

## NORTHERN IRELAND POLICE PENSION BOARD

### ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

#### CHAIR'S FORWARD

I am pleased to report on the sixth year of the Northern Ireland Police Pension Board (PPB). The PPB in its oversight role of the Police Pension Schemes Board notes the excellent administration service provided by PSNI Pensions Branch in ensuring the schemes meet all regulatory requirements.

In carrying out this function the PPB met on 3 occasions during 2020/21 by the medium of teleconference and once by e-mail and all PPB Members have undertaken appropriate training for fulfilling their duties. In accordance with its statutory obligations, information on the PPB is published and maintained on the Northern Ireland Policing Board website, which should provide assurance to the public on the schemes' operation.<sup>1</sup>

The attendance of Board members at Board Meetings is detailed in the table below:

NAME	No. Meetings Called	No. Meetings Attended
Mr Michael N Burton (Chair)	4	4
Employer Representative (1)	4	4
Employer Representative (2)	4	3
Employer Representative (3)	4	4
Independent Member	4	4
Employee Representative (1)	4	4
Employee Representative (2)	2	1
Employee Representative (3)	2	0
Employee Representative (4)	3	3
Employee Representative (5)	1	1

During the current year, 2 key factors were addressed by the Board.

- The addressing of the impact of Covid-19 and its impact upon the delivery of the objectives of the Pension Scheme to members. I am pleased to report that the Pensions Scheme Administrator implemented its contingency plan to ensure continuity of service to members and the Scheme Management, and ensured the continued operation of the Scheme throughout the year. My

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/police-pension-board>

thanks to all involved in this process. The Board will continue to monitor delivery and compliance with regulations with regards to this issue.

- The outcome of the McCloud Judgment was examined and a formal response to consultation issue during this year. Implementation plans have been brought forward by the Scheme Manager and Scheme Administrator, and the Board will continue assisting the Scheme Manager to monitor delivery of the required outcomes.

Over the next year the PPB will continue to review the schemes' compliance and focus on any potential risks/challenges for the future, including the outworking of the McCloud Judgment, the ongoing Covid-19 situation, and working with The Pensions Regulator to develop best practice in Scheme Governance.

To the other members of the PPB I would wish to record my appreciation for their individual and collective contributions, and for their assistance in developing a performance framework on key issues relating to the schemes. I would also like to give my thanks to the Policing Board NI personnel concerned in the administration of the PPB. This information is utilised by the PPB in scrutinising the scheme's effectiveness and the identification of potential areas for improvement.

**MICHAEL N BURTON**

Independent Chair

## **BACKGROUND**

The Northern Ireland Police Pension Board was established in April 2015, following introduction of the *Police Pension Regulations (NI) 2015*.

The PPB provides assistance to the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) as scheme manager:

- a) To secure compliance with –
  - i the scheme regulations:
  - ii and other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the scheme and any connected scheme; and
  - iii any requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the scheme or any connected scheme and
- b) In the performance of the Scheme Manager's functions under the regulations

## **COMPOSITION**

The PPB comprises:

- Mr Michael N Burton (Independent Chair)
- Three employer representatives
- Three employee representatives
- One Independent Member

A log of Member's training and register of declared Conflicts of Interest is maintained by the NIPB.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Terms of Reference for the PPB were agreed by Members and are reviewed on an annual basis. A copy of the Terms of Reference is available on the NIPB website under the Police Pension Board section.

## **MEETINGS**

The PPB met on 4 occasions during 2020/2021: April 2020, September 2020, December 2020 and March 2021.

PPB has reviewed the Terms of Reference and determined that from 2021 going forward there would be the requirement for members to attend a minimum of 2 meetings per annum.

A copy of the agenda and minutes of each meeting are published on the NIPB's website following ratification.

## **PENSION MATTERS CONSIDERED**

During 2020/2021 the PPB considered the following issues:-

- Pension Schemes Manager and administrators response to the Covid-19
- PPB work with The Pension Regulators regulatory supervision exercise on Public Sector Pension Schemes
- Pensions Ombudsman determinations relevant to the role of the PPB;
- PSNI Pension Governance (reporting framework)
- Government Actuary Department guidance
- NIPB Case Management System
- Performance Reports from the Pensions Scheme Administrator (PSNI)
- Risks and challenges facing Police Pension Schemes
- Pension Regulator Guidance
- Annual Benefit Statements
- Annual Allowance Statements
- Reporting breaches of the law
- Guaranteed Minimum Payment Reconciliation Exercise
- Data Protection Regulations
- Audit Reports and the Report to those Charged with Governance
- PSNI Pension Accounts
- The McCloud Judgement
- The PPB Risk Register and
- Pensions resources within PSNI AND NIPB

## **COVID-19 RESPONSE**

Following the Covid-19 requirements for social distancing and the requirement for working from home arrangements to be put in place, the Pension Schemes Administrator implemented its Business Continuity Response Plan. Board Members are updated and briefed on issues involving the administration and management of the Schemes on an ongoing basis to ensure all regulatory requirements of the Schemes are being met.

## **TRAINING DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

The PPB is supported in its work by Mr Brian Quinn in his capacity as the Pensions Advisor. During the 2020/2021 year, the PPB received training/development on a number of relevant issues and updates including, Record Keeping, the role of the Pension Scheme Board, the McCloud Judgment, updates on pension legislation, and a presentation to the Resources Committee of the Northern Ireland Policing Board.