

**Teachers' Pension Scheme Pension Board (TPSPB)
Service Delivery and Maintenance of Data Sub-Committee**

16 June 2021 - (by Teams teleconference)

Present:		
Jackie Wood	Employer Representative – Chair	JW
Susan Anyan	Independent Pension Specialist	SA
Simon Lowe	Employer Representative	SL
Heather McKenzie	Member Representative	HM
Peter Strike	Member Representative	PS
Amy Gibbs	TP Analytics and Risk Manager	AG
Paul Faulkner	TP Director of Operations	PF
Peter Springhall	DfE Head of TPS Supplier Management	PSP
Zaheer Patel	DfE Contract Manager	ZP
Kathryn Symms	DfE Casework & Correspondence & TPSPB (Secretariat)	KS
Helen Cowan	DfE Secretariat	
Mathew Vaughan	DfE Valuation Manager (Observer)	
Apologies:	Sue Crane	

	Item	Action
Agenda Item 1	<p>Welcome and Apologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JW welcomed those in attendance, and accepted apologies from Sue Crane, DfE Contract Manager. The minutes from 24 March 2021 were ratified. 	
Agenda Item 2	<p>Actions from the previous meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PF explained that, at TPARG's request, data had been gathered on revisions casework and analysis is ongoing. The analysis will be presented to the sub-committee in September. All other actions had been closed or will be discussed under the relevant agenda item at this meeting. 	
Agenda Item 3	<p>Transitional Protection Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PF reminded the sub-committee that the position with regard to Groups 1, 2 and 3 had changed at the end of January. This was due to primary legislation being required before TP is able to engage with members to offer their alternative pension benefits calculation and/or request consent for their case to be re-presented to the medical advisers. Re-planning of Transitional Protection work has been agreed with the Department. All preparatory work will be undertaken on the cases, up to the point where TP is ready to engage with the member. A calculation spreadsheet is currently being tested to ensure its accuracy in the various scenarios. It is almost ready to be implemented and will aid the flow of the casework. PF explained the estimated timeline (paper 7) showing when TP expects to carry out the calculations on the various case types. PF explained the complexity of some of the casework. For example, he highlighted that where appropriate, Goodwin benefits reassessment work will need to be completed before 	

	<p>Transitional Protection is applied.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PF explained that for several categories of reassessment casework, the volumes were predictions based on past experience. This is because there will continue to be applications for retirement between now and 31 March 2022, many of which will need to be reassessed. • PF also noted that ill health reassessments could not be progressed because member consent to approach the medical adviser was required. • JW noted that the timeline document provided a useful understanding of when cases will be processed depending on whether they were affected by Goodwin, Transitional Protection, the timing of laying Regulations and so on. She requested that this paper be presented at each meeting so that the sub-committee could keep track of the “burn down” rate. • PF noted that whilst processing was slightly behind schedule, he expected TP would soon catch up to the planned timescales. 	SD1/160621
Agenda Item 4	<p>Goodwin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZP updated that a small team of four has been processing hardship cases since April. • Contract negotiations are almost complete and therefore, as previously reported, TP will ramp up this work from August. • PF confirmed that staff recruited (ahead of contract signing) to undertake Goodwin casework had begun training on 14 June. • ZP confirmed that “burn down” data on Goodwin cases will be included in the quarterly report - May to July will be included in September’s report. 	SD2/160621
Agenda Item 5	<p>Discuss any issues raised from TPARG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZP fed back that TPARG had requested that this sub-committee continues to closely monitor bereavements casework and the contact centre staffing issues. • TPARG also suggested that the sub-committee should consider data on the apparent increase in academies failing to pay contributions. • ZP explained that the number of academies not paying their contributions had previously been as high as 22, but had reduced to 5 in February. He surmised that lockdown meant that schools had prioritised other matters over administrative tasks, such as contributions being submitted to TP, but things were more normal now. • However, ZP agreed to provide further details, including the number of schools involved where MATs had delayed submitting contributions, in the next quarterly report. 	SD3/160621
Agenda Item 6	<p>Forward Work Plan: Data Improvement Strategy (Paper 8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AG explained that TP’s Data Strategy ensures that TP has a sound understanding of the data it holds and how it can be used. Within that, TP’s Data Improvement Plan is more dynamic, and initiatives and progress against the plan are regularly reported to the Department. • Security of data is taken very seriously, and there are regular 	

