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 Scottish Public  
Pensions Agency  
Buidheann Peinneanar  
Poblach na h-Alba

<b>Meeting</b>	Scottish Police Pension Board
<b>Meeting date</b>	02 March 2026
<b>Meeting time</b>	10:30-12.30
<b>Meeting location</b>	Microsoft Teams

Pension Board members	Shirley Rogers	Chair
	Andrew Barker	Pension Board Member
	Brian Jones	Pension Board Member
	Darren Paterson	Pension Board Member
	Eddie Pilkington	Pension Board Member
Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) attendees	Chief Operating Officer	
	Corporate Governance Manager	
	Chief Transformation Officer	
	Governance, Risk and Controls Manager	
	Head of Policy	
	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	
	Strategic communications Lead	
	Programme Delivery Manager	
	Financial Controller	
	Chief Executive Officer	
Head of Strategy, Governance and Communications		
Apologies	Lorna Cunningham	Pension Board Member
	Patrick Brown	Pension Board Member
Minutes	SPPA Governance Delivery Lead	

**1. Welcome and apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all attendees and noted apologies from Patrick Brown and Lorna Robertson.
- 1.2 No new interests were declared.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 2.1 The Board agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were a true and correct record.

**3. Review of Actions**

- 3.1 The Chair referenced the outstanding Police Pension Board actions identified as 'propose to close' in the pack, along with four actions from the Pension Board training event in November 2025. The Board agreed that all actions identified as 'propose to close' should be formally closed.
- 3.2 One action from the September 2025 meeting, relating to contingent decisions, remained open. The Head of Policy provided an update, and the Board agreed that the action should be carried forward, noting the progress to date and that this matter continues to be a UK-wide issue.

**4. Chief Executive Overview**

- 4.1 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), SPPA provided opening remarks and noted key points:

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- Reflected on recent public attention, particularly SPPA's appearance at the Finance Public Administration Committee (FPAC) in December 2025 regarding Remedy delivery. He highlighted that the FPAC session enabled panel members to gain a greater appreciation of the issues faced by SPPA.
- Noted that SPPA is scheduled to appear again before both the Public Administration Committee (PAC) and the FPAC on 17 March to provide a further progress update on Remedy delivery.
- Referenced Capita and other UK pension schemes, and the challenges they are currently facing, noting that SPPA has continued to maintain delivery of its core services where other administrators have experienced difficulties.
- Highlighted the remaining cases associated with Police Remedy delivery, and that a high-quality calculator is now available to Police scheme members, representing a significant improvement in the Remedy process.
- Noted the switch to the Engage member portal as another big improvement which will significantly improve service to members.
- Acknowledged feedback from the September 2025 Board meeting on the Police Terms of Reference (ToR), however no further amendments were proposed.

4.2 The Board noted the update and further discussed:

- The ToR and associated concerns regarding the Board's role. The CEO acknowledged these points and expressed the view that, as Agency performance continues to improve, the level of concern should correspondingly reduce.
- The recent Audit Scotland Section 22 report. The CEO advised that the observations contained in the report had since been addressed, recognising that the audit findings were retrospective in nature.
- The reduced frequency of Board meetings, which was being mitigated through the provision of additional information between meetings, including the monthly communications, and the activities of the Technical Working Group (TWG) and the Police Joint Remedy Working Group, all of which provide enhanced engagement and oversight.
- That SPPA remains willing to continue discussions with Board members on governance arrangements.

P0326.01	SPPA Deputy CEO to engage with Board members and discuss examples of areas they remain concerned with regarding Board governance, in addition as part of these conversations SPPA would share where governance has improved elsewhere in the Agency via different forums, and discuss with Board members where they could strengthen their assistance to SPPA with the outcome to be communicated to the Board by the next meeting in September 2026.
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- That the FPAC session served as a valuable prompt to ministers regarding resourcing needs, with SPPA subsequently securing the requested budget. The Board also recognised that there is now a clearer understanding of the issues raised and the actions required moving forward.
- The appointment of several Non-Executive members to the Management Advisory Board (MAB), including Paul Gray as the new Chair. Pension Board members were encouraged to attend the forthcoming Governance Seminar in May 2026 to meet Paul and the other newly appointed MAB members.

