

Judicial Pensions Board Administration Committee

Key issues discussed at the meeting held on Monday 1 November 2021

Administration

The Committee was updated by the Ministry of Justice's Pension Administration and Contract Lead on the 2020/2021 Pensions Savings Statement (PSS) and Annual Benefits Statements (ABS) Exercise. The Committee was also provided an outline of the Annual Work Planner in conjunction with a Stability plan as a mechanism to measure the ongoing work within the Ministry of Justice's Pensions Administration Contract Teams and manage the team's workload. As part of the strategy, a new member has recently been recruited from Ministry of Justice's Judicial Claims Team and further recruitment proceeding to undergo the provision of the administration of Pension Schemes.

The Pensions and Contract Administration Lead stated the Data Reconciliation exercise is underway to make sure data held across XPS, Liberata and HMCTS is consistent ahead of the Reformed Scheme coming into place and procedures implemented for a smooth transition, that in turn will form part of a Reconciliation exercise.

The Committee was informed that XPS's performance had met SLA requirements for the period under review. The XPS stability plan remained subject to weekly review at administration meetings between XPS and MOJ and monthly at the Pensions Operations Delivery Board chaired by the Deputy Director for Pensions Operations. The Committee was advised that the move of the MoJ Administration Team to Middlesbrough was advancing with the recruitment and training of staff underway. For continuity and to ensure stability, current senior managers from the Wokingham office already working on the Judicial Pension Schemes were to provide senior oversight for the Middlesbrough team and some will continue to do so on a permanent basis.

Fee Paid Judicial Pension Scheme (FPJPS) Data Queries

The Pensions and Contract Administration Lead explained that the projection on the processing of the fee paid data had been adjusted resulting in a slight delay in the processing of fee paid priority cases. Consequently, an increased number of Judicial Claims Team staff had been trained on how to check the fee paid data to expedite its sending to XPS for priority calculation. The Board sought and were given assurance that Fee Paid Judges were being accorded parity in terms of effort and adherence to timescales as had taken place under the JPS ABS/PSS data exercise.

Pensions Savings Statements (PSS) and Annual Benefit Statements (ABS)

The Committee was advised that the JPS 2015 PSS/ABS exercise was now closed. A total of 98.9% of PSS and 99% of PSS had been issued before the deadline. The Judicial Pensions Board had agreed that the late issue of those remaining PSS and ABS for JPS 2015 did not constitute a reportable breach based on guidance of the Pensions Regulator. A few very complex cases remained which required prolonged investigation and these were being prioritised by XPS and MoJ. The remaining few ABS and PSS for the Judicial Pension Scheme 2015 were being investigated by MoJ, XPS and Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service. The outstanding Fee Paid Judicial Pension Scheme and JUPRA benefit statements had been issued. The Committee was informed that a joint review of this year's exercise was being conducted by MoJ and its partner agencies before a wider 'lessons learned' project would be undertaken to inform preparations for next year's ABS and PSS exercise. The majority of the Fee Paid Judicial Pension Scheme ABSs had been issued on 28 September with the remainder being sent on 18 October.

Future Reformed Scheme

The Committee was advised of XPS and MoJ preparations for the introduction of the Reformed Judicial Pension Scheme 2022.

Date of next meeting: 24 January 2022