

Teachers' Pension Scheme Pension Board (TPSPB)
Information to Members and Communications Sub-Committee

DATE : 25 September 2019

Present:		
Julie Huckstep	Member Representative - Acting Chair	JH
Jerry Glazier	Member Representative	JG
David Butcher	Employer Representative	DB
Simon Lowe	Employer Representative	SL
Neil Crombie	TP Head of Teachers' Pensions	NC
Kerry Tate-King	TP Head of Engagement	KTK
Jo Cole	TP Engagement Team	JC
Tony Watt	TP Engagement Team	TW
Kathryn Symms	DfE Policy Team Leader Casework & Correspondence & TPSPB	KS
Anna-Marie Alderson	DfE Contracts Manager	AMA
Karen Cammack	DfE TPSPB Secretariat	KC
Liz Cook	DfE ESFA Communication Strategy	LC
Peter Springhall (observer)	DfE Head of Commercial, Contracts & Finance	PS
Apologies:		
David Trace	Member Representative - Chair	
Susan Anyan	Independent Pension Specialist	
Ian Payne	Employer Representative	
Dave Wilkinson	Member Representative	
Sue Crane	DfE Senior Contract Manager	

	Item	Action
Agenda item 1	<p>Introduction, attendance, apologies:</p> <p>Welcome and Apologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JH welcomed those in attendance, and accepted apologies from David Trace, Susan Anyan, Ian Payne, Dave Wilkinson and Sue Crane. AMA introduced PS, DfE Head of Commercial, Contracts & Finance, attending as an observer. <p>Review of previous minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes from the sub-committee meeting of 12 June 2019 were agreed as an accurate record. 	
Agenda item 2	<p>Forward Work Plan - ESFA / TP Academies Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC explained that the joint presentation between TP Engagement team and DfE ESFA Communications Strategy team would set out how TP and DfE currently communicate with academies and where they currently work together, along with next steps and plans to improve engagement and communications. The presentation was a follow-up to that given at the previous sub-committee meeting to address IM&C sub-committee (and TPSPB) concerns regarding the lack of engagement as evidenced by TP's data. JC highlighted that TP and DfE are working together to improve the 	

	<p>awareness and knowledge of academies regarding the TPS, using ESFA communication channels to support the work already underway. The objective is to increase knowledge and compliance regarding pension related actions and obtain correct email and named contacts details within academies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She reiterated previously noted concerns regarding the noticeable decline of pensions knowledge and expertise within academies, citing feedback received from academies, stakeholder groups, Employer Relationship Managers and academies, and the impact of this. • TW mentioned concerns regarding generic email addresses (e.g. admin@academy.co.uk) whereby some academies are missing out on a range of communications because email addresses do not meet GDPR security protocols. This results in around 37% - 41% of email addresses being suppressed, which has an impact on all campaigns and presents a range of communications challenges. • JC confirmed the key message is around the importance of academies /trusts engaging with TP in order to meet their (statutory) responsibilities. • Internal and external stakeholders are equally important in supporting communications with academies and can help improve understanding and provide appropriate signposting. JG noted that generally Free Schools have no historic knowledge or expertise as they are set up from scratch and so provide a bigger challenge; LC confirmed that ESFA does work closely with Free Schools group within DfE, and undertook to consider how they could also be included/supported in future planning. • LC explained that TP and DfE are developing a joint engagement plan to ensure all effective communication channels are utilised. Based on good practice, knowledge of academy behaviour and feedback, a “mixed-channel” approach is planned, and DfE/TP will continue to work together to deliver and monitor the plan and act on feedback. • A key aspect of the plan is harnessing existing stakeholder groups to help with communications; to understand issues and barriers; to cascade the message; and help assess the success of the plan. • There are also plans to develop a joint script for the new starter pack issued to academies on their first day of operation which led to discussion on the value of “pre-opening” engagement. LC noted the comments around improving support ahead of an academy’s opening day and undertook to feedback comments and concerns. • JG emphasised that the concern of the Board had been around reinforcing the message of responsibility, and it is looking for a collaborative approach with rigorous processes to both check and challenge academies and support TP. • ESFA continues to look to the future and at how it can add value to the work that TP does to reinforce the message. LC noted that ESFA has access to some direct channels which they can use to strengthen the message and ensure best use of communication channels, also utilising the Regional Schools Commissioners (RSC). • Both PS and JG noted that there are two strands to the issue, one around ensuring efficient and effective employer engagement and the other around promoting the positive benefits of the scheme, which should have both a positive effect on opt-out figures and 	
--	--	--