## 5. BAU Delivery

5.1 The Chief Operating Officer, SPPA provided an overview of BAU Delivery, noting key points:

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- A Remedy-compliant pension modeller will soon be available. This will represent a significant improvement and will integrate effectively with the Annual Benefit Statements (ABS) process, an area that has posed challenges in previous years.
- The Engage member portal was successfully launched in Q4, with over 7,000 Police scheme members already registered. Initial feedback had been positive, supported by lessons learned from the earlier deployment of Engage to the NHS and Teachers' schemes. Webform has now been fully integrated into the system and the same integration for the NHS and Teachers' schemes is scheduled for completion by June. Engage is now fully connected to the case management system, and automation capability is also in planning. The programme continues to work towards a digital-first member journey over the next 12 months, and regular communications will be issued to support adoption.
- Service restrictions had impacted call waiting times, which recently peaked but had since improved. Callback functionality was currently undergoing testing within the NHS scheme, and its implementation is expected to significantly reduce call abandonment rates.
- Recent recruitment initiatives, including for an Operations Manager for Police and Fire, a key appointment that will provide dedicated leadership and capacity in this area, and a Member Services Manager, a timely appointment given the launch of Engage and the focus on enhancing the member journey and driving efficiencies.

5.2 The Board noted the update and further discussed:

- That the sign-up rate to Engage (20%) exceeded SPPA's projected uptake at this stage (15%). Board members were encouraged to actively promote the Engage platform with support from the SPPA Communications Team, as members will be directed to use Engage as their primary point of contact.
- The need for early communication with Deferred members in relation to Engage, as SPPA do not hold email addresses for all members in this group. It was confirmed that SPPA will issue written updates to Deferred members and include relevant information in payslips, member newsletters, and other standard communication channels. The Employer Engagement Team will follow up with member and employer representatives to maximise the reach of these communications.

## 6. Technical Working Group Update

6.1 The Chief Operating Officer, SPPA referred members to the latest report included in the meeting pack and proposed that, going forward, it be presented to the Police Pension Board on an exception-only basis. This approach will ensure the report is brought forward only when specific input or action is required from Board members, with routine elements incorporated into the BAU Delivery Update. There were no objections from Board members, and the proposal was agreed.

## 7. Annual Events

7.1 The Chief Transformation Officer, SPPA provided an overview of Annual Events, noting key points:

- The appointment of a new Project Manager. Unlike previous technically focused roles, this appointment is intended to strengthen governance structures and provide dedicated expertise in programme delivery.
- Work underway to develop a solution for issuing Deferred members' ABS, with the intention to commence distribution from April 2026. Where email addresses are not held for deferred members, statements will be issued by post. It was noted that

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recent data-cleansing activities with Heywood have resulted in an increased number of valid email addresses, which is a positive development.

- There are approximately 170 outstanding cases relating to both ABS and Annual Allowance (AA) statements, primarily linked to transfer activity, which continues to require significant processing time for SPPA. Work is ongoing with Heywood, and the aim is to begin issuing these statements from April/May 2026, subject to dependencies in other areas. It was noted that Club transfers will take longer to complete due to their inherent complexity.

7.2 The Board noted the update and further discussed:

- That engagement with relevant third parties will be required in relation to Club transfer cases, to ensure SPPA have the necessary information available once the supporting functionality goes live, thereby avoiding further delays. It was also agreed that it will be beneficial for SPPA to maintain oversight of the data required to complete Remedy activity across all schemes, with Operations able to supply the relevant information as needed.

## 8. Legislative Projects

8.1 The Chief Transformation Officer, SPPA provided an overview of Legislative Projects, noting key points:

- Approximately 600 members had yet to receive their Remediable Service Statement (RSS). Variations in the burnup chart projections were largely attributable to ill-health and injury benefit cases. SPPA is currently working through these with Finance, and once ministerial clarification is received, an update on the approach will be provided. A pause remained in place on ill-health overpayment cases and affected members will be contacted in due course.
- Work is continuing on the processing of beneficiary cases and ill-health re-assessments. Current planning indicated that 100% of Police cases are expected to be completed by the end of July 2026, with beneficiary and ill-health cases forming the final stages of this work.
- Work remained underway on matters relating to Lifetime Allowance. SPPA continues to engage with the Government Actuaries Department (GAD), who are currently developing the necessary calculators and associated guidance to support this work.
- Shared insights from the Police RSS responses, specifically focusing on member choices and underlying reasons. Analysis indicated that nearly 75% of members were already in receipt of their optimal pension position. The majority of the remaining members yet to respond were also assessed as already being in the best position.
- No specific update was available on Pensions Dashboard, with a more detailed update to be provided in the September 2026 Board meeting.

