

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF POLICE PENSION BOARD
HELD AT NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD, WATERSIDE TOWER,
CLARENDON DOCK, BELFAST
TUESDAY 6 DECEMBER 2022 at 2pm**

PRESENT:

Mr Michael Burton, Chair
Mr Liam Kelly (Police Federation of Northern Ireland)
Mr Mark McEwan, Assistant Chief Constable (Chief Police Officers Staff Association)
Superintendent (Supt) Ian Magee
Ms Alison McClune (PSNI)
Ms Aislinn McGuckin, (Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits, Northern Ireland Policing Board)
Mr Brian Quinn (Independent)
Ms Sinead Simpson (Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Policing Board)

PSNI REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Jim Montgomery (PSNI Pensions Branch)

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

3 Board Officials

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2022

The minutes of the Police Pension Board (PPB) meeting on 6 September 2022 were approved. The Chair asked that they also be published on the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) website. **(AP1)**

4. ACTION LOG

Members noted that all outstanding actions following the previous PPB meeting had been completed.

5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

5.1 The Pensions Regulator Supervisory Report Update

The Chair confirmed that the Pensions Regulator Supervisory Report had been received with green status and 21 recommendations. He stated that further consideration would need to be taken before sharing with all Board members.

5.2 Member Training Plan Update

The Chair discussed upcoming plans for Member training and noted the requirement for all Members to complete their Effectiveness Questionnaire in advance of future training being introduced. He requested that Board officials share the Effectiveness Questionnaire with PSNI Employer Representative for completion. **(AP2)**

6. SCHEME MANAGER REPORT

The Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits provided an overview of ongoing workstreams following the previous PPB meeting in September 2022. The report provided members with a high-level update on key activities involving the Scheme Manager, as well as any key updates and information in the area of police pensions.

Items discussed included:

- Engagement with the Scheme Administrator in relation to ongoing work and ad-hoc issues.
- Confirmation of no update on legal cases, and no new engagement with the Pensions Ombudsman during the reporting period.
- The Pensions Regulator Scheme Return is due, which the Scheme Manager and Administrator will collaborate on. No notice has been received this year in relation to The Pensions Regulator Survey.
- Resources Committee met on 3 occasions with all pension and injury benefit results issuing in the usual manner.
- A finalised McCloud Benefits Calculator was received; however, there have been IT issues. Further updates will be shared with key stakeholders.
- A Tripartite Pensions Group was established with representatives from the Scheme Manager and Administrator.

7. PSNI GOVERNANCE REPORT AND SCHEME FINANCE

7.1 Quarterly Scheme Administrator Report

The T/ Head of Pensions Branch provided an overview of the Quarterly Scheme Administration Report. The paper provided Members with an analysis of scheme membership, financial reporting, branch performance and governance.

Items discussed included:

- Age and gender analysis of new entrants and opt outs to the Pension Scheme, as well as analysis of pensioners, dependents and deferred members.
- Current year financial figures as at the end of October 2022.
- Confirmation of continued employers and employee contributions.
- An Internal Audit for 2021/22 had been completed. The Overall Audit Opinion was “Satisfactory” with no recommendations made.
- The Chair thanked T/ Head of Pensions Branch for confirming that Annual Benefit Statements were issued by 31 August 2022 for all 3 pension schemes.
- Annual Benefit Statements were issued to all officers who breached the Annual Allowance threshold. It was noted that Pensions Branch worked closely and effectively with officers as good practice.
- T/ Head of Pensions Branch to look into the possibility of increasing the transfers target from 56 days to 90 days. **AP3**

7.2 Pensions Dashboard

The T/ Head of Pensions Branch provided an overview on the progress of the Pensions Dashboard Programme and noted the Programme had been delayed because of the impact of the McCloud Remedy on pension schemes.

The T/ Head of Pensions Branch also provided an update on the drafting of the legislation that would govern the Programme, noting that the security concerns that had been expressed were being taken on board and when the Programme was in place, participants may provide as much or as little information as they wish to the Programme.

