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

**Service Delivery and Maintenance of Data Sub-Committee**

**20 September 2023 – via Teams**

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| **Present:** |  |  |
| Simon Lowe  | Employer Representative (Chair) | SL |
| Peter Strike | Member Representative | PS |
| John McGill | Member Representative | JM |
| Heather McKenzie | Member Representative | HM |
| Susan Anyan | Independent Pension Specialist | SA |
| Amy Gibbs | TP Head of Governance and Risk | AG |
| Alyson Collingwood | TP Head of Operations | AC |
| Anna-Marie Alderson | DfE Senior Contract Manager  | AA |
| Zaheer Patel | DfE Contract Manager | ZP |
| Melanie Phillip | DfE Casework & Correspondence & TPSPB  | MP |
| Helen Cowan | DfE Secretariat Manager | HC |
| Zillay Usman | DfE Secretariat | ZU |
| **Observers** |  |  |
| Lindsay Kearns | DfE PA to Deputy Director | LK |
| **Apologies:** |  |  |
| Yvonne Moult | Employer Representative | YM |

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|  | **Item** | **Action** |
| Agenda Item 1 | **Welcome and Apologies:*** SL welcomed those in attendance - Alyson Collingwood, TP Head of Operations (she recently replaced Danielle Barker, who has now left Capita) and Lindsay Kearns, Peter Springhall’s PA, who had recently joined the Department who was observing the meeting.
* Apologies were received from Yvonne Moult.
* The minutes from 21 June 2023 were ratified.
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| Agenda Item 2 | **Actions from the previous meeting:*** SL noted that SD1/210623 would be covered under Item 8 of the agenda.
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| Agenda Item 3 | **Transitional Protection:*** AA advised that preparatory work was complete for rectification to start 1 October.
* Two pieces of work are underway. The first regarding HMRC tax treatment of lump sums where the policy intent is now clear meaning this can move into delivery from October. The second being contingent decisions. This is where a member has taken retirement benefits from the 2015 scheme, but who may have made a different decision had the McCloud Seargent judgement not triggered transitional protection implementation. The Department are reviewing cases to take any necessary rectification activity from 1 October 2023.
* AG confirmed that the project is in a good place and rated as ‘amber’ due to complexities and the forthcoming deadline of 1 October. There is still work to do on IT development which is being tested and is continuing.
* AG referred to LGPS +1 FTE service, highlighting that the commercial agreement is in place and approved and project initiation has commenced.
* JM raised an issue that a Welsh local authority was having with MCR. AG confirmed that there is a team working with employers who are struggling with MCR delivery, with training and guidance being provided.
* SL queried if there were issues with resourcing the contingent decisions work. AA confirmed that CAN152 includes significant resourcing to deliver the project but once the actual numbers of contingent decision members affected are known, it is difficult to quantify the additional impact. Work is ongoing to ensure contingent decisions are built into the current processes.
* AA assured the Board that the project is on track to deliver to the timescales. AG clarified that the resource includes technical SMEs to deal with the cases, and that they are not expecting large volumes.
* SL queried if there were sufficient resources to drawn on. AG confirmed that Capita have been actively developing career plans and pay frameworks to support attrition and to ensure they are an attractive employer.
* The sub-committee members recognised that it was a difficult market but was assured that work was ongoing and all necessary actions being taken.
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| Agenda Item 4 | **Digital Improvement Strategy*** AG reminded the Board that the strategy was introduced in 2015 and initiatives such as a drive for My Pension Online (MPO) have been added since. She reported there had been a significant data cleanse exercise to identify gaps in service and development of the Hartlink administration platform to identify errors.
* More simple exercises included email campaigns to target specific member and employer groups.
* AG explained how TP’s operational framework was originally built around the member events meaning that a data cleanse exercise was completed only at retirement; but as the pension industry has evolved, members want online immediate access meaning accurate data becomes key to effective delivery.
* The strategy has continued to develop alongside the industry and has had another refresh to ensure objectives remain appropriate and aligned to best practice in the industry.
* The revised objectives (slide 3 of the paper circulated), are still aligned with TPS and Capita’s vision, which is to be the best UK pension scheme. The strategy aims are focused on digitisation and supporting future delivery, regardless of that being by a new provider. TPS recognise the data needs to be in the right place to enable a successful transition.
* Slide 4 highlights progress of the data initiatives.
* AG reported that the MCR pilot exercise went well and has now concluded.
* SL queried how missing service that is difficult to obtain is evidenced.
* AG acknowledged the difficulties evidencing this and explained how TP work with employers on an individual basis to rebuild pay lines. The challenge is due to employers disposing of information due to their retention policy.
* SL acknowledged the issue had been compounded by academisation.
* JM recognised that some members could be looking for evidence going back 40 years.
* AG indicated these issues were discussed when GDPR was implemented but the Department’s data protection leads were clear that TP cannot require specific retention periods to be implemented.
* JM referred to the member data for MPO (1.3 million members) noting this had flatlined recently and queried how TP were engaging with members who did not have an account.
* AG assured the Board that TP retained functionality to provide non-digital means of communication to members meaning they can use their channel of choice.
* SA queried the size of the problem regarding missing service. AG reported numbers to be in tens of thousands but a significant number of these were where employers had not provided a leaver indicator. She confirmed that the older information would be very difficult to rectify but the newer cases should be resolved by TP proactively reaching out to employers.
* SL asked if pausing the opt in/opt out process will compound further missing service. AG confirmed that MCR deals with future service as it reconciles contributions. However, if employers delete historic information there is no way to rebuild that data.
* SL queried if newly qualified teachers were engaging with MPO. AG advised that TP send out welcome packs to new teachers which encourages them to create an account. A good proportion of MPO users are older active teachers and pensioners.
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| Agenda Item 5 | **Pensions Dashboard Programme*** AA discussed that the Department are still working with Capita and their third party partner (Intellica Phyxis) to conduct a data audit of the dataset to checking readiness for onboarding onto the pensions dashboard.
