

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF POLICE PENSION BOARD**

**WATERSIDE TOWER  
TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2020  
2pm**

**PRESENT:**

**Members:** Michael Burton (Chair)  
Superintendent Robert Drennan (Superintendent's Association NI)\*  
Brian Quinn (Independent)  
Amanda Stewart (Chief Executive, NI Policing Board).  
Aislinn McGuckin (T/ Police Administration Director, NI Policing Board)  
ACC Mark Hamilton (Chief Police Officers Staff Association)  
Paul King (PSNI)  
Liam Kelly (Police Federation NI)\*

**Also present:** One PSNI Official\*  
One Board Official

*\* Attended via video-conference*

**1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

**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 27 January 2020 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 27 January 2020 are published on NIPB's website.**

### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

Members considered a paper regarding the matters arising from the PPB meeting of 27 January 2020. Members noted that the majority of the matters had either been progressed or were on the agenda for the current meeting. In relation to Item 4 – Ongoing Pensions Ombudsman cases, Members noted there were no further updates at this stage.

### **5. PSNI GOVERNANCE REPORT & SCHEME FINANCE**

Paul King briefed Members on the PSNI Governance Report paper tabled at the meeting. This paper provided Members with an update of key financials and statistics together with a general update on the current matters arising within Pensions Administration.

The Chair thanked Paul's team for their work in relation to the Report and congratulated everyone on a clean audit opinion received in the accounts.

No issues were raised by Members in relation to the PSNI Governance Report.

## **6. PPB RISK REGISTER**

Aislinn McGuckin took Members through the Police Pension Board Risk Register and Members considered whether each item should remain on the Risk Register at this stage together with a revised risk rating if appropriate:

### **(1) Knowledge & Understanding**

Members confirmed that this risk should remain on the Risk Register. The Chair noted that it is important that a good training record is maintained. The Chair noted that the Public Sector Annual Conference did not take place as planned this year and is due to take place in March 2021.

### **(2) Conflicts of Interest**

Members confirmed that this risk should remain on the Risk Register.

**Action: Aislinn McGuckin to circulate a Conflict of Interest policy to Members as soon as a final draft has been produced.**

### **(3) Record Keeping**

Members confirmed that this risk should remain on the Risk Register.

**Action: Paul King to provide an update at the next meeting in relation to a data review and scores.**

### **(4) Reporting breaches**

Members confirmed that this risk should remain on the Risk Register.

Members noted that there was nothing new to report and that a matrix was in place should this ever need to be utilised.

#### **(5) Pensions Administrator controls**

Members confirmed that this risk should remain on the Risk Register.

Members noted that Administrator/Manager meetings had taken place via Zoom throughout the initial Covid-19 period. In addition, Members were advised that the Administrator and Manager were in contact on an ad-hoc basis as any/all issues arose and further regular meetings were also due to take place. Members noted that a contract formalising the reporting controls between the Manager and Administrator is to be drafted for consideration by PPB.

Amanda Stewart noted that a copy of the internal audit report had not been provided and asked if same could be shared.

**Action: Paul King agreed to provide Members with a copy of the internal audit report when it is finalised.**

#### **(6) Member communications**

Members confirmed that this risk should remain on the Risk Register. A PSNI Official noted that it may be prudent to have a separate risk in relation to IT infrastructure owing to the upcoming implications of the McCloud judgment. Members agreed to discuss this further at Agenda Item 7 (below).

**Action: Paul King and Aislinn McGuckin to liaise and draw up a risk in respect of the McCloud case for the Risk Register.**

## **(7) Covid-19**

Members confirmed that this risk should remain on the Risk Register. Amanda Stewart noted the current inherent and residual risks were both categorised as 'high' and this grading should remain. The Chair was confirmed his agreement with same.

## **7. MCCLOUD CONSULTATION**

This matter was discussed in detail following Member training given by Brian Quinn on the Police Pension Scheme and the McCloud consultation.

