

**DRAFT**

**Meeting of the HSC Pension Scheme Pension Board – Castle  
Buildings Wednesday 13 April 2016**

**In Attendance:**

Deborah McNeilly	DHSSPS - <b>Chairperson</b>
Phil McCusker ( <b>PMC</b> )	DHSSPS – Pension Policy and Legislation
Russell McGowan ( <b>RMG</b> )	DHSSPS – ( <b>Secretariat</b> )
Martin Bradley ( <b>MB</b> )	HSC Pension Service
Roberta Magee ( <b>RM</b> )	Unison
Mary Caddell ( <b>MC</b> )	RCM
Dr Padhriac Conneally ( <b>PC</b> )	BMA
Maryna Chambers ( <b>MC</b> )	Northern HSC Trust
Pamela Crozier ( <b>PS</b> )	Western HSC Trust
Alan Stout ( <b>AS</b> )	NIGPC

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**Apologies:**

Desi Lowry	RCN
Kevin McCabe	Nipsa
Oonagh Burns	BSO

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**1. Welcome / Introductions / Apologies**

The Chairperson welcomed representatives and conveyed apologies received.

**2. Matters Discussed / Action Points**

Minutes of last meeting

Board Members were updated on the action points and agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 September 2015.

Appointment of Pension Board Independent Chair

**MC** raised the issue of an independent chair fearing the delayed appointment might reflect negatively on the Board as a whole. The Chairperson informed members that the process for appointing an independent chair was still ongoing and due to work pressures within Public Appointments Unit it was likely to be later in 2016 before an independent chair would be appointed.

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### Future Agenda – Rolling Items

Discussion took place on the agenda for future meetings, what topics should be considered as rolling agenda items and what information on a regular basis would need to be provided for future meetings.

**ACTION POINT 1: Secretariat, Chairperson and DHSSPS representatives to meet to discuss future agenda items for consideration by Board members.**

### Terms of Reference (TOR)

Members discussed and agreed the amendments to the draft TOR provided by DHSSPS Pension Policy Unit.

**ACTION POINT 2: Secretariat to issue finalised TOR for the Pension Board and issue draft TOR for the Scheme Advisory Board.**

**ACTION POINT 3: Secretariat to issue members with the revised membership for both the Pension Board and Scheme Advisory Board**

### Decision Making Process (TOR)

The TOR states that in the event that consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be taken and only if the vote is equal will the Chairperson have the deciding vote. As the interim chairperson is a DHSSPS employee it was agreed the secretariat would set out proposals for decision making in the event of a tied vote.

**ACTION POINT 4: Secretariat to draft proposals for decision making in the event of an equal vote whilst an interim chair is in place**

### Board Member Training

Members agreed the content of the Pension Board Training Plan and for the completion of a Training Needs Assessment proforma.

Members agreed to attend ½ day training on pensions to be provided by the HSC Pension Service in June.

**ACTION POINT 5: Secretariat to issue Pension Board Training Plan and Training Needs Assessment proforma for completion by 13 May 2016.**

**ACTION POINT 6: Secretariat to arrange date and venue for ½ day training in Belfast for w/c 20 June 2016.**

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### Role of the Pension Board

**PMC** provided members with a draft table detailing the responsibilities of the Pension Board, the related activities and where information/evidence could be obtained to assist members in carrying out their role as Board members. He explained that the related activities were linked to the Terms of Reference. Members were happy with the content detailed in the draft table. Members were also directed to the Pension Regulator's website which has substantial training modules for Board members covering the activities detailed in the draft table.

**ACTION POINT 7: Secretariat to issue the agreed table on the Responsibilities of the Pension Board and provide a link to the Pension Regulator's website guidance.**

### Overview of HSC Scheme Regulations

**RMG** talked Board members through an overview of the HSC Pension Scheme and the Regulations detailing the provisions of the 1995 Scheme, 2008 Scheme and the new 2015 Scheme, highlighting the similarities and differences between the three schemes. Consolidated copies of each of the three scheme's regulations were made available. **PC** enquired how many active members were in each scheme. **MB** advised that due to interface data issues between BSO payroll and pension systems an accurate figure would not be available for a few weeks.

Members were also provided with an update on two consultations currently ongoing in relation to GP Federations and the abolition of Contracting-Out.

**ACTION POINT 8: MB to provide details of the number of active members in each scheme.**

### Scheme Managers Report / Major Exercises 2016 /17

**MB** provided members with a Scheme Manager's report which detailed the key achievements and developments in 2015-16, in particular the introduction of the new pension scheme from 1 April 2015, the transfer of GP Locum claims to the HSC Pension Service and the processing of 4,294 pension estimates and management of 34,722 automated calls.

**PC** raised concerns regarding the delay in some members receiving pension estimates. **MB** agreed that there were some delays in members receiving

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pension estimates and the payment of their pension benefits due to issues with the BSO payroll and late receipt of completed forms, also from BSO payroll. Board members agreed that a letter should be issued to the Chief Executive of the BSO expressing the Board's concerns with these delays.

**ACTION POINT 9: Chairperson to issue agreed letter to Chief Executive of BSO expressing Board's concern with delays.**

Members were also informed of four major exercises which the HSC Pension Service will be undertaking in the current year, Choice 2, GMP Reconciliation, Annual Benefit Statements and Protection-Opt-Out. In particular, MB raised concerns about the resources required for GMP reconciliation and the value for money of undertaking such a time intensive exercise. He informed members that just over three hundred scheme members would be eligible for Protection-Opt-Out, of the statutory requirement to issue Annual Benefit Statements to scheme members by 31 August each year and that 'Choice 2' would take place in late May / early June 2016.

Board members were agreed that the information being provided to scheme members for 'Choice 2' would play a crucial role in determining the choice they make and that the information would need to be easily understood by scheme members with worked examples included.

**ACTION POINT 10: MB to provide Board members with the Choice 2 communication material prior to issue to scheme members.**

### **3. Schedule of Future Meetings**

The date of future meetings are scheduled as follows:-

- **29 June 2016      10.00 – 12.00**
- **12 October 2016    10.00 – 12.00**
- **18 January 2017    10.00 – 12.00**

The venue for future meetings will be confirmed in due course.