

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF POLICE PENSION BOARD
HELD AT NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD, WATERSIDE TOWER,
CLARENDON DOCK, BELFAST
WEDNESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2021 at 2:30pm**

PRESENT:

Mr Michael Burton, Chair
Mr Liam Kelly (Police Federation of Northern Ireland)*
Mr Mark McEwan, Assistant Chief Constable (Chief Police Officers Staff Association)*

Ms Aislinn McGuckin (T/Director of Police Administration, 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

SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN IRELAND REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE

Superintendent (Supt) Ewan Anderson

THE PENSIONS REGULATOR REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Richard Caines*
Mr Timothy Lunn*

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

2 Board Officials

*Attended via Video Conference

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

The Chair welcomed Mr Richard Caines and Mr Timothy Lunn, The Pensions Regulator (TPR) to the meeting noting that they were attending the meeting to observe as part of the going TPR supervisory project of the Police Pension Board.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Chair noted changes to the membership of the Police Pension Board (PPB) since the last meeting and welcomed new Member NIPB Chief Executive, Ms Sinead Simpson to the meeting. The Chair further noted the resignation of Mr Paul King, PSNI Head of Financial Reporting & Accounting Services from the PPB. The PSNI had not yet nominated a replacement to the PPB and so Mr Jim Montgomery, PSNI Pensions Branch, would be attending PPB meetings until a replacement for Mr King was identified.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the PPB meeting on 13 September 2021 were approved. The Chair asked that they also be published on the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) website.

5. MATTERS ARISING

5.1 Pension Toolkit Training for Members

The T/ Director of Police Administration noted that as had been discussed at previous meetings the link to the Pension Toolkit Training had been circulated to all Members via email on a number of occasions.

The T/ Director of Police Administration noted that some Members had not yet completed the Toolkit and agreed to recirculate the link for Toolkit Training to all Members while noting the requirement to complete this training on appointment to the PPB. **(AP1)**

5.2 Police Pension Board Reporting Breaches of Law Policy

The T/Director of Police Administration confirmed that the Reporting Breaches of Law Policy had been updated to include a Decision Tree at Annex D as had been discussed at the previous meeting on 13 September 2021.

The Police Pension Board approved the Reporting Breaches of Law Policy and the Chair asked that the Policy be published on the NIPB website. **(AP2)**

5.3 Information Sharing Agreement

The T/Director of Police Administration provided an update on the ongoing development of an Information Sharing Agreement (ISA) between the Scheme Manager and Scheme Administrator noting that the ISA was intended to codify existing practices whereby limited information was shared between the Scheme Manager and Scheme Administrator. The T/Director of Police Administration agreed to share updated on the ISA with the PPB at the next meeting in March 2022. **(AP3)**

5.4 Correspondence to Scheme Advisory Board re Information Sharing Sessions

It was noted that an update about this would be provided later in the meeting at agenda item 9.2.

5.5 New Quarterly Scheme Administrator Report Format

It was noted that an update about this would be provided later in the meeting at agenda item 7.1,

6. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

6.1 Pension Scheme Annual Return to The Pension Regulator

Members noted that the Pension Scheme Annual Return had been submitted to TPR.

7. PSNI GOVERNANCE REPORT & SCHEME FINANCE

7.1 Quarterly Scheme Administrator Report

A PSNI Pensions Branch Official provided an overview of the Quarterly Scheme Administration Report, noting that changes to the content and format would be made to the Report before the next meeting in March 2022. The Chair asked NIPB Officials to schedule a meeting in early 2022 with him and Pensions Branch Officials to meet and discuss the content and format of the Report. **(AP4)**

The paper provided Members with an analysis of scheme movements, current scheme membership, and an overview of the current performance levels.

Items discussed included:

- The current position of PSNI's pension budget and spending as at the end of October 2021.
- Confirmation that all monthly payrolls were maintained and paid on time.
- The processing of retire notices, Cash Equivalent Transfer Values (CETVs), and changes to Tax records as of October 2021.
- Annual Benefit Statements have been issued to all active Members.
- Confirmation that there were no breaches of law or data issues and no complaints received during the period.
- Details of pension overpayment made to Members and confirmation that these monies were recouped.
- Enquiries received by the PSNI Pensions Branch as a result of McCloud and ongoing legal cases in England.

The T/ Director of Police Administration noted that the Pension Ombudsman had recently commended Pensions Branch and the Scheme Manager for their response times in dealing with matters of complaint.

