

RECORD OF THE FORTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE PENSION BOARD (NICSPB)

Date: Thursday 4 December 2025
Time: 10.30AM
Venue: Online via Teams

In attendance:

Chairperson: Bumper Graham (Chairperson)

Employer Representatives: Gary Fair (TEO)
Carolyn Atkinson (DOJ)
Brian Quinn (DE)

Shadow Employer Representative: Sheila Ward (DOF)

Employee Representatives: Maria Morgan (NIPSA)
Laurence McCann (FDA)

Shadow Employee Representative: Ryan Wilson (NIPSA)

Non-voting Representatives: Peter Philip (DoF - Policy)
Olivia McMenamy (DE)

Scheme Representatives: Colette Heaney (Director of Pensions Division)
Jonathan Butler (Scheme Manager, CSP)

Secretariat: Catherine O’Kane (CSP Policy & Legislation Branch)

Apologies: Joanne Veighey (NIPSA)

No	Description
1.	Welcome, Introductions, Apologies and Board Membership
	<p>Chairperson: Bumper Graham</p> <p>Apologies: Joanne Veighey</p> <p>The Chairperson welcomed all members to the forty-second Pension Board meeting and noted apologies. He advised that Ryan Wilson would step up as Shadow Representative in the absence of Joanne Veighey for this meeting only.</p>
2.	Conflicts of Interest
	<p>The Chairperson asked Board Members if they had any conflicts of interest they wished to declare. No conflicts were raised by Board Members. They were advised to contact the Secretariat if any did arise in the future.</p>
3.	Minutes of previous meeting
	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28 August 2025 were agreed.</p> <p>The Chairperson asked if there were any redactions to the minutes of the forty-first meeting. No suggestions for further amendments were made. The Secretariat are to circulate the minutes by email for final approval ahead of publication on the CSP(NI) website.</p> <p>The Chairperson informed the Board of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the issue with the presentation of the CSP(NI) website analytics would be discussed further at the next meeting; • he confirmed that the NICSPB Annual Report 2024-2025 has been published on the CSP(NI) website; • the meeting of the NI Public Service Pension Schemes Pension Board Chairs Forum took place on 4 September 2025; it was a positive meeting in which all members agreed to invite the Chair of NILGOSC Pension Board moving forward. The next meeting is scheduled for 26 February 2026. <p>There were no questions from the Board and they were content to note.</p> <p><i>AP 01/42 – Secretariat to re-issue minutes from the forty-first meeting for final review/ redactions prior to arranging publication of the record on the CSP(NI) website.</i></p>

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4.	McCloud Remedy Update
	<p>Board Members received an update paper on the McCloud Remedy in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Peter Philip provided a further update with regards to the Contingent Decisions process. He advised that CSP aim to go live with 'opt-outs' only in the coming days on the CSP(NI) website. At this stage, the process will include an application form, the use of a modeller, and that an Employer Pension Notice will be issued. CSP plan to conduct a soft launch and expect the number of applications to be low. They were conscious not to inundate the scheme administrators with unnecessary queries from members.</p> <p>Brian Quinn queried how CSP deal with the members who do not respond with a choice at all. Peter Philip advised that CSP send the members a reminder before the twelve-month deadline and if they do not respond by the deadline then their record remains as it was. Colette Heaney further explained that the process on how to deal with tapered members who have not made a choice is still being considered and agreed to share CSP's approach when addressed. The Chairperson cited that the responses rate of 46% either shows that members are not concerned regarding their choice or do not understand the process.</p> <p>Laurence McCann asked if the members receive a letter and do not make a choice do they stay 'as is'. Colette Heaney confirmed that this is the case, except for those who are in the tapered group, however the Scheme Manager still needs to make a decision on this. Laurence McCann queried how many members would fall within this group and Colette Heaney confirmed that there are approximately two thousand protected members and around a third of those impacted by McCloud fell within the tapered group.</p> <p>Laurence McCann queried how members qualified to be in the tapered group and Colette Heaney explained that members, who, on 1 April 2012, were between 10 years and 13.5 years of their Normal Scheme Pension Age. They could opt to remain in their legacy scheme and transitioned to alpha at a later date between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. She also flagged that many in the tapered group could be worse off financially no matter what option they choose and that GAD has offered to help with the more complex cases. Colette Heaney advised that those members who choose a like for like option will have their overpayments written off, otherwise CSP will seek recovery.</p> <p>The Chairperson reminded the Board of how important it is for members to seek financial advice in the first instance before making their choice and how GAD will charge for their services if availed of. The Chairperson queried if CSP are still on target to meet their March 2027 deadline and Colette</p>

