

# Public Service Pensioners' Council

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## Appendix 1

### PSPC General Secretaries Report AGM 2022

David Luxton Deputy General Secretary Civil Service Pensioners Alliance was General Secretary from the May 2019 AGM to February 2022 when Chris Haswell Pension (Personal Cases) Manager Civil Service Pensioners Alliance took over the role with the agreement of the Executive Committee. Many thanks to David for his hard work.

This has been another year of living with the Covid19 pandemic and the last AGM in 2021 was held virtually. The Executive has met virtually by zoom video calls until February 2022 when we returned to face to face meetings. PSPC has continued to submit evidence to Treasury consultations; and have send out relevant public service pension briefings and Budget information by e-mail and have facilitated liaison between organisations on pension issues. PSPC has continued to be active in promoting the interests of all public service pensioners, and was able to submit letters to the Prime Minister and other members of the Government. ( see attached). The General Secretary has also submitted a PSPC response to the review of State Pension Age.

### Ongoing Issues

#### Public Service Pensions

##### (i) Remedies for McCloud Appeal Court Judgement on 2015 Public Sector Pension Schemes

As previously reported the Government had agreed to proceed with the Deferred Choice Underpin (DCU) option which attracted wide support from PSPC affiliates in the consultation. Active scheme members have now being moved across to the 2015 schemes where appropriate. Unions and Affiliates are working with schemes to communicate the process and implementation to members.

##### (ii) Cost Cap Mechanism

The Government consulted on the Cost Cap Mechanism raising concerns among member representatives intending to implement a clause about government affordability which would allow an override of the whole Valuation process. At the time of writing some of the Public Service schemes have had results of the review of 2016 valuations allowing for the McCloud Remedy cost, The Teachers scheme exceeded the cost cap, the civil service scheme did not. Some unions are taking legal action against the

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imposition of the review of 2016 valuations as promised improvements are no longer on the table.

- (iii) **Survivor`s Benefits** – Supreme Court Ruling Implementation of the Goodwin legal judgement for equal treatment for survivor pensions is proceeding at variable pace across the various main public service pension schemes, and although progress is being monitored by the Executive Council we are concerned that whilst some schemes are implementing this others are not.
- (iv) **Pensions for Life** - CSPA have continued their campaign for Pensions for Life for widow`s and widower`s receiving survivor pensions under the pre-2002 Civil Service Scheme who choose to re-marry or cohabit in later life. PSPC has supported the campaign so that surviving partners do not have to choose between companionship or financial security in later life. NARPO are joined in legal action on the issue which is due to be determined in the next few months.

### **State Pension Triple Lock House of Lords Amendments**

The General Secretary wrote to the Prime Minister 9 November a detailed letter encouraging the government to accept the House of Lords amendment to the Social Security Bill. Attached is the Government response. This was about the integrity of the Triple Lock and the use of the Earnings element which appeared to be skewed due to the pandemic. Now it is the inflation element which is problematic with the current cost of living crisis.

### **Christmas Bonus and Winter Fuel Allowance**

The General Secretary wrote to the Chancellor about the derisory amount of the pensioner benefits of the Winter Fuel Allowance and Christmas Bonus. The reply from the Public Spending Minister is attached it outlines means tested benefits which avoids the key issues.

### **Review of State Pension Age**

The General Secretary submitted the attached response to the Governments review of state pension age. Baroness Lucy Neville-Rolfe in charge of the Review is speaking at the AGM. The response picks up on the points in the motion carried in 2019 about not increasing the SPA and WASPI women. The impact on public service schemes normal pension age is a concern.

**Christine Haswell**

General Secretary

May 2022