

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF POLICE PENSION BOARD
HELD AT POLICE FEDERATION HEADQUARTERS, BELFAST
TUESDAY 3 JUNE 2025 at 2PM**

PRESENT:

Michael Burton, Chair
Ryan Henderson, Assistant Chief Constable (ACC)
Damian Walsh (Police Federation NI)
Alison McClune (PSNI Pensions Branch)
Sinead Simpson, (Northern Ireland Policing Board)
Sarah Reid, (Northern Ireland Policing Board)

**PSNI REPRESENTATIVES IN
ATTENDANCE**

Michael McKeown (PSNI Pensions Branch)

**NORTHERN IRELAND
POLICING BOARD OFFICIALS
IN ATTENDANCE**

1 Board Official

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Liam Kelly, Brian Quinn and Amanda Ford. Michael Hanna was due to attend in Amanda's absence but due to a diary issue was not in attendance.

The Chair, on behalf of the Board, congratulated Michael McKeown (**MM**) on his recent appointment as Head of the PSNI Pensions Branch.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2024

As March's sitting of the PPB took place by written procedure there were no minutes to approve.

4. ACTION LOG

Action Point **(AP) 4** (3 December 2024) meeting regarding Member training and the completion of conflict-of-interest returns remain open subject to confirmation that new members had completed the mandatory public sector toolkit. Members were requested to complete the necessary training and advise the secretariat.

Ryan Henderson **(RH)** confirmed he had completed The Pension Regulator **(TPR)** Toolkit. It was agreed that the PPB Secretariat will send **MM** the PPB induction pack, TPR Toolkit and Conflicts of Interest form for completion **(AP1)**

The secretariat advised that they would also be organising an induction training session for new members which would be delivered by Brian Quinn.

AP3 (4 March 2025) meeting regarding the approval of the amended Terms of Reference, remained outstanding as **RH** had not yet advised approval. **RH** who was present at the meeting confirmed his approval and it was agreed to close this action.

5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair advised that both he and the Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits **(PPIB)** Directorate would be attending the Public Sector Pensions Conference in London on the 19 June 2025. The Chair suggested that a representative from the PSNI Pensions Branch also consider attending. It was agreed that the PPIB Director would resend the conference invite to the PSNI Pensions Branch Official. **(AP2)**

6. SCHEME MANAGER REPORT

The Director of PPIB provided an overview of ongoing workstreams detailed within the Scheme Manager report. Specific reference was made to:

- A new Pension Forfeiture Procedure is in place which was approved by the Northern Ireland Policing Board's (**NIPB**) Resources Committee in December 2024. Officials subsequently brought six cases to March's sitting of this Committee whereby Members agreed that three cases did not meet the threshold for pension forfeiture and the remaining three cases should be sent to the Minister who should decide if a forfeiture certificate should be issued. This information has been sent to the Minister's office and PPIB officials are now in the process of obtaining additional information requested by the department. The secretariat agreed to send information on the three cases to the PFNI representative. **(AP3)**
- March's sitting of NIPB's Resources Committee considered the case of a serving officer who has applied for Ill Health Retirement but is currently subject criminal investigation and internal misconduct proceedings. Resources Committee Members agreed that, as per the governing Regulations, the officer should *be required to continue to serve*. The Director of PPIB updated that considering this case, Resources Committee Members had requested a policy to cover such occasions. A policy was drafted and sent to Crown Solicitor's Office (**CSO**) to ensure it was in keeping with the legislation. CSO advised that a policy was not appropriate or in keeping with the legislation, instead each case should be considered on its own merit. Members noted this approach.
- Regarding Selected Medical Practitioner (**SMP**) recruitment, there have been three successful applicants, each on a part-time basis. Two of the applicants have successfully transferred their existing security clearance and the remaining applicant is in the process of obtaining security clearance. The applicants in possession of security clearance have been invited to an SMP induction/ training day on 30 July 2025 which will also be attended by one of the existing SMP's.

PSNI GOVERNANCE REPORT AND SCHEME FINANCE

6.1 Quarterly Scheme Administrator Report

The Head of the PSNI 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.

The official highlighted the following workstreams:

Issuing of RSS Statements

- There have been significant issues with the Pension Scheme System and its ability to produce accurate statements. It was acknowledged that due to a change in management there is a lack of resources within Civica. Pensions Branch officials have been working closely with Civica on this issue with several workarounds being performed to ensure that the pension data is available. A meeting has been arranged with Civica on Thursday (7th June) to assess whether they will meet their objectives to deliver. There has been budget set aside for Civica staff to come on site to identify and then solve the problems. Pensions Branch officials are also awaiting outstanding calculations in respect of club transfers.
- It is anticipated that active members Remedial Service Statements (**RSS**) will be delivered with the Annual Benefit Statements by the end of August 2025. While PSNI is fully expecting to meet this date, if there is slippage the ABS gateway must be informed. Following this attention will move to immediate choice which they anticipate will be completed by the end of December 2025. The more difficult cases will be calculated manually if the information is not available from Civica.
- There have been ongoing issues with the service provided by Civica, however, it is expected that the forthcoming meeting will identify solutions

to allow dates to be communicated to members and these dates will also be advised to the Director of PPIB.