	<p>audits attended by Capita and Departmental security teams. Capita has recently been awarded the Cyber Essentials+ Accreditation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AG discussed some of the initiatives that were detailed in her paper. She explained that following completion of the MDC full checklist, TP is now looking back at gaps that the exercise has identified, and is working directly with employers on that. • Where the outstanding data has not been provided by the employer, then member self-service will be “switched on”. This will encourage members to check and update their own personal information. • AG highlighted that TP is performing well against OM12 targets which cover completeness of data in line with the Pensions Regulator’s record keeping requirements. • TP continues to focus on increasing the number of MPO accounts because members are best placed to know what needs updating or correcting on their records. • AG explained that COVID-19 had presented some security challenges where employers were working at home – as well as TP’s own staff. TP has mitigated this by enhancing the security operating procedures, providing guidance to TP staff and all those accessing the environment. • AG reported that the Head of Actuarial, Terry Wharton (TW) is currently mentoring the TP Data Manager, Ian Dodds so that TP can capitalise on TW’s expertise and add further value. The Data Manager is also undertaking professional qualifications which will benefit the TPS. • Finally, it was agreed that the additional information in the quarterly report about deferred members should continue. • JW was pleased to note that data monitoring is improving, and the sub-committee agreed that they were content with the strategy. 	SD4/160621
Agenda Item 7	<p>Review of Papers 4, 5, 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JW suggested that the sub-committee focused on performance in three areas: bereavements, the contact centre and complaints. <p>Bereavements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZP explained that there had been challenges for the bereavements team - mainly due to the high volume of work. However, there is currently a downward trend in the number of death notifications, so it is expected that the situation will have improved by the end of July. • SA clarified whether staff absence had impacted SLA 4b and c or whether it was the volume of work. PF confirmed that staff absence had not affected SLA 4 work, but that contact centre staffing issues had impacted on those suffering a bereavement because the dedicated lines had not been functioning satisfactorily due to contact centre staff absence. • SA suggested that comparing the volume of work with previous years would provide some context to the sub-committee. JW agreed that because the bereavement team’s work had been in backlog as far back as 2019, the data would be helpful. • JW sought further assurance that through overtime, prioritisation of the work and what appears to be a downward trend in the 	SD5/160621

<p>number of new cases, recovery of the position was likely within the next three months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PF agreed, re-capping the position pre-COVID-19 when four additional staff were recruited and trained in the expectation of increased casework. However, due to peaks of work through COVID-19, even those higher staffing levels had not kept up with casework. PF explained that it was now important to determine the new normal level of bereavements and review the resource model. He agreed to update the sub-committee on this resource review. 	SD6/160621
<p>Contact Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff attrition and sickness absence is affecting the performance of the contact centre. Some staff have left Capita, but others have successfully gained a new position within the organisation. • To improve the performance, new staff have been recruited - but because they require eight weeks training, the impact is not immediate. Three new staff completed their training and began work on the contact centre on 14 June and a further three are due to do likewise on 12 July. Shortening the training programme was considered, but due to the risk that this could adversely impact the quality of the service, this option was not pursued. • There are three members of staff off sick, with a further two on a phased return to work. PF confirmed that these absences were not connected to personal wellbeing issues and that there were no apparent trends. • PF reassured the sub-committee that by mid-August, he expected the performance of the contact centre to be much improved. In the meantime, overtime is being offered so that callers may opt to have a call-back later the same day, after the contact centre has closed. Negotiation with the senior executive at Capita to consider funding “overflow” staff to mitigate the impact of staff attrition is also in train. • SL queried the notice period for staff compared with the training period. PF advised that it was one month’s notice whether it was an internal or external move – but that where possible the timing of internal move would be negotiated. • SL suggested that TP consider external benchmarking of staff turnover and sickness absence on contact centres. PF agreed to check with his management colleagues in the TP contact centre as to what specific benchmarking is undertaken. PF also confirmed that TP consider that this resourcing issue is a spike rather than a trend. • PS enquired whether staff surveys were useful. AG confirmed that as well as the normal staff surveys, two further surveys about remote working had taken place. The results of those have led TP to conclude that contact centre staff must be the first team to return to the office environment when it is considered safe to do so. • The surveys did not identify any further support requirements over and above that already on offer. There are various routes available to staff who are encouraged to speak up if they are experiencing any difficulties. • Despite the delay to lifting the final lockdown restrictions, Capita is considering whether a 1 July return to work is feasible by 	SD7/160621

