



Judicial Pension Board

Key issues discussed at the meeting held on 26th January 2016.

Board Membership

The Board welcomed new employer members Sarah Wallace (Deputy Director Finance HMCTS) and Abigail Plenty (Deputy Director Judicial Pay and Pensions).

MOJ Communication on tax Changes.

The Board discussed the principle of “carry forward”, where a member can carry forward unused allowance for 3 years (but only where they had been a member of a registered scheme). The Board went on to agree that it was neither their role nor the MOJ’s role to provide advice to scheme members and that members would need to seek independent advice if they were minded to pursue this. The Board also noted that the method of scheme pays seems immensely complicated and that there is a need for the MOJ to issue a communication on the subject in draft form so it can be amended following any changes in the March 2016 budget.

Fee Paid Update

The Board heard that there was a delay in the introduction of FPJPS which is now due to be introduced on the 1st December 2016. The Board were reassured that no-one would be financially worse off due to the delay and that fee paid judges due to retire from April 2016 would receive an interim payment. The interim payments will run until the 31st March 2017.

Administration

The Board reviewed the following papers:

- Stewardship report from the MoJ Head of Pensions
- Punter Southall administration report

The Board discussed the process regarding the payment of a lump sum benefit. The Board heard that regarding the lump sum benefit, all members of the JPS 2015 had been issued with nomination forms on joining and forms for JUPRA members would be enclosed with their benefit statements. The Board also discussed the ending of contracting out in 2016. The Board went on to examine the efficiency of prevailing Punter Southall administrative procedures as well as the efficiency of the call centre operation whilst highlighting that this would be the first year that annual benefit statements would be issued.

Actuarial Valuation as at March 2016.

GAD attended the meeting and delivered the first training session on the actuarial valuation. The training covered the 2012 valuation highlights; roles and responsibilities; 2016 valuation plans; employer contribution rate and cost cap. The Board agreed that the MOJ and the HMT should meet to discuss the implementation and policy issues regarding the 2016 valuation, specifically whether fee-paid members are included. The Board went on to discuss whether the unisex assumptions used by GAD complied with the regulations or whether the regulations stipulate gender specific actuarial factors should be used in pension calculations. The Board also requested clarification from GAD on the rules regarding the scheme pays offset calculation.

Communication.

The Board heard that Punter Southall would be able to set up a generic website once the MOJ had confirmed the logo/banner and the domain name. The MOJ would then need to investigate whether the website could be set up by MOJ developers who dealt with specialist content or whether the Board would have to go with the solution offered by Punter Southall. If the latter option was chosen, then the website would be functional by April 2017.

Date of next meeting: 20th April 2016.