

# "Beyond Parsimony"

Bulletin No. 24



## Ball in Trustee and BP Court

### *Bulletin highlights*

- *Route 1 solicitor's letter issued to the Trustee*
- *Route 2 formal complaints/remedies issued to Trustee and BP*
- *Window of opportunity for both parties to revisit and reweigh matters in dispute*

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**“The Trustee with the agreement of the Company intend to follow a policy of increasing pensions fully in line with the cost of living wherever possible and provided the Scheme has sufficient resources to do so.”**

BP Pension Policy Statement (2002)

# Welcome to Bulletin 24

Dear xxxx,

In the October bulletin we explained our decision to pursue two parallel pathways aimed at resolving this pensions dispute. We are pleased to report that submissions have now been made to the Trustee in pursuit of Route 1 and to the Trustee and to BP separately in pursuit of Route 2.

## *Route 1 - Pressing the Trustee to seek a High Court ruling.*

You will recall, this route places the Trustee 'on notice' that a number of important legal questions relating to the Fund's Pensions Increase Policy (PIP) require clarification through an approach to the High Court by the Trustee on behalf of – and in the interests of – the Fund beneficiaries.

Last week, **Stephenson Harwood** solicitors submitted a highly detailed, 11-page legal letter to Linklaters, the solicitors acting for and advising the Trustee board. This was prepared by **Andrew Spink KC** and his legal team at Outer Temple Chambers.

We believe this submission provides a compelling set of legal arguments. It also provides an appropriate pathway for the Trustee to take in order to clarify and settle matters of great importance to the pension fund membership – today and in the future.

## *Route 2 - Submitting our case to the Pensions Ombudsman (PO) for determination.*

Before the Ombudsman will accept complaints against the Trustee or BP, we must complete a formal Internal Dispute Resolution Process (IDRP) for both parties. This allows the two parties to consider if the complaint can be resolved – failing which the Ombudsman will become involved.

We're pleased to inform you that two highly detailed formal complaints and proposed remedies each extending up to 20 pages in length were submitted on **6<sup>th</sup> December** – one to the Trustee and one to BP. As you might expect a huge amount of work and time has gone into their preparation by members of the Steering Group which had we resorted to external counsel to prepare would have incurred estimated costs running into six figures.

## *Confidentiality*

Unfortunately, we continue to be constrained by legal privilege and the Non-Disclosure Agreements imposed by the Trustee in respect to Trustee Board materials which were shared with Steering Group

members and our external lawyers.

**This means we cannot share with members – at this point – the three detailed submissions referred to above – which contain references to this restricted material . This is a matter of great frustration to us.**

What we can say is that the submissions to BP and the Trustee raise issues relating to errors of commission and omission made by both parties when it came to formulating and considering the discretionary increase recommendations of the Trustee in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

As well as seeking restitution of the 11% loss in real value to the pension, we have also sought to settle questions relating to the status and application of the long-standing Pensions Increase Policy – not just as it related to the decisions made in 2022-24 but how it should be considered and applied in the future.

### *A Short Period for Reflection*

**We also believe it appropriate to allow the Trustee and BP a suitable short period in which to quietly weigh the contents of these submissions out of the public eye.**

**For that reason, we have decided to delay announcing - via our external media, social media and political channels - that they have been submitted. We will keep this under close review in January.**

Depending on the response of the Trustee and BP, and subject to the restrictions referred to above, our aim is to share greater detail with members at the earliest opportunity.

In the meantime, we ask for your patience and support for the approach we have adopted.

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### *Christmas Wishes*

*Finally, with Christmas fast approaching, we extend our very best wishes to you and your families and thank everyone involved with the campaign for your continuing hard work and contribution. We look forward to a New Year in which important strides to settling this matter are achieved.*



**Best regards**

Suzie Baverstock  
Colum Doyle  
Mike Hennessy  
Jonathan Popper  
Mike Slingsby  
Adrienne Tallents

## BPPG Steering Group

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*[Back to top](#)*

Don't forget all the documents mentioned in the bulletins are in *[The Library](#)* as well as all the previous bulletins if you've missed out.

[click to access all Bulletins](#)

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## Next Bulletin

December will be a chance to pause and take stock. As we move into 2025, January will see the campaign **focus** on **preparing** for possible responses to the Legal Letters, **maintaining** pressure on the key Political individuals & groups to support our campaign and **continued** media & social media action. **We will seek to keep you fully informed by bulletin or email.**

Did you receive this bulletin from an ex-colleague, friend etc? Would you like to become a member of the BPPG and receive future bulletins & important news about the campaign? Follow this link to join <https://bppensionergroup.org/join/>

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## Social Media & WhatsApp groups

You may not be an active user of social media but if you have ideas for useful themes or would like to get involved then please contact the team at [social@bppensionergroup.org](mailto:social@bppensionergroup.org).

There are a few different ways you can stay in touch with the campaign, as well as this Bulletin and our two WhatsApp groups (to join click buttons below), another way to stay in touch is via social media on the [BPPG LinkedIn Group](#) and [BPPG Facebook Group](#). Links to these groups can be found at the end of every Bulletin.

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If you haven't signed up to one of the WhatsApp groups yet - follow the links below and join the melee or just get the critical info!

[Join 'Chat' WhatsApp](#)

[Join 'Info' WhatsApp](#)

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Thanks for getting involved and supporting the campaign.  
You can contact the Steering Group at [contact@bppensionergroup.org](mailto:contact@bppensionergroup.org)



## BP Pensioner Group



**BP Pensioner Group**

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