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

**Information to Members and Communications Sub-Committee**

**13 December 2023 – via Microsoft Teams**

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| **Present:** |  |  |
| Heather McKenzie | Member Representative (Chair) | HM |
| Susan Fielden | Employer Representative | SF |
| John Pratten | Employer Representative | JP |
| Maria Chondrogianni | Member Representative | MC |
| Yvonne Moult | Employer Representative | YM |
| Susan Anyan | Independent Pension Specialist | SA |
| Anna-Marie Alderson | DfE Senior Contract Manager | AA |
| Kerry Tate-King | TP Head of Engagement and Marketing | KTK |
| Jo Cole | TP Engagement Team | JC |
| Jennie Connelly | TP Engagement Team | JCon |
| Amy Gibbs | TP Head of Governance and Risk | AG |
| Loraine Dodds | DfE Secretariat | LD |
| Ruby Kennedy | DfE Comms Team (Minutes) | RK |
| **Observers:** |  |  |
| Amy Bulson | DfE Comms Team | AB |
| **Apologies:** |  |  |
| Mark Dutson | DfE Contract Team | MD |
| Helen Cowan | DfE Secretariat Team Leader | HC |

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|  | **Item** | **Action** |
| Agenda Item 1 | **Welcome and Apologies:*** HM welcomed those in attendance and Amy Bulson who was observing the meeting.
* Apologies were received from Mark Dutson and Helen Cowan.
* The minutes from 20 September 2023 were ratified.
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| Agenda Item 2 | **Actions from the previous meeting:*** HM asked AA to provide an update on action IM4/210623 relating to Board members and social media.
* AA explained that KTK at a previous meeting had suggested Board members could have a spotlight in social media, however, there is a wealth of information about Board members published on TP’s website.
* KTK asked if a small pilot on social media could be considered in Spring 2024. There is a vacancy at present for a member representative which had received good interaction on Facebook. It was agreed that KTK would send a proposal to the department with details of what is in scope in the first instance.
* KTK reassured the sub-committee that the intention was to provide a holistic view of the Board and that it would steer away from highlighting individual members.
* HM welcomed exploring the proposed content and the potential pilot.
* SA suggested it would be helpful for people to understand the role of the Board and how it differs from the Scheme Advisory Board.
 | IM1/131223 |
| Agenda Item 3 | **Annual Review and plan (circulated to Board members after the meeting).*** JCon highlighted key achievements for 2023 highlighting that the employer training was a particular success.
* She noted that TrP communications created excellent engagement levels which resulted in members using the site for other tasks such as signing up for My Pension Online (MPO) or checking their benefit statements.
* Social media targets have been exceeded and overall, engagement levels have been met. There has been good initial response from the advocacy pilot using a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) ‘Mr T’.
* The initial NQT engagement post received almost 5,000 impressions.
* JCon provided a comparison of statistics to demonstrate the increase in engagement from the previous year and gave insight into what Teachers’ Pensions (TP) were planning to develop in next year’s plan.
* HM thanked JCon for the overview and said this had assured the sub-committee.
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| Agenda Item 4 | **Training Plan*** JC explained the training plan runs parallel to the school calendar year.
* She provided an overview of the changes to the plan and highlighted the statistics that had increased from the previous year.
* HM confirmed this provided assurance to the sub-committee and stressed the importance of the work carried out. She thanked JC for the update.
* JP echoed this and queried what support was given to members that have retired and may not have access to the internet or are of an older age or poorly sighted. He noted the effects of the cost of living and how people may not be able to afford broadband or devices to access the internet.
* KTK confirmed that the contact centre facility remains available. In addition, members over 80 years of age are sent paper versions of communications to ensure the service is inclusive for all.
* Accessibility requests are detailed and monitored in a monthly report. There had not been any feedback which suggests this is an issue.
* SF said she would have appreciated the plans in advance of the meeting to enable more interaction and discussion about them. HM supported this. KTK said this would be taken on board for the following year.
 | IM2/131223  |
| Agenda Item 5 | **Engagement Plan*** KTK shared the 2024 Engagement Plan with the sub-committee, explaining the plan remains typically the same each year, however, is subject to change where there are any additions or amendments needed.
* Regular conversations have taken place with the department to agree the plan.
* HM shared her concerns over employers that do not engage. She said it was key those employers not engaging needed to be reminded of their responsibility to ensure members are not missing out.
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| Agenda Item 6 | **Review of FWP items for 2024*** AA took the sub-committee through the list of suggested FWP topics for 2024.
* SF asked if there would be value in a deep dive into employers and their engagement and feedback - there has been traditionally low numbers in the feedback that feeds into various performance indicators.
* AA advised that routes to get feedback from employers were being explored.
* HM felt unsure if a deep dive from the sub-committee was appropriate as it was the employer’s responsibility to engage.
* HM queried if members are asked during engagement whether their employer engages with the scheme. JCon confirmed that this does happen.
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| Agenda Item 7 | **Transitional Protection*** JC explained that TrP work will progress and become part of Business As Usual (BAU) for those members taking retirement at a later date.
* There have been some key pieces of work – disclosure communications have been delivered in relation to Scheme roll back. TP understand the importance of getting the right information to the right audience and recognise that there is a difference between those members that have taken their benefits already and those that will receive them in future.
* Communications have been provided to members based on their preferred communication choice. Fact sheets have been provided, and employers and unions have access to information prior to members receiving it to ensure they have knowledge to answer any queries.
* The November newsletter was also used to provide information and resulted in increased traffic to the website and TrP resources.
* JC noted that there was a temporary increase to the volume of calls to front line staff, following this communication, but that volumes have returned to normal now.
* Weekly meetings are monitoring volumes and will determine if any new queries are received.
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| Agenda Item 8 | **Review of Papers** **Quarterly Report:*** SF asked about the reference to outstanding cases in relation to emails and asked if the ‘contact us’ secure messaging counted towards this figure.
* AA confirmed it did.

