

Official

South West Regional Police Pensions Board

Thursday 8 September 2022 at 10:00am

Virtual meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Attendance

Ian Pollitt (Independent Chair)

Esther Lee (Minute Taker)

Member Representatives

Anthony Hart (Devon and Cornwall Supt Association)

Richard Wand (National Association of Retired Police Officers)

Employer Representatives

Richard Hicks (Professional Advisor, Devon and Cornwall & Dorset) rep for Sandy Goscomb
Sarah Holbrook (Wiltshire)

Tim Newman (Dorset)
Claire Hargreaves (Avon and Somerset) rep for Nick Adams

Guests

Paul Mudd (XPS) (for 03/22/37a only)

Shirley Cuthbert (Peninsula) (for 03/22/37b only)

Apologies

Jon Stratford (CPOSA Rep)
Tony Henley (Avon and Somerset Federation)
Jim Purkiss (Devon and Cornwall Federation)

Sandy Goscomb (Devon and Cornwall)
Clive Barker (Wiltshire, Employer rep)
Nick Adams (Avon and Somerset)
Jane Heppel (Gloucestershire)

03/22/25 Introductions and Apologies, Declarations Conflict of Interest, [FOIA open]

Ian Pollitt as Chair welcomed members, confirming that whilst the meeting was not quorate, there was no business on the agenda which required specific decisions or support. The quarterly report had been received from XPS on the morning of the meeting and had been shared with members.

There were no declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

03/22/26 Minutes from the last meeting [FOIA Open]

The draft minutes from the meeting held on 27 July 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

03/22/27 Action Log [FOIA open]

The Chair presented the action log, highlighting the following updates:

- a. **Action 136 – Succession Planning (previous reference 02/21/16 and 03/21/26c 04/21/41b and 01/22/03b 02/22/15a)**
Carried over to the next meeting

Agreed v1

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Action to remain open

- b. Action 159 – Peninsula Pensions Update – New Joiners [FOIA open] (previous minute reference 01/22/11a and 02/22/15f)**
Item closed as completed
Action discharged
- c. Action 161 – Peninsula Pensions Update – Widows benefits [FOIA open] (previous minute reference 01/22/11a and 02/22/15g)**
Item closed as completed
Action discharged
- d. Action 163 - Ashcroft v Evans - additional costs [FOIA open] (previous minute reference 02/22/18)**
Richard Hicks confirmed he had checked with Eyan Naylor. XPS had received the purchase orders required to undertake the necessary actions.
Action discharged
- e. Action 164 - Devon and Cornwall Police Pensions in Payment - audit [FOIA closed s.22] (previous minute reference 02/22/20)**
Discussed at agenda item 03/22/32.
Action discharged

03/22/28 Training / Knowledge of Board Members [FOIA Open]

No new training subjects had been identified for members to complete and the training record tab was up to date. Claire Hargreaves confirmed she had completed the mandatory training when she attended previous meetings.

03/22/29 The Pension Regulator [FOIA Open]

No trends or concerns to raise to the Board.

03/22/30 Pension Compliance and Performance Group [FOIA Closed s.43 commercial interests]

03/22/31 McCloud Pension Remedy – [FOIA closed s.43 Legal Professional Privilege]

03/22/32 Devon and Cornwall Police Pensions in Payment – Audit [FOIA Open]

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Richard Hicks provided an update to the Board, reiterating the update provided by Sandy Goscomb at the last meeting.

Enquiries had been made with XPS to understand any themes in respect of those involved in the control group. They confirmed there were no specific themes and had received little in respect of formal complaints or requests for detailed calculations, where requested such detail had been supplied to the member. XPS had received seven new requests to date, and they were being dealt with as business as usual.

XPS had provided a project initiation document (PID) for potential future work, which was with Sandy Goscomb for consideration. There was no timescale for a decision in relation to the initiation document, but it was hoped an update would be available for the December 2022 meeting.