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	<p>confirmed that they are on track and are currently splitting resources to start making payments/ action choices.</p> <p>With regard to Remedial Service Amendment Regulations, Peter Philip confirmed that GB have their amendment in place and CSP are currently working on draft amendments, which will be subject to negative Assembly procedure. In relation to this, Maria Morgan confirmed that Peter Philip had written to TUS requesting approval for a four week consultation period, she raised concerns that this would be unachievable due the forthcoming Christmas holidays. Therefore TUS and suggested a slightly longer consultation period instead. Maria Morgan stated that further discussions were required with her TUS colleagues on this matter and requested a little more time to come back with a definitive response. Peter Philip agreed to discuss this matter with Maria Morgan separately. It was agreed that the matter would be added as an agenda item for the next Pensions Forum meeting on 18 December 2025.</p> <p>Maria Morgan queried if the delay in the Consultation period would detrimentally affect members. Peter Philip confirmed that it would not as GB's Remedy Regulation amendments came into effect retrospectively to 1 October 2023 and CSP plan to take the same approach in order to avoid any detrimental effect to members.</p> <p><i>AP 02/42 - Secretariat to add the Remedy Regulations Consultation as an agenda item for the next Pensions Forum meeting on 18 December 2025.</i></p> <p>The Board members were content to note the current position with McCloud.</p>
5.	Pensions Division Balanced Scorecard 2025/26
	<p>The Pensions Division Balanced Scorecard 2025/26 was shared in advance with Board members.</p> <p>The Board were content to note the Scorecard.</p>
6.	Pensions Division Risk Register 2025/26
	<p>The Pensions Division Risk Register was shared in advance with Board members.</p> <p>Johnny Butler provided a further update stating that the ABS/PSS exercises have now been completed.</p> <p>Gary Fair queried if there were any plans to test the Business Continuity Plan. Colette Heaney confirmed that issues are addressed as they arise, for</p>

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	<p>the example the on-line portal was down for a period of time but is now operable again. The Chairperson reminded the Board that Business Continuity is also a standing item on the Pension Board agenda and can address any issues as they arise.</p> <p>The Board were otherwise content to note without further comment.</p>
7.	NICSPB Risk Register 2025/26
	<p>The NICS Project Board Risk Register was shared in advance with Board members.</p> <p>The Chairperson referred to R1 (Pension Board membership) and confirmed that the correct procedures were followed in regard to the extension to his tenure/ follow up work and that he had formally accepted. He thanked the Board for their participation.</p> <p>Otherwise the Board were content to note the NICSPB Risk Register for 2025/26.</p>
8.	Business Continuity
	<p>A written update on the staffing position was provided to the Board in advance of the meeting for discussion.</p> <p>The Chairperson noted that two EO1 positions had been filled since the last meeting but raised concerns over continuity. Colette Heaney confirmed that the DP Accountant role had been filled on 1 December 2025. She also confirmed that NICSHR have approved an internal trawl EO1 competition and that a Candidate Information Booklet is currently in draft. CSP will contact TUS once complete. Colette Heaney advised that HR Connect is at full capacity when it comes to running competitions and that CSP may have to wait a period of time before they can move forward with the EO1 competition.</p> <p>The Chairperson raised concerns over the ever increasing dependency on agency workers within the Civil Service and the adverse impact on work that unfilled posts are having within CSP and throughout the Civil Service. Maria Morgan advised that a new HR Platform is being developed to replace HR Connect and will be in place from 2027. She expressed a concern for the health and well being of current Civil Servants and the pressure they are being put under due to the lack of resourcing.</p> <p>Gary Fair informed the Board that the external DP/ SO competitions are due to take place in the first quarter of 2026. Colette Heaney confirmed that the</p>

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	<p>internal DP competition was justified within CSP as there was no external DP competition in place at the time.</p> <p>Gary Fair queried if Elective Transfers are being blocked but Colette Heaney confirmed that CSP recently obtained two EO1s via the Elective Transfer process. Maria Morgan stated that with the current EO2 competition in operation, CSP may need more AOs to replace the ones that are successful in promotion. She believes that the AO Pilot competition will help with this alongside the 2024 External AO competition. Colette Heaney advised that CSP were informed that their current AO vacancies will be allocated from the existing external AO list.</p> <p>Olivia McMenamy stated that there was a recruitment freeze in place in the Department of Education and queried if there was one in place across other Departments. It was confirmed that at present there was none within DoF. The Chairperson raised concerns over any potential recruitment freeze and stated that he would intervene, if necessary, by meeting with the Permanent Secretary. The Chairperson stated that he would seek to have the Permanent Secretary remove CSP from any embargo and only refer the matter to TPR should he not do so in the event of a recruitment embargo.</p> <p>It was agreed to continually monitor the resourcing position.</p> <p>The Board noted that they were content.</p>
9.	Training Needs
	<p>The Chairperson advised the Board to contact the Secretariat with details of any training needs.</p> <p>The Board were content to do so.</p>
10.	CSP Systems Project Update
	<p>A written update on the Systems Project was provided to the Board in advance of the meeting for discussion.</p> <p>A short discussion ensued where it was confirmed that a further contract extension on the current IT contract is now in place up to April 2028 and next steps have been agreed, including closing the current Project, pursuing a further extension and commencing a new project at the appropriate time.. Colette Heaney advised that some staff from the Project Team have been placed in other roles within the Pensions Division until a new project is established. The Chairperson instructed the Secretariat to remove the CSP Systems Project Update as a standing item on the Board Agenda noting that it will be addressed under Business Continuity at future meetings. Maria Morgan asked Colette Heaney if Integr8 caused any issues with CSP's</p>