The PSNI Pensions Branch Official further provided an update on a going legal case on equality grounds by the partner of a Member of the 1988 Police Pension Scheme. The Chair asked that an update be provided to the PPB at each meeting on the progress of the case. **(AP5)**

7.2 Pensions Dashboard

A PSNI Pensions Branch Official provided an update on the progress of the Pensions Dashboard Programme (PDP) including a timeline of events set for the remainder of 2021 to autumn 2022.

It was noted that data matching guidance had been issued by the Pensions Administration Standards Association which was being review by the PSNI IT Security Branch. PSNI had been identified issues about the sharing of information classified as Secret to the PDP's lower security classification IT system.

8. POLICE PENSION BOARD RISK REGISTER

The Police Pension Board Risk Register was discussed noting that the changes requested at the meeting on 13 September 2021 had been actioned.

Members discussed each Risk on the Register including the inherent and residual risks scores and agreed changes to the Register including the de-escalation and return of some risks to the Register:

1. Risk 2 (Conflicts of Interest). Members reviewed this risk and agreed that due to robust safeguards in place that it could be de-escalated from the Register.
2. Risk 3 (Record-Keeping). Members reviewed this risk and agreed that given the implication of McCloud on record-keeping the risk should remain on the Register and categorised as Amber. PSNI Pensions Branch agreed to provide an update on the procurement of a Pension Administration System. **(AP6)**
3. Risk 4 (Pension Administrator Controls). Members discussed the risk and agreed no further changes were required to the Risk Register. As had been

agreed earlier in the meeting, the T/ Director of Police Administration would share the ISA with PPB Members at the next meeting.

4. Risk 5 (Member Communications), Members discussed the risk and agreed no changes were required.
5. Risk 6 (McCloud), Members discussed the risk noting the continued uncertainty over the McCloud Remedy. Members noted correspondence received from Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) about Immediate Detriment cases and asked that it be referenced on the Register. **(AP7)** Members further noted that there had been no further information received from the Department of Justice about whether there would be information sharing sessions for impacted Scheme Members.

Members further discussed slow progress being made by the PSNI in the procurement of a Pensions Administration System and asked Officials to add this risk to the Register. **(AP8)** A PSNI Pensions Branch Official provided an update noting that the procurement of an Administration System was included within the PSNI's Digital Strategy and the Financial Plan costings was deliverable.

PSNI Pensions Branch Official also noted that a PSNI Working Group was being convened to progress the procurement of the Pension Administration System. The Chair requested that a note of the inaugural Working Group meeting and meeting dates be made available to PPB **(AP9)** The Chair further requested that Working Group updates be provided to the PPB **(AP10)** and Assistant Chief Constable McEwan agreed to raise the procurement of a Pension Administration System with the PSNI Service Executive Team to ensure support for it **(AP11)**

In relation to the de-escalated risk relating to COVID-19, due to the development of a new COVID-19 variant (Omicron) Members agreed to keeping a watching brief with a view to potentially reinstating this risk to the Register.

9. MCCLLOUD REMEDY PROJECT

9.1 Legislative Update

The independent Pensions Advisor provided an update on progress made in relation to legislation dealing with the McCloud Remedy - *The Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill* was progressing through the parliamentary process and had received its third reading in the House of Lords. Members were further updated on the launch of an eight week public consultation on the *Police Pensions (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022*. The consultation document was similar to the consultation document launched in England and Wales and it would close on 24 January 2022. Members noted that the Scheme Manager would prepare a response with input from the PSNI. It was further noted that the Staff Associations would prepare their own responses to the consultation.

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

A PSNI Pensions Branch Official provided an update on staffing/resourcing and IT infrastructure required to deal with the implementation of the McCloud Remedy.

Items discussed included:

1. Confirmation that PSNI have acquired a new member of staff; with further progress being made to fill remaining posts to help deal with increased work streams as a result of the implementation of the McCloud Remedy.
2. Guidance was awaited on the issuing of 2023 Annual Benefit Statements.
3. Work ongoing to introduce a new Pensions Administrator system.
4. Member communications - it was noted that information was made available to Members electronically.

The Head of PSNI Pensions Branch noted that there was no further update on the provision of financial advice roadshows to Members and the T/Director of Police Administration agreed to contact the DoJ to seek clarity. **(AP12)**

10. 2022 MEETING DATES

Members noted the 2022 PPB meeting dates.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

T/Director of Police Administration noted the recent Court of Appeal Judgment in Lloyd Kelly vs Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Constabulary and the Board were seeking legal advice about the impact of the Judgment in Northern Ireland.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 8 March 2022 at 2pm.

The meeting ended at 3.55pm.

MR MICHAEL BURTON
CHAIRMAN