Richard Wand, the NARPO representative raised a concern that there appeared to be no specific reason or primary cause for the under and over payments. Richard Hicks confirmed he was meeting with Sandy Goscomb in the coming weeks to discuss the data. He explained he considered the lack of clarity with a specific theme, was the main reason for the need to look at the matter in more detail.

03/22/33 Annual Benefit Statements [FOIA open]

According to Pension Regulations, all members must have an Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) made available by the 31 August each year.

Devon and Cornwall and Dorset Police had completed messaging to all officers via their intranet site. All Board members were urged to undertake the same messaging, highlighting the importance of officers checking their statements for accuracy. Such messaging also provided an opportunity to publicise the use of the online self-service provision.

03/22/34 Pension Saving Statements [FOIA open]

The Pension Saving Statements (PSS) were due to be produced by the usual 6 October 2022 deadline. Devon and Cornwall Police and Dorset Police had led on initiating 'Pension and Taxation Awareness' events, collaborating in partnership with the Superintendents' Association and the Police Federation; they were to be hosted online by XPS in early November 2022. They would be open to the four Regional Forces served by XPS and were seen as popular and helpful to those members in receipt of a PSS. The presentations would run in the morning and afternoon and would last approximately 90 minutes. Details would be shared with regional colleagues once dates were finalised by Richard Hicks/XPS.

For action by:

Richard Hicks

Action discharged

Currently it was unknown how many members would receive a PSS in 2022. The Board recognised that whilst most superintendents were aware of their annual allowance, thresholds had not increased in line with salary increases. Currently it was unknown whether the threshold had started to impact Inspector levels.

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Members were informed that a recent media piece had suggested that doctors with long service were leaving the NHS due to pension tax issues. In turn, the government had suggested they would take action in respect of tax thresholds to ease the trend, however no detail had been provided. It was not known whether any action taken by the government would be relevant for all pension members, or only targeted for the NHS.

03/22/35 Review of Risk Register [FOIA Open]

The Risk Register was confirmed as being up to date.

Risk 5 Communications – failure to explain and inform

Consideration was given to revisiting member self-service as a communication risk. The South West Region was currently seeing online usage of approx. 65%, which was above the national average of 50%. The issue/objective being to maximise the number of members registered/accessing their records online. The Board agreed it could be discussed in the future as required.

Risk 10 Failure to Interpret rules or legislation correctly

The risk currently sat at 2x5 =10. As no incidents had occurred in the previous two years it was suggested and agreed that it could be lowered to green from amber with a score of 1x3 =3. Remedy data cleansing would identify any historical issues and may initiate a new or updated risk area by the end of 2022. Accuracy of Payments was covered as a separate risk (no 6). Esther Lee to update the Risk Register accordingly.

For action by:

Esther Lee

Action discharged

03/22/36 Formal Complaints [FOIA open]

No significant issues, overall trends, or concerns were raised to the Board.

03/22/37 Updates from the Chair and matters raised by the Board for discussion [FOIA open]

A new body was being set up by the National Police Chief Council (NPCC) entitled the Scheme Managers Working Group and was a sub-group of the Scheme Advisory Board. An initial meeting had already been held with the next meeting scheduled for 11 October 2022. It would consist of representatives from Forces across the country with a representative from the South West invited. The purpose of the Group was to align activity undertaken by the 43 forces, bringing consistency to pension related activity. Currently the South West rep was yet to be confirmed.

Richard Wand declared an interest as an ex general secretary of the Constables Central Committee in relation to a case for reduced contributions and benefits which would be shared with the Scheme Managers Working Group.

The Board broke for refreshments.

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03/22/37 Regional Pension Scheme Administration - Performance [FOIA closed s43 Commercial Interests]

Esther Lee provided members with details of actions from the meeting

There being no further items for discussion the meeting closed at 11.48am

Date, Time and Location of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the South West Regional Police Pensions Board will sit on Thursday 1 December 2022 at 10:00am via Teams