**Teachers’ Pension Scheme Pension Board (TPSPB)**

**22 January 2025 Via Teams**

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| **Present: Board Members** | **Also Attending:** |
| Alan Taylor (Chair) | Peter Springhall (Deputy Director) |
| Lisa Sproats (Employer Representative) | Anna Leonard (DfE Head of Supplier Management) |
| Maria Chondrogianni (Member representative) | John Brown (DfE Head of Supplier Management and Secretariat) |
| Susan Fielden (Employer representative) | Amy Gibbs (TP Head of Governance and Risk) |
| Susan Anyan (outgoing Independent Pension Specialist) | Charlotte Wilson (DfE Team Leader) |
| Peter Strike (Member representative) | Abbie Myles (DfE Secretariat) |
| John McGill (Member representative)  | Loraine Dodds (DfE Secretariat) |
| Yvonne Moult (Employer representative) |  |
| Heather McKenzie (Member representative) |  |
| Simon Lowe (Employer representative) |  |
| Michael Collier (Member representative) |  |
| Peter Bryan (new Employer Representative) |  |
| Jo Maguire (incoming Independent Pension Specialist) |  |

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|  | **Item**  | **Action** |
| Agenda item 1 | **Introduction, attendance and apologies:*** The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Jo Maguire as the new Independent Pension Specialist, and Peter Bryan, the new Employer Representative Board Member.
* On behalf of the board, the chair thanked Susan Anyan for all her hard work over the last 6 years as IPS, today is Susan’s last day in office.
* Apologies: Alyson Fox (TP Head of Operations)

**Register of Interests:*** The chair reported there were no amendments to the register, and no reported conflicts of interest.

**Minutes of the previous meeting (Paper 2):*** The minutes of 23 October 2024 were ratified.
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| Agenda item 2 | **Actions Update (Paper 3)**The following actions were discussed: -**AP2/231024 *Virgin Media and public sector schemes**** An appeal was heard last year in the Virgin Media court case. It was held that, if certain actuarial requirements were not complied with, scheme amendments may be deemed invalid, and this could lead to additional liabilities for both private and public sector schemes.
* It was queried how this might impact TPS. The department assured the board that they were liaising with HMT. Any scheme established after 1997 is unlikely to be affected. The department also advised that if public sector schemes were affected there is existing legislation that HMT may consider using to mitigate the impact.
* GAD and DfE are working to ensure there are records of certifications where any changes have been made.
* GAD and HMT are currently looking at available options and what potential impacts these will have.
* Currently there is no agreed outcome, deliberations are still ongoing.

**Pensions Regulator Visit*** The TPR has been invited to the Board meeting in April or June.
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| Agenda Item 3 | **Independent Pension Specialist Update (Paper 4)*****The Autumn Budget*** * There is a budget proposal that, from April 2027, inheritance tax will be deducted from lump sums by the administrator of the pension scheme before being paid into a member’s estate. It was agreed that this would be onerous for pension scheme administrators. The consultation is ongoing.

**WASPI (Women against state pension inequality)*** The government has ruled out compensation for those women who claimed they were inadequately informed about changes to the state pension age.

***Pensions and creditors**** A recent court case concerned the ability of creditors to force people to draw down their pension to satisfy a debt. It was ruled in this case that it was not possible although has been allowed in some past cases.

**Changes in staff contracts*** A recent decision by a university to change employee contracts and remove members from the TPS was noted. Concern was expressed that, if widespread, this could have a significant impact on the scheme.
* The legislation is clear that Post 92 Universities must enrol new staff into the Teachers Pensions Scheme, although this does not prevent employers from providing other schemes if requested by the staff. It was agreed the Scheme Advisory Board would discuss this and whether the policy is working as intended and whether there is a conflict with the rules of the scheme. It was agreed that any further developments will be discussed at the next board.
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| Agenda Item 4 | **DfE Update****Transitional Protection (TrP) including CETV.*** Member frustration with the progress of CETV cases has been reported in the press.
* 2/3rds of the backlog has now been cleared. The remaining 'do-able' cases should be cleared by end February.
* There are still some cases that cannot be completed due to work still ongoing on Transitional Protection.
* TP are providing fortnightly updates to the DfE.
* It is believed that TPS has made more rapid progress with transitional protection than other public service schemes.