	<p>exception, given the very challenging nature of contact centre work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AG explained that the “normal” survey results were currently being analysed so that TP could create an action plan over the next few weeks. Capita benchmark the member survey results through the Institute of Customer Services. • PSp was asked about the Department’s position with regard to contact centre performance. He confirmed that the issue had already been escalated to Capita’s senior management, and supported the view that a return to the office is part of the solution. • JW requested a report showing a breakdown of the 33 posts on the contact centre – showing how many staff are in place, how many are in training, how many are sick and how many vacancies there are. <p>Complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZP noted the large increase in complaints (to 1163) this quarter. There is a root cause analysis of this increase underway, but he noted that this is happening against a backdrop of an increase in customer contact more generally. The analysis will be shared at the next meeting. • PF advised that most complaints are not upheld. He also explained that members can get caught up a complaint loop ie through different channels, where complaints are sometimes generated by frustration at not being able to get through to an agent. • The complaints team is currently recruiting a fourth member of staff to assist in the longer term. In the shorter term, TP is providing holding responses and dealing with aged cases as a priority. • HM enquired how flexible other teams could be in supporting the complaints team. PF confirmed that staff from other teams were moved across when their own workload permitted. The management team meets twice weekly to consider flexible approaches to customer demand, but with the Summer Retirement Exercise underway and the Annual Allowance exercise due later in the summer, this will become more difficult. • PSp advised that this and other concerns will be discussed at the next Quarterly Strategy Board meeting. <p>Dashboard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JW asked for comments on the Dashboard. PS noted that OMs relating to employer engagement were not scoring well at present. • PF explained that prior to closing the employer helpline in March 2020 for around five months, employers would provide feedback willingly at the end of the phone call. Employers have not returned to using the helpline as much as they used to, so requested feedback is by email which is not prompting the same level of feedback. • SL requested the numbers of employers giving negative feedback to add context to the OM scores. <p>Quarterly Report</p>	<p>SD8/160621</p> <p>SD9/160621</p> <p>SD10/160621</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZP noted that TP had carried out a successful Easter Retirement Exercise. • It was noted that the number of revisions cases received was higher than those cleared. PF reiterated that the number of revisions and the outcome for the member was currently being analysed. Within that, TP will consider whether the manual authorisation of some of the cases can be stopped – for example, where the change in entitlement is a very small amount of money. • One probable reason for the increase is that re-employment often spikes in the summer term, and perhaps more so this year due to sickness absence. 	
Agenda Item 8	<p>Agree Key Issues from the Meeting / Report to highlight at the next TPSPB meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bereavements • Contact Centre • Complaints • Data Improvement Strategy 	
Agenda Item 9	<p>Agree whether any individual papers or presentation should be shared with remaining Board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that Paper 8 – the Data Improvement Strategy - should be shared with all Board members. 	SD11/160621
Agenda Item 10	<p>AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEM Benchmarking – Sub-committee members found the report interesting and look forward to further discussion in July. They congratulated TP on the positive outcome. • This section has been removed. A full set of minutes has been be shared with Board members. • PF explained that TP continue to provide a range of communication channels to members as choice was important – email, contact centre, webchat. • PS explained that personal employer engagement was more difficult than for other schemes due to their make-up (for example, small schools, large MATs and Universities) and very high volume. • JW concluded that the report was largely positive, and that it was pleasing to note that where performance was lower, the Board was already aware and monitoring the position. 	
Next meeting	22 September 2021 (by Teams)	

Minutes agreed by Chair: *Jackie Wood*

Date: 15 June 2021

Confirmed by circulation to sub-committee members on: 22 June 2021

To be ratified at sub-committee meeting on 22 September 2021