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	<p>interfaces, Colette Heaney advised that she would inform the Board if she were made aware of any.</p> <p><i>AP 03/42 - Secretariat to remove CSP Systems Project Update as a standing item on the Pension Board Agenda.</i></p>
11.	<p>Pensions Dashboards</p>
	<p>A written update on the Pensions Dashboards was provided to the Board in advance of the meeting for discussion.</p> <p>Johnny Butler advised that the Pensions Regulator has been informed that the connection deadline of October 2025 was not met. Brian Quinn advised the Board that the current connection codes only last for three months, after which new codes would be required and a breach would need to be reported to the Pensions Regulator. Johnny Butler agreed that CSP would be in the same position. The Chairperson raised concerns that as a result of this CSP would be fined. It was confirmed that all parties were engaging closely on the Pensions Dashboards connections to prevent this arising.</p> <p>The Chairperson asked for an update to be shared with the Board before the next meeting in March 2026 if a revised date has not been set. Brian Quinn stated that Teachers Pensions were required to implement a data improvement plan, Johnny Butler confirmed that this was also a requirement for CSP and that scheme administrators are currently reviewing it. The Chairperson affirmed that this would be a requirement for all the pension schemes on the Pensions Dashboards programme to ensure that all data is correct and usable, otherwise there would be no point to it.</p> <p>Colette Heaney reminded the Board that she had written to Chris Curry (Pensions Dashboards Project) concerning the estimated retirement projections which CSP and other schemes are expected to provide, asking for further clarity on exactly what public sector schemes are to provide to members.</p> <p><i>AP 04/42 – Management to provide an update to the Board on the Pensions Dashboards if a new connection date has not been set before the next Pension Board meeting in March 2026.</i></p> <p>Otherwise the Board were content to note the update.</p>
12.	<p>Breach Reporting Policy</p>

No	Description
	<p>The Chairperson gave the Board a brief overview of the Public Office (Accountability Bill) and asked the Board members if they think it will have an impact on the NICSPB Breach Reporting Policy moving forward. He asked for the link to the Bill to be shared with the Board and for it to be issued with the Breach Reporting Policy to assess if it would have an impact on it in the future.</p> <p><i>AP 05/42 - Secretariat to share the link to the Public Office (Accountability) Bill and issue with the NICSPB Breach Reporting Policy for the Board to assess if will have an impact on the Policy in the future.</i></p> <p>The Board were content to note.</p>
13.	Open Action Points from Previous Meeting
	<p>Members were content to close all currently open Action Points with the exception of AP2.</p> <p>AP 01/41 – Re-issue minutes from the fortieth meeting for final review/redactions prior to arranging publication of the record on the CSP(NI) website.</p> <p>AP 02/41 - Contact Communications team to ascertain if a table of website analytics can be created which can compare the current statistics to the previous report.</p> <p>AP 03/41 - Provide NICS HR with a link directly to a website page that contains information on the benefits of joining the NICS pension scheme, requesting that it be used in future application packs for new recruits.</p> <p>AP 04/41 - Issue invite to the next Pension Board meeting on Thursday 4 December 2025 at 10.30am via Teams.</p> <p>AP 05/41 - Circulate draft NICSPB Annual Report for review/comments with the intention of publishing on the CSP(NI) website prior to the next meeting.</p>
14.	AOB
	None
15.	Date of time of next meeting
	The date for the next meeting was agreed and set as Thursday 26 March 2026 at 10.30am via Teams.

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	<i>AP 06/42 – Secretariat to issue invite to the next Pension Board meeting on Thursday 26 March 2026 at 10.30am via Teams.</i>
16.	BELOW THE LINE PAPERS
	<p>The Chairperson informed the Board that there were no concerns arising for Pensions from the Autumn Budget.</p> <p>Otherwise, Board members were content to note below the line papers.</p> <p>The meeting concluded at 12.09pm.</p>