**Scheme Advisory Board (SAB)*** Currently there is work ongoing about the wording that is to be used when contacting members with pre 2007 rights.
* United Learning Trust are currently looking at ways they can leave the TPS scheme, however there is a legal requirement that academies must participate in the scheme and that all eligible staff are enrolled. There are ongoing conversations between DfE and TPS on this matter.
* Working on amendments to regulations to include Further Education settings in the New Fair Deal.
* The SAB are monitoring the implications of the recent Lloyd’s court case on transfers, however currently no action is being taken.

**GDPR Breach Update – Paper 10** * The board were provided with a summary of the recent GDPR breach within TPS.
* Over the past 12 months, 72 breaches have occurred although all but 4 did not require reporting to the REGULATOR.
* The Chair asked if the board were assured on TPS and DfE’s response.
* It was stated that this was the result of human error by an experienced administrator. All SAR’s must be manually printed off and then redacted by hand, which is where the error occurred.
* TPS are acting on lessons learnt from this error.
* The board requested that there is to be an update on breaches lessons learned at the next board meeting.
* It was asked if members are being kept up to date with the ongoing issues with CETV cases. TP answered that they are, including the use of newsletters and website updates.
* It was queried what issues are ongoing to prevent some CETV cases from being completed.
	+ For some cases TP are still awaiting guidance from GAD and HMT.
	+ DfE are consistently requesting HMT for the guidance.
	+ It needs to be acknowledged that even once the guidance is available, there needs to be time for a testing process so TP can ensure the calculations are correct.
	+ Where an RSS can mitigate the issue, these cases are being prioritised.

**Other issues*** Regarding the Virgin Media cases, it was asked whether this needed to be added to the Board’s risk register. The risk is managed by the internal DfE project management team and does not require escalation to the board currently.
* There is, yet, no timeframe on when a decision on the issue created by United Learning Trusts actions will be finalised. It was reiterated however that the board needs to consider the impact of this on scheme delivery. The SAB will be consulted on any potential policy and legislative impacts.

**CETV*** It was raised that the CETV issue in the press seems to be solely focussed on TPS and not other providers.
* A question was raised regarding how long overdue the CETV guidance was from HMT. An action was taken for DfE to ask the policy team and reply via correspondence.
* DfE provided assurance to the board that a response is going to be provided on the issues raised by ULT’s actions, and that DfE share the concerns of the board. The response will come from the Permanent Secretary.
 | AP1/220125AP2/220125 |
| Agenda Item 5  | **MRIC sub-committee update****Group Internal Audit Update*** A clean audit result was received for Capita’s contractual obligations related to the Exit Management Plan. Governance and contractual obligations were confirmed to be operating as expected.

**Upcoming audits:*** Data Security Audit – Risk Committee to report findings in due course.
* 2025 Audits – Two more audits scheduled: scope and frequency under review.

**Forward Work Plan, Risk Management and Volumes*** Transition risks remain high on the risk register.
* Unprecedented rise in retirement volumes within the Teachers’ Pension Scheme. Discussion on addressing the increasing demand from members:
* Suggested a deeper analysis to understand whether volume increases are a sustained trend or a temporary issue.
* Raised the need to identify factors driving these increases, beyond cost-of-living pressures.
* Consultation on Increased Member Contributions:
* Discussion about the potential financial impact and associated risks for the scheme.
* Further insights to be integrated from the Portfolio Executive Overview.

**Actions Underway:*** Capita is conducting detailed analyses of volume trends and their root causes. Capita to provide an update at April board meeting.
* A November impact assessment identified the need for additional resources.
* Discussions with the Department are ongoing to finalise data extracts and analysis for the Risk Committee’s review in March 2025.

