other attendees		Deputy Director, Corporate Hub, Corporate Transformation and Workplace Directorate, Scottish Government
		Head of Strategy, Governance and Risk, SPPA
		Head of Business Transformation, SPPA
		Chief Financial Officer, SPPA
		Strategy and Business Planning Manager, SPPA
Apologies		Chief Transformation Officer, SPPA
Minute taker		Corporate Governance Manager, SPPA

1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed all participants, and invited introductions from attendees. The Chair highlighted the importance of all members familiarising themselves with the MAB Terms of Reference, suggesting a group discussion be scheduled to discuss.
- 1.2 Non-executive MAB members outlined what they hoped to contribute and gain from their involvement on the board. Contributions included expertise in digital transformation, complex change programmes, corporate governance, audit and risk, HR, and organisational delivery and

development. The value of constructive challenge and collaborative working to strengthen MAB and the relationship with SPPA Executive was acknowledged.

- 1.3 The Chair requested that the SPPA Executive Team reflect on the discussion and prepare a summary for the next meeting setting out what the Agency seeks from the MAB.

Action MAB 0226.01

SPPA Executive Team to reflect on its expectations of MAB members and prepare a one-page summary for the next meeting, which sets out what the Agency seeks from the MAB.

Deadline: October 2026

Owner: SPPA Head of Strategic Governance

2. Apologies and declarations of interest

- 2.1 Apologies were received from SPPA Chief Transformation Officer. The SPPA Head of Transformation attended the meeting in their place.
2.2 No new declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes and actions from previous meetings

- 3.1 The minute of the meeting held on 28 August 2025 had been approved electronically.
3.2 SPPA provided an update on all outstanding actions. The Board agreed that the action MAB0524.02 and recommendations MAB0225.01R and MAB 0225.02R could be closed.
3.3 The Board noted the revised completion date of June 2026 for action MAB0225.02 (Agency dashboard) and confirmed they were content with progress.

4. CEO Key issues - Remedy

- 4.1 The SPPA Chief Executive expressed strong support for the reconstituted MAB, referred members to the Remedy paper, and proposed arranging an ad hoc MAB meeting to consider the Remedy Programme in greater detail including agile approach needed to navigate complexities of programme, interdependencies, stakeholder communications and progress against plan.
4.2 The board discussed the materiality of Remedy-adjusted benefits, noting that additional payments may be significant for some Remedy-impacted members already in receipt of their standard pension.

- 4.3 SPPA committed to provide cohort datasets at the to-be-scheduled deep dive session and outlined communications material was already in place and regularly updated. External assurance processes will also be provided.

Action MAB 0226.02

SPPA to schedule further session(s) to cover:

1. Deep dive on Remedy (including cohort breakdowns)
2. MAB Terms of Reference

Deadline: June 2026

Owner: SPPA Head of Strategic Governance

5. Audit and Risk Committee Update

- 5.1 The ARC Chair provided a summary of collaborative engagement with SPPA, which included fraud, assurance mapping, annual report and accounts, section 22 report, and noted there were no items to flag for MAB's awareness.

6. SPPA Financial Strategy 2025-2030

- 6.1 SPPA Chief Finance Officer (CFO) joined the meeting to provide an update to the paper provided. The board:
- Noted the update from the SPPA Chief Finance Officer confirming that the Scottish Government had approved the 2026/27 Budget and that SPPA's funding request had been granted in full, aligning with Option 2 of the Financial Strategy.
 - Noted the current Financial Strategy which will be updated to reflect:
 - the approved 2026/27 Budget; and
 - any feedback provided on the current version.
 - Agreed that members may submit individual feedback directly following the meeting.
 - Noted that there may be an opportunity to incorporate indicative long-term funding and service implications extending beyond the 2025–30 period currently covered.
 - Noted that the section on the potential employer levy funding model had been intentionally summarised and that a more detailed report will be provided to MAB prior to any decision to progress implementation.
 - Noted the SPPA CFO's comments regarding the 2025/26 budget position, including that while an additional £1.8m — consistent with SPPA's Ministerial Submission and Option 2 of the Financial Strategy — had been recognised by DG Corporate as a cost pressure, this did not constitute a formal budget transfer. As a result, SPPA's 2025/26 financial statements are expected to show an outturn exceeding the formal

budget, with an explanatory note to reference DG Corporate's prior acknowledgement.

