Metropolitan Police Pension Board

Minutes of the Board's Meeting

Details	Date: 2nd June 2021
	Place: Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams

Present	Role	From
Pension Board Members		
Ian Pollitt (IPo)	Chair	Independent
Alex Anderson (AE)	Employer Representative	MOPAC
Catherine Roper (CR)	Employer Representative	Operational Policing/Professionalism
Paul Oliffe (PO)	Employer Representative	Finance
David McLaren (DMc)	Member Representative	CPOSA
Don Ratcliffe (DR)	Member Representative	NARPO
Kate Halpin (KH)	Member Representative	Superintendents' Association
Paul Deller (PDe)	Member Representative	Police Federation
In Attendance		
Ken Anthony (KA)	Pensions SME	Metropolitan Police
Paul Mudd (PM)	Secretarial	XPS Administration
John Kakatsos (JK)	Director	Equiniti
Iain Gray (IG)	Head of Remediation	Equniti
Apologies		
Mark Pomroy (MP)	Employer Representative	Human Resources

Minute		Action
	Introduction and apologies for absence	
2021-25	IPo opened the meeting and confirmed as quorate.	IPo
	AE replaces FA as the MOPAC Employer Representative.	

Minute	Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality	Action
2021-26	IPo asked Representatives to declare whether there were any conflicts to declare, explaining that a conflict would not necessarily preclude participation on the Board, as detailed within the Terms of Reference and the Conflicts Policy. There were no declarations from any member.	All
2021-27	**Minutes of Previous Meeting** IPo asked Members to confirm that they had received, read and agreed with the contents of the minutes from the previous meeting (3rd March 2021). These were then confirmed as a true record.	IPo
	Pension Board Action List	
2021-28	(AL1) – Biographies – It was agreed by the Board to remove this action from the list. AE asked to provide, however it was conformed that these are no longer published on the MPA website.	ALL
2021-29	(AL2) – ESA – KA advised that this project was at the point of conclusion with only a handful of cases to finalise.	KA
2021-30	(AL3) – Valuation – IPo informed the Board that this was linked in with the McCloud case and that more will be known and communicated about the valuation as progress is made on the remedy project. HMT had originally expected that the floor of the cost cap mechanism may be breached, however the impact of remedy is likely to see this change. HMT have indicated, that a waiver may be given to avoid short-term fluctuation to the scheme cost or benefit structure.	KA / IPo
2021-31	(AL17) Releasing AVCs through Utmost Life – KA confirmed that the position had not changed since the last meeting. KA explained the issue for the benefit of new members. DR added that his members were aware that discussions were ongoing and awaiting an outcome. KA confirmed that he had contacted the Home Office since the last meeting to chase progress on this item.	KA

Minute	Pension Board Action List (Continued)	Action
2021-32	AL19 – Opt-out Information	KA / IPo

IPo confirmed that this data had been made available immediately prior to the meeting and that this needs to be analysed to properly identify trends. An explanation was given to the Board as to why this information was important and the need to encourage membership of the scheme to ensure it's long-term solvency and to aid recruitment and retention.

2021-33	Agreed that the remaining items from the action list would be covered within the main agenda items.	All
2021-34	**Update from Administrators**	JK /IG / ALL

JK and IG joined the meeting to present an update from the Scheme Administrators.

JK introduced IG to the Board and explained that he had been drafted in to specifically focus on stabilising the administration service for the Metropolitan Police, explaining that Equiniti is keen to invest in the relationship with both SSCL and the MPS.

JK explained that there had been some service issues as a consequence of the pandemic and the office move and that these issues had caused some backlogs.

Further recruitment and enhancements to the processes and the overall governance structure had meant that there is now a much greater ability for Equiniti to manage, resource and ultimately clear backlogs that had escalated at one point to over 20 weeks and over 2,700 individual pieces of work. These numbers have reduced down to just 650 cases, and of these, there were 150 cases in checking. The backlog period had reduced from over 20 weeks outside the SLA down to 10 days.