**Potential Contributing Factors Identified:*** Industry-Wide Trends: Increased awareness due to COVID-19, improved communication campaigns, and social media influence (e.g. Facebook groups).
* Increased teacher retirements due to workload pressures and redundancies.

**Operational Challenges:*** Significant increase in call volumes at TP (up to 400%) has stressed resources.
* Recruitment difficulties due to contractual uncertainties impacting staff retention and attraction.
 | AP3/220125 |
| Agenda Item 6 | **IMC sub-committee update****Engagement Plan Review 2024 and development of Engagement Plan for 2025****Key Achievements:*** Development of an employer toolkit for signposting to member resources.
* Significant rise in training numbers.
* Establishment of a relatives and advisors’ hub, receiving positive feedback, especially from unions.

**Campaigns and Engagement:*** Significant increase in usage and website views.
* Benefit statements are highly successful in targeting specific members.
* Over 1,000 members engaged.
* Social media improvements, with Facebook being the most engaged platform, though there are negative comments around CETVs.
* “Ask our Expert” generated 230 questions, leading to website improvements.

**Future Plans:*** Introduction of Pinterest for advertising in 2025.
* Review of a new platform called “Blue Sky”.
* Continued work on MCR training and awareness of key deadlines for employers.

**Transitional protection**1. Videos have been updated to assist members in retirement planning.
2. Significant rise in modeller views in 2024.
3. RSS video and factsheet has been launched; added FAQs to the website.
4. Decision tree has been updated.
5. Produced a transitional protection newsletter; reviewed ‘making my choices’ page with messaging on RSS challenges.
6. Created and shared a remedial pension saving statement factsheet.

**CETV**1. Assurance given regarding complexities; communication to be published on the website when finalised.
2. Outcome Measures are performing well, indicating high-quality communications from TP to members and employers.
3. Positive feedback from members indicates effective communication strategies and good social media interactions.
4. Cookie Policy Changes: Google Analytics changes allow employers to opt out, impacting feedback collection. Outcome measure removed and reapportioned across other measures.
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| Agenda item 7  | **SDMoD sub-committee update****Improvements to ill health casework position**1. Ill Health Cases:
	* The Department for Education (DfE) reported that the backlog of ill health cases has been cleared.
	* Service delivery has been maintained for the last four weeks and is now considered to be in a Business as Usual state.
2. Sub-Committee Feedback:
	* The sub-committee congratulated the team on clearing the ill health backlog.
	* They sought clarity on efforts to reduce the number of flexibility cases.
	* Pot sizes will continue to fluctuate due to ongoing Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) requests.
	* TP is working on a grading process for complicated flexibility cases, and the sub-committee requested this data be shared at the next meeting.

**Update on TP Workload Pressures**1. Workload Impact on SLA Targets: The sub-committee has identified TP workload as a factor in missing SLA targets and has requested assurances on actions being taken.
2. DfE’s Role: The Department for Education (DfE) is working with TP colleagues to manage the increased volume of transactions. They are also working through a draft impact assessment to identify supportive actions.
3. Deep Dive in March 2025: A detailed review will be provided at the March 2025 sub-committee meeting.
4. Capacity Concerns: The sub-committee queried how TP is addressing the need for more capacity. TP mentioned that the recruitment process can take 6 to 12 months due to a limited labour market in the pensions sector.
5. Recruitment Efforts: TP is taking actions to rectify the capacity issue, including expanding recruitment efforts UK-wide and maintaining ongoing conversations with DfE to monitor the situation.