- 6.2 The ARC Chair confirmed that the Committee had contributed to the development of the strategy and that many of its views were reflected in the version presented. It was noted that any future changes to the funding model would require significant resources, making the timing of such changes critical and all implications thoroughly considered.
- 6.3 The Chair highlighted Audit Scotland had reviewed the draft and commented the arrangements appeared appropriate and satisfactory, which provides reasonable assurance on the current version of the Financial Strategy. He encouraged SPPA to continue to review, considering long-term future and materiality of any changes very carefully, with ARC's assistance.

Break 11:04-11:15

7. SPPA Strategic Priorities, business planning and impact on pension platform options

- 7.1 The SPPA Deputy Chief Executive (DCEO) reported that the current Corporate Plan ends in March 2027 and that work has begun on a new five-year plan, including an appraisal of future pension administration platform options.
- 7.2 The Board noted the significant challenges faced since the existing plan was drafted, including Remedy, and the Agency's aim to establish strong foundations for future planning.
- 7.3 The paper set out the strategic context, proposed priorities for the next 12-18 months, draft strategic aims for the next five years, and findings from discovery work and critical path analysis on pension platform modernisation.
- 7.4 During the discussion that followed, the Board considered the proposed approach and:
- Collectively agreed the appropriateness of focusing the next 12-18 months on stability of core services and delivery of statutory programmes
 - Recommended the development of success factors for each area of the annual Business Plan, with an organisational-level summary; incorporating considered prioritised improvement objectives that would support progress without placing BAU activities at risk e.g.:
 - contract quality, supplier management, full utilisation of system capabilities.
 - evolution of operating model
 - development of customer experience journey framework
 - employer engagement.
 - Supported the overall direction and ambition of the draft strategic aims for inclusion in the new Corporate Plan, encouraging the Executive to

bank existing transformation whilst further developing and refining its approach to meet organisational ambition of next 10-15 years.

- 7.5 The group discussed procurement timelines, including contract length, desired future functionality of pension platform, recognised the progress with improved supplier management and desire to build program functionality and management capabilities within the organisation.
- 7.6 The Board emphasised the importance of clear documentation of risks, dependencies and critical path analysis and requested that an updated paper be presented at the next meeting setting out the associated timelines, assumptions, and potential failure points across all considered options.
- 7.7 In response to the paper's request for strategic advice, the Chair summarised the Board's broad support for the proposed approach with the following advice:
- 12-18 month focus: The Board agreed that prioritising the delivery of statutory programmes and stabilising core services represented a realistic and solid foundation for the next Corporate Plan period, with strengthened programme management, improved data quality and continued enhancement of IT, governance and organisational capability.
 - Draft Strategic Aims: The Board supported the overall direction and ambition of the draft strategic aims for inclusion within the next Corporate Plan. Members encouraged further development of measurable success factors and organisational-level outcomes to ensure aims remain realistic, coherent and aligned with SPPA's long-term ambition over the next 10–15 years.
 - Pension Platform Options / Contract Approach: In considering pension platform modernisation, the Board agreed the proposed approach was a proportionate and risk-managed staging decision. The Board supported an approach that maintains service continuity, avoids premature procurement commitments, and allows SPPA to strengthen internal capability, governance, and readiness before entering any future procurement process.

Action MAB 0226.03

SPPA to provide an updated paper to the meeting on 29 October 2026 which sets out the associated timelines, assumptions, and potential failure points across all considered options within MAB 11/25

Deadline: October 2026

Owner: SPPA Head of Strategic Governance

8. Any other business

8.1 The Chair complimented SPPA on the high-quality papers provided and thanked attendees for their contributions then closed the meeting at 12:14.

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