The Board was informed that by moving the helpdesk to the Liverpool based Customer Experience Centre (CEC), and with the enhancements detailed above, that with another month of targeted intervention, the service will hopefully be back within SLA with all backlog work cleared.

There are a number of continuous improvement activities planned for 2021 and these were outlined within a document shared at the meeting and agreed that a copy could be distributed to the Board following the meeting,

Key topics from the document included;

- Aged Work Clearance – Completion of backlog work and stabilisation of the service level agreement activity.
- Enhanced Work Management Capability – Automating the routing of work and removal of manual intervention which will streamline work processes.

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Minute	Update from Administrators (Continued)	Action
2021-34		JK /IG / ALL

- Transition of Telephony – Rerouting the calls through to the Customer Excellence Centre (CEC), allowing the administrators to concentrate on the day to day calculation and administration function.

IPO said that he is familiar with the set-up of the CEC and that this has a good pedigree.

- To continue to invest in the Member Self Service functionality and drive activity through this enhanced platform.

To ensure Member Self Service is as effective as it can be, another letter is due to be sent to those members who have not yet registered. The Board were unanimous for everyone to encourage members to sign up to the online service in order that their Annual Benefit Statements and other important information can be readily accessed.

- Continuous Improvement and end to end internal reviews. An external assurance Audit will also be completed to identity points of failure so that these can be addressed.

A project update was also given to the Board with highlights as follows:

- ESA – Confirmed the position as per KA in the earlier action list. Equiniti will continue to work on the remaining cases to ensure completion of the project.
- Evans and Ashcroft – JK informed the Board there had been a total of 647 cases that required a review of their injury benefits. This project was coming to its conclusion with 28 cases requiring further work to complete.
- Annual Benefit Statements (ABS) – JK confirmed that the end of year information had been received with any data queries to be raised with SSCL by the 14th June. Anticipated that ABS would be published to the Member Self Service by the 6th August.

PD posed a question to JK regarding the accuracy of the ABS, stating that there were a number of issues that had been brought to him by his members. Generally members were somewhat confused, particularly where they were due both legacy and reformed information, and also that part time working seems to be causing an issue. IG and PD will discuss outside the meeting to identify whether these cases were errors, or misunderstandings, and that the feedback was useful to inform changes to the way information is presented.

- Pension Savings Statement (PSS) – Confirmed that the relevant data had been received with queries (where appropriate), to be sent back to SSCL by the 14th June. PSS are due to be published to Member Self Service by the 19th September and this work is on track.

Update from Administrators (Continued)

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Minute		Action
2021-34	KH remarked that this was good news for her members as this is a high priority in light of issues encountered in previous years. KH confirmed that this meeting is her penultimate meeting as she will be retiring and will shadow a replacement at the next meeting.	JK / IG / ALL

GMP Reconciliation

IPO asked JK to explain the current position regarding this project. JK said that this was quite slow moving and that KA had a meeting with the GMP team next month.

There is still some work to do on this and an updated report will be provided to the MPS with planned activities and timelines.

IPo said that in order that the members confidence in the Police Pension Scheme is not undermined, it would be preferable to have GMP reconciliation completed as soon as possible and before any Remedy work as a result of the McCloud decision.

IPO thanked JK and IG for their insightful input and they left the meeting.

Knowledge and Understanding

2021-35	It was confirmed that all Board members were up to date with their online training.	All

The Public Service Toolkit has recently been updated with a module on Pension Scams, it was recommended that Members of the Board complete this module.

http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/public-service-schemes.aspx

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Minute	Current Issues	Action
2021-36	McCloud Legal Challenge	IPo

It was confirmed that an impact assessment of the remedy requirements was awaited from SSCL and this will likely show a work programme lasting for two, to two and a half years to deal with the immediate work on the remedy.