**Update on position re CETVs**1. Outstanding CETV Cases:
	* TP is working through outstanding Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) cases, delayed due to awaiting cross-scheme guidance, IT development, and training.
	* Most cases do not involve flexibilities and good progress has been made in processing them.
	* Cases involving flexibilities are complex and need to be processed manually, resulting in higher handling times.
2. Guidance and Compliance:
	* Some cases are still awaiting guidance as queries are being resolved with various schemes’ legal teams to ensure overall compliance with the remedy.
	* Once guidance is agreed upon, the full process will move into normal service delivery.
3. CETV Case Categories (as of end of October):
	* Embargo affected cases: 56 cases delayed due to an embargo from March 2023 to July 2023 and further delays due to Transitional Protection legislation.
	* BAU workable cases: 1,824 cases currently being worked on, expected to be completed by February 2025.
	* Cases involving flexibilities: 939 complex cases requiring manual processing.
	* Retired members: 243 cases awaiting policy guidance from HMT before completion.
4. Efforts to Address Outstanding Cases:
	* The Department is working with TP to explore options for addressing outstanding cases sooner, including administrative process improvements and potential automation.

It was also noted that the Performance Data was presented in a new format at the December meeting, and the committee were happy with this change. It was agreed there is value in seeing more historic data and volume numbers alongside percentages. |  |
| Agenda item 8 | **TP Update (Paper 5 and 6)*** TP are performing well against their strategic objectives.
* Most measures are being reported as ‘Green’.
* Due to increases in activity across the administration services, there is a continuing impact on member and employer satisfaction scores.
* Active Stakeholder Engagement Objective - rated Red as there has been an increase in complaints due to CETV cases and regulation issues that are outside of TP control.
* Change Management Objective – scored Amber due to delays in Transitional Protection.
* RSS activity is picking up pace, however the average handling times are higher than expected. This is predominantly down to the analysis of average handling times being undertaken over 2 years ago, and also due to the complexity of the cases.
* Operational Performance (Paper 6)
	+ High volume of cases having impact on SLA
	+ Having to be conscious of workload on staff members.
	+ Engagement strategy for 2025 has been reviewed to ensure members are being kept up to date with changes.
* 2/3 of CETV backlog cases have been cleared.
* Run on of services will have an impact on staff attrition, and TP are currently holding several talks to gather responses from colleagues on this issue.
* TP want to get colleagues excited about the transition to TCS, especially for TUPE staff.
* The Chair thanked TP for all their hard work and opened the floor for questions from the board.
* Assurance was sought on the higher levels of attrition. TP stated that this is not major but will continue to be monitored closely. TP clarified that staff leaving are in the majority not leaving the sector. Many are moving from fixed term to permanent positions within Capita or moving to other roles with pensions.
* The board raised the topic of complaints being higher than TP’s target level and sought clarification on what kind of complaints they are handling.
	+ TP responded that they are made up of CETV cases, delays in processing and members not agreeing with the decisions made by TP in line with regulations.
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|  | **TP COLLEAGUES LEFT THE MEETING** |  |
| Agenda Item 9  | **Secretariat Update****The remainder of this section has been removed to ensure commercial sensitivities are maintained.  A full version of the minutes will be prepared and shared with Board members, and at the next TPSPB meeting.** |  |
| Agenda Item 10 | **Transition Sub-Committee Update and Progress Report – Paper 8****The remainder of this section has been removed to ensure commercial sensitivities are maintained.  A full version of the minutes will be prepared and shared with Board members, and at the next TPSPB meeting.** |  |
| Agenda Item 11 | **Portfolio Executive Summary – Paper 9** **The remainder of this section has been removed to ensure commercial sensitivities are maintained.  A full version of the minutes will be prepared and shared with Board members, and at the next TPSPB meeting.** |  |
| Agenda Item 12 | **Any Other Business**No AOB were raised. |  |
|  | The chair concluded by thanking everyone for their attendance and contributions to a very productive meeting.The next meeting will take place on 23 April 2025 |  |



Minutes agreed: Date: 14/02/2025

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| Minutes circulated to Board members for review on 17 February 2025. No amendments were requested/made. |
| Minutes ratified at subsequent TPSPB – 23 April 2025 |