8.2 The Board noted the update and further discussed:

- Confidence levels SPPA would reach 100% of RSS issued by end of July 2026 should take into account an element of uncertainty, as there may still be unknown factors that could affect delivery.
- Ill-health overpayment cases and the rationale for overpayment recovery. which is the standard process, in line with the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM), and reflects UK-wide policy. It was noted that advice had identified a potential, though highly limited, basis for considering a collective waiver; however, such an approach would be deemed exceptional and has been examined thoroughly.
- The increased granularity now available as the number of outstanding RSS cases has reduced. SPPA confirmed that this level of detail can be incorporated into the

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Pension Board monthly communications, including breakdowns by cohort and visibility of how numbers are decreasing over time. It was noted that this will help illustrate that ill-health cases, in particular, are contributing to the remaining workload.

### 9. Member Engagement

9.1 The Strategic Communications Lead provided an overview of Member Engagement, noting key points:

- The Police Communications sub-group is now fully active again following the pause in meetings over the summer and autumn. SPPA expressed appreciation for the continued support provided in relation to Remedy member communications.
- Regular cycle of communications for members awaiting RSS is in progress, this will continue until completed.
- In respect of ill-health overpayments, the SPPA Communications team are keen for members to receive any updates directly, with discretion from Board members appreciated.
- Ongoing input and feedback was welcome in relation to member newsletters from Communications sub-group members, feedback thus far had been very positive.
- Noted that the coming months would be particularly demanding from a communications perspective, and the team is providing as much support as possible to the CEO and wider organisation. The team welcomed feedback from Board members on the effectiveness of ongoing communications and any areas where further refinement may be helpful.

9.2 No further discussion took place.

### 10. Update on Scheme Risks

10.1 The Governance, Risk and Control Manager provided an overview of Scheme Risks, noting that the paper was written from an Agency perspective with a Police Pension Board lens. The top SPPA risks that impacted the Police Pension scheme were as follows:

- Operational Remedy
- Data Strategy
- Data Quality
- Cyber Security
- Size and Shape of Agency
- Annual Events
- IT Effectiveness

10.2 The Board noted the update and further discussed:

- Cyber security, recognising it as a significant risk and exploring whether there is any additional support the Board could offer in this area. SPPA acknowledged that the current red risk position is not ideal, though it does represent an improvement. It was noted that internal capacity to undertake thorough cyber security checks and testing had only recently become available, although both Heywood and the Scottish Government (SG) have their own established cyber security measures in place. SPPA advised that, following completion of a full review, the risk score is expected to reduce by the next reporting period.
- The recent appointment of a new Head of SPPA IT, who was leading significant work to strengthen Cyber Security. It was agreed that the Head of SPPA IT will complete the ongoing work to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of IT, Information, and Cyber Security management before the Agency provide further assurance to Board members.

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P0326.02	Following the commencement of work to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of SPPA IT, Information, and Cyber Security management, SPPA to outline to Board members the latest position at the Board meeting falling in September 2026.
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- The work underway by the SPPA Risk Team in relation to fraud risk assessments, with the team working closely with SG Counter Fraud colleagues. Further activity planned for the year includes a risk assurance mapping exercise and a risk maturity assessment.

**11. Horizon Scanning**

11.1 The next Governance Seminar date is 21 May 2026. SPPA are currently developing the agenda, and Cyber Security will be considered as an item for inclusion. The Chair encouraged full attendance at the event from Police Board members.

**12. Police Pension Board Terms of Reference**

12.1 The updated Police Pension Board ToR were included in the pack for noting. The discussion from earlier in the meeting was referenced and the ToR was agreed.

**13. Police Pension Accounts – 2024/25 Annual Accounts position**

13.1 The report in the pack was noted, with a request from SPPA to include a comparable view from the previous year as a point of reference.

**14. Any Other Business**

14.1 No AOB was raised.

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**Summary of new Actions**

P0326.01	SPPA Deputy CEO to engage with Board members and discuss examples of areas they remain concerned with regarding Board governance, in addition as part of these conversations SPPA would share where governance has improved elsewhere in the Agency via different forums, and discuss with Board members where they could strengthen their assistance to SPPA with the outcome to be communicated to the Board by the next meeting in September 2026.
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