

MINUTES OF MEETING OF POLICE PENSION BOARD

**WATERSIDE TOWER
MONDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2019
10.00am**

PRESENT:

Members: Michael Burton (Chair)
Liam Kelly (Police Federation NI)
ACC Mark Hamilton (Chief Police Officers Staff Association)
Superintendent John Magill (Superintendent's Association NI)
Amanda Stewart (Chief Executive NI Policing Board).
Brian Quinn (Independent)

Also present: Aislinn McGuckin (T/Director of Police Administration, NI Policing Board)
Jim Montgomery (PSNI)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Paul King (PSNI) and Tim Logan (Director of Resources, NI Policing Board).

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chair asked members to consider today's agenda and advise if there were any conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair requested that the Members present at the Police Pension Board (PPB) meeting on 20 May 2019 advise if they were content that the draft minutes represented an accurate account of the meeting. Members agreed the minutes as accurate and that they should be published on the NIPB's website.

Action: Board officials to ensure the minutes of the PPB meeting of 20 May 2019 are published on NIPB's website.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Members considered a paper regarding the matters arising from the PPB meeting of 20 May 2019. Members noted that all of the agreed actions had been either been progressed or an update would be provided during the course of PPB meeting on 30 September 2019.

Members also discussed the frequency of PPB meetings. This was further to recent talks delivered by the Pensions Regulator (to include at the Northern Ireland Local Government Pension Scheme Conference) in which it was recommended that pension boards should meet every quarter.

Members agreed that the PPB would meet every quarter. Members further agreed that three formal meetings would be held annually and the fourth meeting would be tabled for CPD seminars and training sessions together with any other business that might arise.

Action: Members agreed that the PPB Terms of Reference should be updated to reflect the move to quarterly meetings.

5. PSNI GOVERNANCE REPORT

Jim Montgomery briefed Members on the PSNI Governance Report paper tabled at the meeting. This paper provided Members with an analysis of scheme movements, changes to scheme membership, and an overview of the current performance levels for key items such as response times to general pension queries.

Other issues discussed by Members included:

- The current position of PSNI's pension budget and how it was hoped that PSNI would not need to avail of monitoring rounds, rather that they would

place inside their current budget. This position was caveated by the unpredictability of Ill Health Retirement and Injury on Duty applications.

- Scheme movements and in particular opt out numbers and trends. It was noted amongst other things that the current trend for op outs appeared to be those officers with over 30 years of service, with very few new scheme members opting out. It was also noted that scheme members should take independent financial advice before opting back into a scheme.
- The McCloud case was discussed together with the potential liabilities depending on outcome. It was noted that PSNI as Scheme Administrator and NIPB as Scheme Manager would need clear guidance from central government on what next steps were required once a remedy is decided.
- Members also discussed the Walker judgment, the out-workings of which are expected to be mirrored in Northern Ireland.

6. GMP RECONCILIATION EXERCISE

Members received an update from Jim Montgomery in relation to the GMP reconciliation exercise noting that the scheme financial reconciliation has now completed. Details on future equalisation are still to be reviewed by the Department of Finance and next steps on this are yet to be agreed.

Following the action agreed by the PPB at meeting on 20 May 2019, it was agreed that the GMP Reconciliation Exercise would remain on the agenda under 'Any Other Business' until the final return is copied to the PPB.

Action: Final GMP Return to be forwarded to PPB.

7. SCHEME FINANCE

Covered at Section 5

8. CURRENT PENSION OMBUDSMAN CASES

Aislinn McGuckin provided a short update in relation to two ongoing Ombudsman cases. Ms McGuckin explained that it appeared that the

Ombudsman was still dealing with a delay/backlog of cases and no responses and/or final decisions had been forthcoming on either case to date.

Action: NIPB Officials to share Pensions Ombudsman responses when these have been delivered by the Ombudsman.

9. PPB RISK REGISTER

Members noted that the PPB Risk Register had been updated in line with the approved amendments discussed at the 20 May 2019 meeting.

Following review, Members agreed the below in relation to updates to the register:

- (1) Training would be a standing agenda item for each 'fourth' PPB meeting, being the newest meeting agreed by Members per Agenda Item 4 (above).
- (3) PSNI are undertaking a data review in October 2019 and the out workings of this review would be incorporated into PSNI's report to the next PPB meeting.
- (5) The Risk Register is to be updated to reflect that the PSNI, as Pension Administrator issues a formal written report to the PPB as well as inputting orally to each PPB meeting.
- (7) GDPR to be removed from the PPB Risk Register. It will be continued to be monitored the regular Scheme Administrator/Manager meetings, with any issues arising brought to the PPB by the Scheme Administrator and Manager.

10. MEMBER TRAINING

Brian Quinn provided training to new PPB members. This training outlined key governance requirements in public service pension schemes. The training session also detailed the Pension Regulator Code of Practice 14 and gave an overview of the Police Pension Scheme 2015, amongst other things.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Jim Montgomery provided Members with an update on Annual Allowance Statements and confirmed that these had been issued by 31 August 2019.

Superintendent John Magill expressed his thanks directly to Jim for the work undertaken by PSNI Pensions Branch in producing these statements. He also commended the level of detail provided. Both the Chair and ACC Mark Hamilton echoed these sentiments.

Members also briefly discussed the PPB Chair's Annual Statement. Member's confirmed that they were content with same and that this should be uploaded to the NIPB's website.

Action: To upload the Chair's Annual Statement to NIPB's website.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted the provisional date of the next meeting of the Police Pensions Board as Monday 27 January 2020.

MR MICHAEL BURTON
CHAIRMAN