* She is mindful that the connection date is now October 2026, so this will fall into the new contract.
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| Agenda Item 6 | **SD&MoD Terms of Reference*** SL invited comments from Board members.
* SA reflected that it was high level but allowed for flexible interpretation and felt comfortable that service delivery and data aspects were reflected.
* JM reported struggling with the format of papers, i.e. issues log which was more suitable for face to face meetings.
* SA also found it difficult to read large tabular documents such as the risk register and asked they be formatted differently.
* SA asked if all documents could be provided in the same format, e.g. PDFs and in a way that can be seen/printed.
* PS also highlighted that accessing zip files was difficult on an iPad.
* HM confirmed that she had a meeting with the secretariat on Monday and was happy to take this forward.
* SL confirmed that the quality of papers was good but the formatting was problematic for some board members. The sub-committee was happy to adopt the Terms of Reference as drafted.
 | SD1/200923 |
| Agenda Item 7 | **TPARG*** ZP reported that TPARG was held on 12 September and there was one escalation, their concern regarding the delay in processing the ill health cases.
* The Quarterly Report (para 14) provided the number of outstanding cases at the end of July, which was approximately 190. As of 15 September this has decreased to 165. The Department is working with HM to complete these outstanding cases as quickly as possible.
* TPARG have also noted the CETV embargo lift regarding member customer experience and delays in payments. ZP assured Board members that these are being worked through and pension benefits actioned and paid as soon as possible.
* PS was concerned that ill health delays continued to be an issue despite previous assurances it was being managed.
* SA highlighted that the MRIC subcommittee has Ill Health on its agenda and a paper will be shared with the Board on this topic. She recognised there has been genuine progress but there are higher volumes and increased complexity of cases than originally expected, including more serious ill health cases.
* AA confirmed that the Department was working closely with HM to resolve the issues around the delivery of ill health and are awaiting receipt of a rectification plan.
* AA confirmed that the backlog had reduced and the oldest cases and any serious ill health cases were prioritised.
* SL queried what the reference to 9% of errors are returned meant. AA confirmed they were quality errors which could be a spelling or grammar error. AC advised these can cause a delay of one week or more, due to prioritising the serious ill health cases over rectifying an error.
* SA queried how transition would fit into the contract term which ended in March 2025. AA confirmed this formed part of the commercial discussions being held. AA also confirmed that there was a log of lessons learned.
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| Agenda Item 8 | **Review Dashboard and supporting papers:****Quarterly Report (Paper 5)*** AA highlighted the Summer Retirement Exercise (SRE) was delivered a week ahead of deadline. All retirees were paid on time, the remaining cases outside the window will be paid via SLA1 regime.
* AA thanked AC and her teams for getting this completed ahead of the schedule.
* AA reiterated that they are working through the CETV cases. The Pension Regulator had been informed of cases that have not met regulatory requirements and are working to a completion date of 1 December 2023.
* She highlighted that SLA3 Change of Entitlement (re-employment element) is likely being affected by cost of living because of activity such as people taking pension benefits and then re-entering employment. This has impacted SLA performance but an improvement in August has been seen; although this impact may continue until commercial negotiations regarding resourcing are completed.
* Overall SLA performance is positive, notwithstanding the challenges around SLA3. SLA4 continues to perform well. SLA5 and 6 (transfers in and transfers out) were impacted by the CETV embargo which has now been lifted. SLA12b (general calls) continues to be impacted as a result of volume of calls.
* Outcome measures (OM) are strong although work is underway regarding OM5 and 6 which has been adversely impacted this quarter. AA and AG have analysed the questions on feedback mechanisms for OMs 5 and 6 and changes have been made in consultation with the engagement team and focus groups of members to enhance feedback.
* Page 12 shows breakdown of contact centre performance for the last 12 months, which demonstrates that current volumes are a challenge.
* AA confirmed that there were three pots of work on historic calculations and some of the data had not been held correctly. However, the work is going well and the magnitude of overpayments are still low value.
* The Department has received the result of the scheme valuation and cost cap and this is currently with the ministerial team before those decisions can be published.
* ZP confirmed that the Department are still awaiting a formal report following the cyber incident. However, an incident playbook has been introduced between TP and the Department so if an incident did occur again then there is an agreed process for TP to notify DfE. This will then involve consideration to informing TPSPB, as well as other potentially interested parties.
* JM referred to page 15 - Regulator’s engagement, querying if those MATs had been reported to the ESFA. AA confirmed they had and the Department was working with ESFA to concentrate on those employers who have been repeatedly referred to TP for non-compliance of contributions.
* JM asked for the identity of those MATs in his role as member representative.
* AA confirmed she would liaise with the finance team to check such a disclosure would not be a data breach.
* JM requested further information regarding the commercial agreement regarding remedy service. AA confirmed this related to excess service which isn’t pensionable in the teachers’ pension scheme but may be pensionable in LGPS if the employer at the time an accepted member of LGPS was also. Work is underway to identify those members who are affected so they can decide how that service is treated. TPS will start work on this in January 2024.
* PS referred to SLAs 6 and 12 where demand exceeds capacity, asking if more resource was needed.
* AA confirmed that commercial negotiations were underway following the trigger of a contractual mechanism as a result of membership increasing by 5%.
* SA asked if the challenge was that the mechanism deals with the change in membership numbers rather than volume of work.
* AA confirmed that is factored into the negotiations.
* AG highlighted this was a challenge as it meant that TPS bear the immediate consequences and it takes time before any commercial impacts are felt. This will be discussed further in the coming weeks.
* SL queried levels of staff turnover. AG confirmed it was low compared to industry averages but expected it to be affected by the procurement announcement.