7.3 Procurement of Electronic Pension Administration System Update

The T/ Head of Pensions Branch provided an update on the procurement of an electronic Pension Administration System, stating that they were going through the evaluation process with a bidder and was hopefully on schedule to deliver by October 2023.

8. POLICE PENSION BOARD RISK REGISTER

Members discussed each Risk on the Register including the inherent and residual risks scores and agreed on the following updates to the Register.

1. Risk 2 (Record Keeping), Members reviewed this risk and noted that it has the potential to go green once the electronic case management system is in place.
2. Risk 3 (Pension Administrator Controls), Members discussed this risk and noted that the Information Sharing Agreement had not yet been looked at. An update on progress would be given in 2023/24.
3. Risk 5 (McCloud Remedy), Members reviewed this risk and agreed that it should be re-drafted and reviewed for the next meeting in March 2023.

Officials agreed to action all Risk Register changes as requested by Members.

(AP4)

PPB members agreed that key milestones are needed to be included within the PPB Risk Register regarding the Legacy Cases Reassessment Project. It was agreed that as soon as a communications plan is circulated by the NPCC that this will be shared with PPB Members. **(AP5)**

9. MCCLOUD REMEDY PROJECT

9.1 Legislative Update

The Independent Pensions Advisor noted that phase two of the McCloud Remedy was under way now that all remaining active members of the 1988 and 2006 Police Pension Schemes had transferred to the 2015 Police Pension Scheme. It was further noted that the implementation of the Retrospective Remedy and its regulations should be in force by 1 October 2023.

9.2 Scheme Administrator Update including Staffing/Resourcing and IT Infrastructure Updates

The T/ Head of Pensions Branch provided an update on staffing/resourcing and IT infrastructure noting that the on boarding of three new staff members in the branch in 2022 ensured that they were back to appropriate staffing levels which positively impacted their ability to meet expected performance measures.

9.3 Government Actuary Department Calculator

The Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits confirmed that a finalised calculator, bespoke to Northern Ireland, had been received. However, there have been technical difficulties with the IT infrastructure. IT continue to try and have this calculator up and running as soon as possible. Further updates will be shared with key stakeholders outside of PPB meetings, as and when they are received.

9.4 Legacy Cases (Retired) Reassessment Project

The Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits discussed how Board Officials had worked closely with various stakeholders to determine the next steps in relation to those immediate choice members who ill health retired during the Remedy Period under their legacy schemes. A reassessment project has now commenced with key tasks to include collating a list of affected officers, implementing a communications plan, and agreeing doctor availability. The project is due to conclude in time for 1 October 2023 deadline and key milestones will be provided to members. **(AP6)**

9.5 Legacy Cases (In Process) Project

The Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits noted that Board Officials continue to work with stakeholders on this ongoing project relating to those officers who were already in, but had not yet completed, the ill health retirement process at 31 March 2022. An early-stage approach had been taken to identify those officers within the legacy scheme that transferred to the 2015 scheme, to ensure they could be provided an underpin option from both of their schemes.

10. MEMBER TRAINING

10.1 Remedy Period IHR Project

The Independent Pensions Advisor noted that implementation of the Remedy would include re-assessment of certain ill health retirements between 2015 and 2022.

The purpose being to understand whether any ill-health retirement applications under a member's existing pension scheme would have been eligible for ill health benefits under the alternative pension scheme. The process is due to conclude in time for 1 October 2023.

10.2 Public Services Pension Schemes

(Rectification of Unlawful Discrimination) (Tax) Regulations 2023

The Independent Pensions Advisor advised that HMRC released their consultation on draft regulations that deal with the tax treatment of the Remedy, noting that the Remedy will make retrospective changes to pensionable service. The aim of Aim of the regulations is to put members in the tax position they would have been in had the discrimination not happened. This legislation is intended to take effect from 6 April 2023, but some provisions will have a retrospective effect.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

PPB members had no further items to discuss.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 2pm.

The meeting ended at 3:36PM

MR MICHAEL BURTON
CHAIRMAN