

Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board
10:30-12:30, 27 August 2024
MS Teams and in COSLA Conference Centre

Attendees

<u>SAB Members</u>	
Andy Thompson (Chair)	GMB
Simon Watson (Joint Secretary)	UNISON
Cllr Vaughan Moody	COSLA
Cllr Simon Mountford	COSLA
Cllr David Richardson	COSLA
Kirsty Robb	Scottish Borders College
David Bell	Unite
Graham McNab	Unite
Annette Drylie	GMB
Kenny Dick	Care Inspectorate
Dr Davena Rankin	UNISON
Arthur Nicoll	UNISON
<u>Advisers and observers</u>	
Gareth Dixon (Joint Secretary)	COSLA
Susie Hare	SAB
Alan Wilkinson	SPPA
Eva Sobek	SPPA
Martin Smith	GAD
Garth Foster	GAD
Albert Chen	Lothian Pension Fund
Richard Mcindoe	Strathclyde Pension Fund
Laura Colliss	NESPF
Catherine McFadyen	Actuary (Hymans)
Evelyn Johnstone	Highland Pension Board (Chair)
Alan Walker	North East Scotland Pension Board (Chair)
Tom Howorth	Lothian Pension Board (Vice Chair)
Brian Robertson	Unite

Apologies

Cllr David Parker (Vice Chair)	COSLA
Iain Coltman	SPPA
Kimberley Linge	SPPA
Victoria Rogers	HR Director - West Dunbartonshire

Mirren Kelly	COSLA
Amanda Templeman	Director of Finance – Falkirk

Discussion

1. Welcome and Apologies

The outgoing Vice Chair (Andrew Thomson) welcomed everyone to the meeting in Cllr David Parker's absence and apologies were noted. Issues accessing the internet caused delays to those joining online.

Changes to the representation of Unite were acknowledged with Brian Robertson attending as an observer of the SAB and an introduction was made to David Bell who will become a member of the SAB. Thanks was given to Brian's time and work on the Scheme Advisory Board.

2. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

The Employee's Side nominated Andrew Thomson as joint Chair, and the Employer Side nominated Cllr David Parker joint (Vice) Chair.

Andrew Thomson was appointed Chair and Cllr David Parker as Vice Chair. He thanked the previous Chair for all the work they had undertaken in the role over the previous year.

3. Conflict of Interest Declarations

None advised.

4. Minute of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The Minute of the previous meeting of 21 May 2025 was submitted and approved as a correct record. The actions from the minutes were reviewed with the Joint Secretariat team.

5. GAD Update on Section 13 Report and HMT Valuation Verbal Update

The SAB received a presentation from GAD colleagues. The SAB was informed of the progress made since 2020 on the approach to the Section 13 Report and were presented with a summary position as at 31 March 2023 for the Scottish Funds. It was noted that GAD are still to publish the LGPS Scotland Section 13 Report and continue engagement in advance of the 2026 valuation cycle. The SAB further discussed the wrap around work that funds carry out as part of the valuation process.

ACTION: Joint Secretariat team to circulate the summary presentation from GAD to members after the meeting.

6. SPPA Update

The SAB discussed the upcoming changes to UK Government's Access and Fairness consultation noting the SPPA plan to introduce a consultation on these topics in coming weeks. It was noted that the consultation for the minimum pension age has been postponed due to the decision that England, Wales and Northern Ireland should consult on this change at the same time.

Regarding a SAB response to the Access and Fairness consultation, it was highlighted that the closing the date of consultation will likely be the end of November/December with the hopes that the SAB will be able to respond. It was noted that the regulations would need to be laid by February 2026 due to upcoming Scottish Parliament elections.

SPPA noted the circular that was issued on flexible retirement to ensure each case was considered on an individual basis with the correct evidence. The number of cases on flexible retirement increased from 2 in 2024 to 23 in 2025 in Scotland. The circular on the minimum pension age change circular was also highlighted.

The SPPA were thanked by the Chair for their circulars on these issues.

ACTION: Seek extension to respond to SPPA consultation

7. Annual Report 2024/25

The Joint Secretariat team apologised for the delay in sending out the annual report for 2023/24 ahead of the meeting. It was asked that comments were sent to the Joint Secretariat ahead of formal publications the following week.

ACTION: The Joint Secretariat to reshare the annual report and ask for comments ahead of publication.

8. Update on SAB Actions and Working Groups

All updates from English and Welsh SAB working groups were acknowledged. An update on the work of the Board Reference subgroup was provided, it was noted that there was a delay in receiving the requested information and that the group would meet again once the information was received before returning it to the SAB later in the year.

9. Good Governance Work Plan

The Joint Secretariat outlined the previous work on Good Governance by the SAB and detailed the new workplan to continue this work and sought comments and agreement

from the SAB on the workplan. It was noted the Joint Secretariat would like to reconvene the Good Governance Working Group to work on these actions.

The SAB agreed to the Workplan.

10. Gender Pension Gap

The Joint Secretariat detailed the correspondence the SAB had received in regard to the Gender Pension Gap from the Scottish Joint Council (SJC) for Local Government Employees. It was noted the Joint Secretariat had a meeting with the Strathclyde Pension Fund on the topic and highlighted the analysis of the Gender Pension Gap in their fund.

The SAB agreed to the Joint Sect team to establish a workplan.

ACTION: Joint Secretariat team to establish a workplan ahead of the next SAB meeting.

11. Scottish & NI LGPS Funds Meeting

The Joint Secretariat outlined how the SAB attendance at the Scottish and NI LGPS Funds meeting as a means of improving the working relationship between the SAB and Funds. It was noted the need for a SAB representative to attend future meetings and appealed to any SAB member to attend the next meeting on Thursday 2 October.

Arthur Nicoll volunteered to attend the next Scottish and NI LGPS meeting on behalf of the SAB.

ACTION: Invite details to be passed onto SAB member

12. Local Investment

The Joint Secretariat noted the sent ministerial letter on local investment in Scotland highlighting the SAB's survey which had been sent onto the Minister. The Invest Local meeting held in July 2025 was outlined with acknowledgement of attendance from SPPA, the Scottish Government DG Economy, advisors to the SAB and the Joint Secretariat team. The issues raised by the group was highlighted.

It was questioned whether a formal action was needed following the meeting to the Minister or if it was agreeable to allow SPPA to pass on the information. SPPA noted there would be a response from the Minister in the coming weeks.

Questions were raised around; the use of comparing Scotland to the Australian model; fiduciary duty and how the definition may need updating; the forms of investment that could be considered for local investment and how pension funds could become involved; how a pipeline/framework could be used to encourage increased investment while taking into account risk and returns; how increased local investment could impact the housing

crisis in Scotland; and how housing has become an increasingly more difficult investment. SPPA noted that the government officials are investigating what possible avenues are possible for all pension funds to engage more investment in Scotland.

The Chair requested an update on the need for an updated fiduciary duty. It was agreed that the current definition was satisfactory.

ACTION: Joint Secretariat to publish summary cover page of Scottish investments data

13. SAB Work Plan – Working Group Membership

An update of the workplan was provided and the proposed membership change for the representatives to the English and Welsh SAB working groups. The changes to membership were approved.

14. AOB

Simon Watson raised the pushing back of the next SAB meeting from Wednesday 26 November to the Wednesday 3 December which would be online.

The SAB approved the change of date.

ACTION: Joint Secretariat to update meeting details for the meeting in December 2025

Future Meeting Dates:

- Wednesday 3 December 2025 as amended (online)