**Dashboard*** AG noted operational volumes are increasing at a significant rate leading to a negative impact on performance. A backlog in back-office casework has arisen due to delivery of priority cases.
* TP have changed the questions for OM5 and OM6 to improve feedback.
* TP are receiving good feedback from employers although volumes remain low.
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| **TP colleagues left the meeting** |
|  Agenda Item 9 | **Update from Transition Sub-Committee**The remainder of this section has been removed to ensure commercial sensitivities are maintained. A full set of minutes (and actions) will be produced from the sub-committee meeting, which took place on the morning of 20 September 2023 and will be shared with the Board Members, and at the next TPSPB meeting. |  |
| Agenda Item 10 | **Agree key issues from the meeting / Report to highlight at the next TPSPB meeting:*** Ill health
* MCR
* Transitional Protection
* Well done from s-c on the SRE
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| Agenda Item 11 | **Agree whether any individual papers or presentations should be shared with the remaining Board members:*** Data strategy paper
* Ill health paper
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| Agenda Item 12 | **AOB****TP colleagues left the conference call.**The remainder of this section has been removed to ensure commercial sensitivities are maintained. A full set of minutes (and actions) will be produced from the sub-committee meeting, which took place on the morning of 20 September 2023 and will be shared with the Board Members, and at the next TPSPB meeting. |  |
| Next meeting | 13 December 2023 – to be held virtually |  |

Minutes agreed by Chair:  Date: 27 September 2023

Confirmed by circulation to sub-committee members on: 27 September 2023

To be ratified at sub-committee meeting on 13 December 2023