Issues discussed by the Members included:

- Tax advice/financial advice implications – DCC Mark Hamilton queried if there was responsibility from any stakeholders to provide financial advice. Paul King advised that it was unlikely that any of the key stakeholders in attendance at PPB bore a responsibility to provide tax or financial advice as they are not indemnified for same. Members agreed that this may have repercussions on Scheme Members. A lengthy discussion ensued on the implications of amount of providers sufficiently qualified to provide such advice.
- The Chair advised Members that the Department of Finance had issued its consultation in respect of the choice of remedies. Members discussed the onus on any/all PPB Members to provide a response to this consultation. DCC Mark Hamilton raised a query as to whether the PPB should be required to issue a collective response to the consultation however, the Chair advised this should be issued by the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB). Amanda Stewart suggested that it might be prudent for a letter to be issued by the PPB to the SAB to outline concerns in relation to the consultation, not least the IT and resourcing implications on PSNI. It was agreed that Amanda Stewart,

Aislinn McGuckin and Michael Burton would meet to draft a response to be circulated amongst Members for approval.

- Members discussed the proposed remedies generally following briefing from Brian Quinn to include the purported pros and cons of each option and the future impact on all stakeholders.
- Members discussed at length a variety of other issues relating to the judgment to include, but not limited to serving officers post 1 April 2022, Members who have left the scheme, IT solutions and resourcing at PSNI,

**Action: Amanda Stewart, Aislinn McGuckin and Michael Burton to draft letter to flag concerns in respect of the McCloud consultation.**

## **8. MEMBER TRAINING**

Brian Quinn provided training to Members on the Police Pension Scheme and the McCloud consultation. Brian took Members through a presentation and a lengthy discussion ensued and is detailed in Item 7 above.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **9.1 PSNI Pension Accounts 2019-20**

Paul King talked Members through the accounts.. The Chair thanked Paul and his team for this piece of work and Members approved the accounts.

### **9.2 Response to Covid-19**

DCC Mark Hamilton thanked Pensions Branch for their work during the pandemic and noted that pay and pensions have been unaffected throughout.

### **9.3 GMP Reconciliation Exercise**

Paul King noted that this is still an ongoing piece of work and the Chair recommended that this matter be kept on the agenda for the next meeting.

**Action: GMP Reconciliation Exercise to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.**

### **9.4 The Pensions Regulator Supervisory Project**

The Chair advised Members that a new point of contact at the Pensions Regulator had been appointed and following discussion with him, this project will be held in abeyance until later in the year. Amanda Stewart sought clarity from the Chair that the Regulator had no issues with the scheme and the Chair confirmed that the Regulator's role was merely to oversee the PPB and ensure that best practices were taking place and noted that the regulator had advised that no issues had been identified in respect of this scheme.

### **9.5 PSNI Pensions Branch Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure**

Members discussed the IDRPs here and in England and Wales and it was confirmed that a pros and cons paper to move from a two stage process to a one stage process only be presented at the next meeting.

**Action: Aislinn McGuckin and Paul King to liaise to produce the paper for the next meeting.**

### **9.6 PPB Terms of Reference**

Members discussed the current terms of reference particularly in relation to the time frame for papers being issued in advance of meetings. The current terms of reference state that papers should be issued 10 days in advance of the meetings. Following discussion Members agreed that it would be suitable for this to be changed to 5 days.

**Action: Terms of Reference to be amended to remove the 10 day period and replace same with 5 days for issuing of papers in advance of meetings.**

#### **9.7 National Fraud Initiative**

The Chair noted that Pensions Board are still exempt in relation to same as assurances have not been provided and therefore there is no onus on the Pensions Board at present to comply.

#### **9.8 Pensions Overpayment Policy**

Paul King took Members through the draft policy provided in the papers and sought clarification from Members that same could be agreed and the policy uploaded to the website. Members were content to agree to same.

### **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place in December with a date to be agreed in due course.

**Action: Potential dates to be provided to Members to agree on a date for the next meeting in December.**

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**MR MICHAEL BURTON**  
**CHAIRMAN**