

MINUTES OF ADMINISTRATORS FORUM

30 June 2008

Present:

Bobby McEwan (BM) - Inverclyde Council
 Paul Doak (PD) - North Ayrshire Council
 Stephen McAnaw (SM) - North Lanarkshire Council
 Catherine Young (CY) - Renfrewshire Council
 Eileen Hughes (EH) – Renfrewshire Council
 Frank Fulton (FF) – South Ayrshire Council
 Brian Milligan (BMil) - South Ayrshire Council
 Stephen Sloey (SS) – South Lanarkshire Council
 Liz Hyndman (LH) – East Renfrewshire Council
 George Morrison (GM) – Glasgow City Council
 Gordon Bathgate (GB) - Glasgow City Council
 Wallace Turpie – (WT) – North Ayrshire Council
 Sharon McKechnie (SMcK) - SPFO
 Alistair Gray (AG) – SPFO
 Cathy Douglas (CD) – SPFO
 Nicola Smith (NS) - SPFO
 Andy Knox (AK) –SPFO
 Doreen Shannon (DS) - SPFO
 Marie Hunter (MH) – Strathclyde Police
 Margaret Gray (MG) – Strathclyde Police
 Karen Shannon (KS) - West Dunbartonshire Council

Apologies:

Jim Morton (JM) - North Ayrshire Council
 Aileen McCosh (AM) – Argyll & Bute Council
 John Sheridan (JS) - East Ayrshire Council
 Donna Dewhurst (DD) - East Ayrshire Council
 Anne Bryan (AB) – East Ayrshire Council
 Pauline Cameron (PC) - East Renfrewshire Council
 Louise Donnelly (LD) – West Dunbartonshire Council
 Mel McConnell (MM) - South Ayrshire Council
 Vicki Aitken (VA) - South Lanarkshire Council
 Bill Graham (BG) - South Lanarkshire Council
 Iain Shaw (IS)- Strathclyde Fire & Rescue
 Christine Beveridge (CB) – North Lanarkshire Council

ITEM	CONTENT	ACTI ON BY
1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	Minutes approved & adopted. Item 6 should have stated 6 key software suppliers. ACTION POINTS	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPPA will not be supplying a software specification document. SMK advised that everyone should work together on this. AK working on this at present. • Councils all agreed to contact their software suppliers to arrange a meeting mid-July. SMK will email invites once software attendees known. • Inverclyde still to make decision on new payroll system supplier – currently with their legal team. Will be one of the existing 6 suppliers. West Dunbartonshire also tendering for new supplier. • Richard McIndoe (Head of Pensions) sent a letter covering a variety of subjects relating to the Actuarial Valuation, including strain costs. SMK asked DS to ensure copies are issued to attendees. 	DS
2. DATA	<p style="text-align: center;">STARTERS AND LEAVERS</p> <p>Leavers Data SMK informed meeting that 71% of the leavers data had now been cleansed by Data team. SMK advised that outstanding queries will be dealt with after valuation. Data team to concentrate on 07/08 posting errors meantime.</p> <p>Starters Data 1300 new records now created with work still ongoing. SMK confident that the 50% target will be achieved. SMK warned that this will generate more queries for employers. SMK very pleased with progress made to date.</p>	
3. VALUATION	SMK informed everyone that Project Plan is on target. Stages 3 and 4 underway. Richard McIndoe has commenced Stage 5.	
4. VALIDATION REPORTS	SMK - all 18 red alert reports completed. 83% cleansed. Remaining queries are mostly multiple employments. SMK commented that good progress had been made and that outstanding queries will be picked up after valuation.	
5. POSTING QUERIES 07/08	SMK has prepared a report for Lynn Brown, Director of Finance. Report shows 14,000 queries. Renfrewshire Council had the highest percentage of errors due to a software problem which they are now in the process of resolving. SMK has drafted in	

	<p>additional members of staff to work overtime to manually update contributions – at no cost to Renfrewshire.</p> <p>5,000 posting queries have been resolved. 3 employers completed and spreadsheets containing lists of missing information for starters and leavers for 07/08 have been produced. These will be emailed to appropriate contact within each authority. CD commented that, as information is so recent, SPFO will be requesting everything that S1/S11 would contain – not just basic information as with historic cases.</p>	
<p>6. NEW SCHEME PROJECT PLAN</p>	<p>SMK and AK visited several English authorities to ascertain best way to proceed and avoid any mistakes they may have made. Communication with employers and software suppliers is a key factor.</p> <p>SMK will issue a ‘to do ‘ list to employers to supplement their own plans.</p> <p>SMK asked if any outstanding issues from AGM - no comments.</p>	
<p>7. TIERED CONTRIBUTIONS</p>	<p>AK handed out SPPA statutory guidance document which was developed by a group of pension managers (including AK) and payroll practitioners and agreed for publication by SPPA. SPPA and SLOGPAG both agreed that tiered contributions would not be treated as cumulative.</p> <p>AK talked through main points of document and the general principles. Document contains a ‘look-up table’, which is a comprehensive split of all contribution bands, however, there is a spreadsheet available from SPFO for smaller employers. This contains a facility to calculate contribution rate for any given salary, which may be more suitable for smaller employers.</p> <p>BM expressed concern at 31st March date for determining rate for following year. Stated year- end would be more suitable. Lengthy discussion followed re this after which a vote was taken and majority present agreed that 31st March would be their preferred option.</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed that the new contribution rate could not be applied from the first pay period of the tax year as in some circumstances 31st March may fall within the fist pay period. It was requested by all payroll practitioners present that AK ask for an amendment to the guidance document to replace this with “First full pay period after the period that includes 31st March”.</p> <p>WT asked whether Trade Unions had been consulted on the removal of the 5% protected rate. AK stated the Unions did not</p>	<p>AK</p>

	<p>appear to have commented on the exclusion of the protected 5% rate from the draft transitional regulations.</p> <p>MH asked how SPFO would check correct rates had been applied if an employee was on half pay, no pay etc. AK stated that SPFO should be informed of changes such as this as matter of course. BM stated that for new employees not entitled to sick pay this would involve informing SPFO of every sick day. SMK advised that this would not be necessary. Only changes which would have a noticeable impact on pay rates should be communicated to SPFO.</p> <p>Pauline Cameron (East Ren) had sent a question regarding procedure for employees who move between unitaries. Part (l) of general principles contains answer.</p> <p>Maternity pay cases - FF asked whether other authorities were deducting employers contributions at the full rate of pay or the reduced rate. He advised that South Ayrshire were deducting employer's contributions on the basis of the member's reduced pay in common with other ex Strathclyde Region payrolls.</p> <p>AK informed everyone that payslips were sufficient notification of contribution rate change. BM stated it would be more practical to issue a letter. SMK stated that some English authorities had sent a letter which included the 'look-up' table. MH warned that this was too much information and would generate many queries from employees.</p> <p>BM asked how we notify employees of right of appeal. AK stated that agreement had yet to be reached on this. SS asked what time limit would be for appeal. AK stated 6 months. SS then asked who would pay the refund of contributions if appeal was successful. AK – employer would make refund.</p>	
<p>8. AOCB</p>	<p>SMK asked DS to ensure that employers receive a copy of the article which SPFO inserted into the GCC Insider magazine regarding new scheme. DS will also send a copy of the tiered contributions guidance.</p> <p>There were no requests for a technical bulletin.</p>	<p>DS</p>
<p>9. NEXT MEETING</p>	<p>TBC</p>	