2a	<p>support the department's recruitment and retention strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A progress update will be provided to the December sub-committee meeting. <p>Next FWP topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JH noted that the next topic was scheme valuation communications in plain English. KTK suggested that the 2020 Engagement Plan might be a particularly good topic for December as this would be ready for review at this time. The sub-committee agreed to have 2020 Planning as the FWP item for December, and then discuss further to agree subsequent topics. 	<p>IM1/250919</p> <p>IM2/250919</p>
Agenda item 3	<p>Scheme Valuation Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sub-committee discussed the letter to TPS members employed in independent schools (as per IM2/120619), and the checklist for employers considering leaving the TPS (re IM3/120619). • KTK highlighted that TP have received positive feedback, in particular from teaching unions, regarding the usefulness of the letter generating only a few, low-key, comments and queries on social media. She also noted that Employer Relationship Managers are also including an update in their face to face employer workshops. JG agreed it was a good, clear and useful letter. 	
Agenda item 4	<p>Review of Actions arising from 12 June sub-committee meeting:</p> <p>IM2/120619 - Independent Schools -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered in the update above. <p>IM9/120619 - Portal update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMA referred to pages 13/14 of the quarterly report which sets out an update on the action. The topic will also be discussed at the next TPAF meeting in October. <p>IM11/120619 - DB/DC update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMA advised that initially it was expected that this update would feature in the employer bulletin, but, on reflection, it was felt to be a member need and so the update was included in the September member bulletin. 	
Agenda item 5	<p>Review of Papers 4,5,6,7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JH invited comments and observations from the sub-committee regarding papers 4-7. • She drew attention to the Engagement Outcome Measures on page 5, which looked positive; and noted the reference to this sub-committee at para 23 on page 6. AMA observed that the questions supporting OM11 had been of particular interest to sub-committee members at the previous meeting and highlighted that feedback is used to improve services. • JH observed that good progress is being made re webchat (page 7); AMA confirmed that the launch has gone well and that there is a 	

	<p>good uptake.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JH felt the low level of telephony complaints was note-worthy, and also observed that aged cases were being successfully dealt with. • JG queried para 35 (page 10) asking whether TP characterise the type of complaint about employers; KTK confirm that generally members complain that employers don't have sufficient knowledge to answer pension-related questions or to signpost members adequately. JG observed that this linked to the ESFA/TP presentation earlier reinforcing the message of how important is to establish communication routes to/with academies. • AMA noted that from the DfE perspective the dashboard was showing a positive picture. TP's Engagement team work proactively and constructively with DfE colleagues, but if necessary are reactive/responsive to events. • Paper 5 - AMA highlighted the current consultation on independent schools that is due to close on 3 November. • Paper 7 - AMA noted that the issues on the log related to service delivery/resources and there were no engagement issues featured. 	
Agenda item 6	<p>Agree Top Key Issues from the Meeting / Report to highlight at the next TPSPB meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sub-committee agreed to highlight the following issues to the TPSPB meeting in December: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ESFA academies engagement (progressing concerns raised by the sub-committee) ○ Progress on the aged cases backlog. 	
Agenda item 7	<p>Agree whether any individual papers or presentation should be shared with remaining Board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The slides from the TP/DfE presentation should be shared, for interest and information, with all Board members. 	IM3/250919
Agenda item 8	<p>AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no items of other business. 	
Next meeting	11 December 2019, TP, Lingfield Point, Darlington	

Minutes agreed by Vice-Chair: *Julie Huckstep*

Date: 02 October 2019

Confirmed by circulation to sub-committee members on: 02 October 2019

Ratified at sub-committee meeting on 11 December 2019.