

**NI TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME PENSION BOARD (NITPSPB) MEETING**

**09/09/2025 @ 2.00pm**

**Antrim Board Centre**

<b>Attendees:</b>	Michael Burton (MBurt)	Chair
	Maxine Murphy-Higgins (MMH)	Member Representative
	Kevin Daly (KD)	Member Representative
	Angela Armstrong (AA)	Employer Representative
	Joanne McKenna (JMckK)	Employer Representative
	Sean Lavery (SL)	Employer Representative
	Mark Bailey (MBail)	DE
	Peter Philip (PP)	Public Sector Pension Scheme
<b>In attendance</b>	Brian Quinn (BQ)	DE
	Stephen Van Houten (SVH)	DE
	Pamela Hubbard (PH)	DE
	Grace Russell (GR)	DE (Secretariat)

No.	Description	Action
1.	<b>Apologies and Introductions</b>	
	<p><u>Introductions:</u> Michael Burton welcomed everyone to the meeting. He welcomed Stephen Van Houten to the meeting deputising for Neil Palmer.</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Gail Flavell (Employer representative). Raymond Beggs (Member representative) Neil Palmer (DE)</p>	
2.	<b>Conflicts of Interests</b>	
	No material conflicts noted.	
3.	<b>Minutes of last meeting and Action Points</b>	
	<p>Minutes of last meeting (25/02/2025) were agreed by all Board members and cleared for publishing.</p> <p><b>AP7 – BQ to review overpayment reporting standards and provide the Board with proposed changes.</b></p> <p>BQ advised that this was carried forward until after the Accounts had been finalised.</p>	<b>AP7 carried forward.</b>
4.	<b>Scheme Administration – Quarterly Report</b>	

<p>BQ presented the quarterly report on scheme administration performance.</p> <p>The August retirements are progressing well, 450 applications have been received to date, 234 cases were received on time for September payment. 264 members have received their lump sum and a further 31 are at final approval stage. 87 cases are awaiting the option forms from the member and 49 are awaiting information from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.</p> <p>The Annual Benefits Statements (ABS) have been run and 99% were processed by 31 August 2025.</p> <p>BQ referred to the scheme's breach reporting matrix provided in the report and recommended that this did not appear to be a reportable breach.</p> <p>Following discussion by the Board it was agreed that the level of errors was not material and the matter would not merit reporting to the Pensions Regulator as a breach of the law.</p> <p>BQ stated that the remainder of the report indicated good progress was being maintained. In respect of the late receipt of information from employers, one school was late twice and received the courtesy e-mail and one school received a 3 late return letter. 2 letters have been sent to date, but no reply, BQ will contact the school in the coming days in line with the agreed process.</p> <p>BQ advised that there was a significant increase in Overpayments due to the National Fraud Initiative cases being recorded.</p> <p>In connection with McCloud BQ confirmed that the issue of ICU choices is around 50% complete. The DCU choices are embedded in business as usual.</p> <p>There is a backlog of checking at present as</p>	
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	<p>resources at checking level are low. 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 is the deadline for completion notified to the Pensions Regulator.</p> <p>BQ stated that the branch hoped to have a Webinar in January in advance of next year's main period for receipt of retirement applications.</p> <p>MBurt noted the general progress and on August retirements in particular and passed on his thanks to staff for all their work on achieving this.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Scheme Finance</b>	
	<p>The Overpayment report had been dealt along with the Scheme Administration.</p> <p>PH provided an update on Scheme Accounts.</p> <p>PH advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was sufficient information available to the auditor to enable them to commence the 2024-25 audit by their deadline of 1 September. Comments on the draft statements will be shared DE Finance and with the auditor.</li> <li>• The 2024-25 statements are on track to be certified in advance of the mid-November statutory deadline.</li> <li>• Once this has occurred it is hoped that the Teachers' Pension Scheme accounts backlogs will be brought up to date and the accounts will fall into typical annual reporting timeframes.</li> </ul>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Updates on legislation and policy</b>	
	<p>BQ provided an update on the scheme policy and legislation on which a paper had been circulated.</p> <p>Valuation data has been finalised and shared with GAD. The Valuation will determine the employer contribution rate from April 2027.</p>	

	<p>Work on legislation regarding survivor benefits is ongoing with Departmental Solicitors (DSO). MBail stated that DSO resourcing is currently stretched, leading to some delays in responses.</p> <p>MMH asked if the minimum retirement age was rising from 55 to 58.</p> <p>BQ stated that any changes to minimum retirement age would be an issue for all schemes and NITPS will carefully consider the way forward. Scheme Advisory Board will be consulted on any proposed changes.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Risk Register/Update on Audit Matters</b>	
	<p>BQ provided the Board with an update on the risk register, and this was noted.</p> <p>He advised that there was little change to this.</p> <p>The technical risk relating to McCloud has been downgraded as the necessary software updates are in place. This risk will be removed before the next meeting.</p> <p>BQ also advised regarding the risk regarding replacement staff. A new Grade 7 is commencing on 13 October 2025.</p> <p>There are currently 24 AO vacancies across TPPT, 10 AO recruitment offers have been accepted including 6 agency staff already in office and a further 5 offers of employment are due to issue.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Pension Dashboards</b>	
	<p>BQ provided an update on Pension Dashboards.</p> <p>Testing is going well in UPM test. There was discussion of a potential emerging issue regarding the supplier's ability to connect to the Dashboard in</p>	

	<p>a timely manner. BQ agreed to keep the Board informed as necessary.</p> <p>MBurt noted that many schemes are having issues regarding the Dashboards.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
	<p>MBurt stated that he had attended a GAD conference in London regarding public sector pension schemes which he found to be very beneficial.</p> <p>MBurt asked the Board members to consider, for discussion at the next meeting, if they believe there would be merit in amending the Terms of Reference to state that a quorum of one member and employer representative instead of two is needed for a vote in the meetings.</p>	<p><b>AP11</b> – Members to consider if they would favour a change to the ToR.</p>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Time and Date of next meeting</b>	
	<p>The next meeting will be held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday 9 December 2025 via Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 3.15pm.</p>	