- A query arose regarding how overpayments would be dealt with. The Pensions Branch official advised that regarding serving officers, after they have indicated their choice, any overpayments due would be taken from their pay and this would be communicated to members.
- There has been limited guidance on the treatment of interest for Remedy, and it was agreed that the Director of PPIB would seek any available guidance and forward it to the Pensions Branch. **(AP4)**
- There was discussion regarding the impact of prospective divorce on calculations, which has been outstanding for some time. The Director of PPIB informed Members that GAD Guidance for Northern Ireland was expected, however, she had spoken with her equivalent within the Teacher's scheme who had advised that at present, they are following the England and Wales guidance with some technical differences. The Director of PPIB agreed to provide the Pensions Branch official with the contact details of her counterpart in the Teacher's scheme. **(AP5)**
- The Pensions Branch Official advised that any complaints regarding the delay in issuing RSS statements are being dealt with under NIPB's IDRPs procedure.
- The Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**) of NIPB acknowledged the work of PSNI Pensions Branch particularly given the Pension Branch official was only recently made permanent in the role.

Pensions Dashboard

- The Pensions Branch official advised that they have been liaising with Civica to deliver a solution in relation to the Pensions Dashboard. Civica believes that there is a deliverable solution however, a meeting is being organised with Civica to discuss the issues. The Director of PPIB may be asked to attend this meeting.
- The registration codes that were recently issued have instigated the process for connection. In considering the connect-by date set for the PSNI scheme (31 October 2025), it was agreed that a new date would likely be

required to enable the development of a solution that would ensure data protection and to allow for both technical and consumer testing phases.

- It was agreed that the Scheme Manager would be advised of a new connect-by date following discussions with Civica and members of the Board will be advised of this date via written procedure. **(AP6)**

Governance/Update on administration work

- Regarding the wording within the 'Enquiries' section of the Scheme Administrator's report *i.e. 'The pensions' administration team has continued to try and provide responses to general queries within 56 days of receipt where possible'* the Chair asked that this wording is revised going forward in line with TPR guidance.

7. POLICE PENSION BOARD RISK REGISTER

Members considered the current status of each risk and agreed the following:

- Risk 1 – the risk should remain with its current status due to changing membership.
- Risk 2 – the risk should remain with its current status until data cleansing has been completed and advised to the Scheme Manager.
- Risk 3 – the risk should remain with its current status. An SLA, which is currently being drafted by the Scheme Manager, will be finalised and shared with PSNI for consideration and signing.
- Risk 4 – the risk should remain with its current status however consideration should be given to changing it to red following the outcome of the Scheme Administrator's meeting with Civica.
- Risk 5 – the risk should remain at its current status. Members were advised that Box has been set up for the electronic transmission of serving officer cases from PSNI HR to PPIB going forward, however, if a case management system is developed, all current paper files held by the Board would need to be digitised. In respect of a potential case management system, a previous scoping exercise was carried out by the Board which resulted in the

development of a specification; however, this would need to be updated. The potential cost of a system is unknown and may be unaffordable, however, officials will continue to pursue this project.

- Risk 6 – the risk should remain at its current status; however, the residual rating may have to be changed to red if there is limited progress with Civica regarding a Dashboard solution as there is a reputational risk to both the NIPB and PSNI.

8. POLICE PENSION BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT (V2)

Members approved the updated Code of Conduct and agreed that it should be uploaded to the PPB section of NIPB's website and that members should formally sign up to it as part of the annual register of interest. It was also agreed that as the annual register has taken place, members will be requested via email to sign up to it following the meeting. **(AP7)**

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members attention was drawn to the anonymous complaints sent to NIPB regarding injury on duty awards. Members were advised that such complaints were being sent to PSNI HR who can share with Professional Standards Directorate colleagues, where appropriate.

The Chair advised that he was in the process of updating the PPB annual report which, when complete, will be circulated to note. He further advised that as part of his contract he had to conduct an annual review with individual members. He asked that going forward Members feed any communications through the PPB Secretariat and rather than individual meetings he will address any issues in his review with the CEO of NIPB.

The Pensions Branch Official advised that the first draft of the Annual Accounts has been sent to KPMG for commentary and is due back imminently. The next draft will be closer to a final version which will be shared with the Chair in draft format for signature. **(AP8)**

The Chair further advised that the Pension Board should have visibility of the terms of reference for any audits being conducted in respect of the PSNI or NIPB Pension Branches to ensure that any identified risks or issues can be included.

In closing the meeting, the Chair reminded Members of the need to meet the minimum requirement for attendance at PPB meetings.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be 1 October 2025.

MR MICHAEL BURTON
CHAIRMAN