**Dashboard:*** JP asked for some information on opt-outs and whether they are increasing or decreasing and if any factors are contributing, specifically cost of living.
* AG noted that an update was provided to the Board last quarter. Where a member is considering opting out of the scheme, information is provided to allow an informed choice.
* HM added that communications about the scheme to employers and members is crucial. She recognised that many members are fully engaged in what the TPS offers and choose to remain in the scheme.
* HM also highlighted some key parts of the paper that Board members may wish to refer to.

**Issues Log:*** HM referred to paper 6 and noted that the issues were surrounding MCR and ill-health cases.
* SF noted that whilst these aspects may give cause for concern in terms of the communication elements, these issues are addressed in the other sub-committees as well.
* AA added that whilst there are issues and problems being managed and they know what action is required. Hence, the communications piece is in a good place. HM agreed there were positive achievements.
* SF wanted to acknowledge that factors outside of Capita’s control can affect this. HM agreed and noted that the sub-committee could only provide assurance over the things within their control.
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| Agenda Items 9 & 10 | **Highlights to report to the Board:*** Annual Review and plan
* Training Plan
* Activity on social media

**Agree whether any individual papers or presentations should be shared with the rest of the Board for information:*** It was agreed that the presentations from agenda items 3 & 4, and the 2024 engagement plan from agenda item 5, would be shared with the Board.
 | IM3/131223 |
| Agenda Item 11 | **AOB** * HM thanked sub-committee attendees for their contributions to the meeting.

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| **TP colleagues to leave the meeting** |
| Agenda Item 12 | **Transition sub-committee update****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 13 December 2023 and will be shared with the Board Members. |  |
| Next meeting |  20 March 2024 in Darlington (venue to be confirmed)  |  |

Minutes agreed by Chair: Heather McKenzie Date: 19 December 2023

Confirmed by circulation to sub-committee members on: 3 January 2024

To be ratified at sub-committee meeting on 20 March 2024