Updates to Legislation and the Regulations are expected by the early next year and then the longer term work can start. Updates are expected from the Home Office and HM Treasury in as implementation processes are defined.

IPO asked Member Representatives what they were hearing from their organisations and members. There remains general nervousness about what will happen and whether the members will understand the changes and options afforded to them borne out by a lack of accurate pension statements in the past. It was agreed that communication was key to the members understanding their position and that it was still hoped that national communications would be provided, similar to the national options exercise when the 2006 scheme was introduced.

It is expected that there will be a calculator provided by the Government Actuaries Department (GAD) which should help members understand their position.. With GAD owning this calculator, there should be a level of confidence in the accuracy of this calculator and it should be kept up to date.

Assurances were again given that all members affected by this case, whether active, deferred or in receipt of a pension would automatically be contacted by the Scheme in respect of what the remedy means for them.

The Board was alerted to a potential claim that the Superintendents Association was considering submitting In relation to the change, for all members, to the new scheme on 1st April 2022.

IPo stated that this item will remain on the agenda as a standing item

2021-36	**Report by Senior Pensions Contract Manager**	KA

Much of the reporting that KA would ordinarily cover had been covered off within the update from the Scheme Administrators.

IDRP

There were 5 Stage 1 applications received for Internal Dispute Resolution. Three of these related to transfers out, one related to the ESA review, querying the legitimacy of the pension being adjusted and one was due to the member not agreeing with the pay

Minute		Action
2021-36	used in the retirement benefits where temporary promotion had been carried out prior to retirement,	KA / All

Report by Senior Pensions Contract Manager (continued)

Scheme Statistics

The Board had already been made aware of the backlog position and the good progress that had been made on this. Unfortunately, this had impacted on some of the SLA numbers, though the position against SLA targets was expected to improve markedly over the next two reporting quarters.

Auto Re-Enrolment

The next re-enrolment date for the MPS was June 2022. There will be approximately 3,000 Officers who will be assessed for re-enrolment and placed back in their appropriate scheme, This is a three-yearly project, which is government led to encourage the take up of occupational pension schemes. All members have a right to opt out if they wish, and it was agreed that the statistics on opting out will be particularly interesting due to the high-profile nature of the scheme changes.

2021-36	**Communications**	IPo

IPO confirmed that he will continue to work with Met Friendly to see what could be achieved, and where possible, assist in the delivery of pension introductory sessions to new recruits.

Due to the pandemic, online sessions were now in operation, however there was a question as to how effective these were compared to face to face sessions.

PD stated that Federation membership take up from face to face meetings was in the region of 95%-100%, whereas it is somewhere between 60% and 75% now that the sessions are online, with the concern that a drop of this proportion in pension scheme take up could quickly lead to scheme funding issues, and longer term financial issues for Scheme Members where they choose not to participate in the Police Pension Scheme.

In May, there were 290 officers recruited and of these, 53 had chosen to opt out. This gives a retention rate of just over 80% compared to an MPS average of just over 91%.

Minute	Risk Register	Action
2021-37	IPo had discussed with KA in advance of the meeting, the status of the Risk Register and they continued to be comfortable that the risk ratings remained as per the previous meeting. IPo asked the Board whether they felt any of the scores needed to be amended due to their likelihood, or their impact. The Board were happy that the scoring of the Risk Register should remain the same. This will continue to be reviewed at each meeting.	IPo
	Update from the Chair	
2021-38	IPO had spoken to Kevin Courtney (LGA - Pensions Advisor), and there was nothing to add that hadn't already been discussed earlier in the meeting. If appropriate, IPO may ask that the LGA delivers a brief to the Board at a future meeting.	IPo
	Any Other Business	
2021-39	With no further business to discuss, IPo thanked everyone for attending the meeting and reminded Board Members of the scheduled dates for forthcoming meetings.	IPo
	Date of Next Meeting	
2021-40	1st September 2021 – Virtual Meeting 1st December 2021 - TBC	All

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