CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONERS' ALLIANCE

Gloucestershire Group

11 November 2026

I usually begin the Newsletter with the most important pension related topics but this time I have to start with something more mundane but essential if the group is to continue and that is a plea for new committee members.

For many years, the committee on your behalf, has worked to protect and promote pensioners' rights. To continue this important work, we need more members willing to become involved. Age has crept up on the present Committee and fresh blood is required.

We particularly need a Chairman, Secretary and Committee members. The Committee meets four times a year just before the Group meeting so the job is not too time consuming. If you think you, or someone you know would be a suitable candidate please let me know by email or at the December meeting. The person would be interested in protecting their pension and other pensioner benefits, organising Group events, writing a Newsletter, social media support choosing a speaker and running the group.

At the next meeting I shall give out a slip of paper with the request that you "nominate" someone you think would be good on the Committee. You do not need to ask them, the present committee will do that and not reveal who "voted" for them.

If we are unable to form a new committee the Group will have to close, something we don't want to happen so please think seriously.

Update on MyCSP/Capita Transistion

CSPA continues to meet with the Cabinet Office and pressure Capita for faster progress.

The Cabinet Office Parliamentary Secretary Sally Jameson MP delivered a statement to the House of Commons on 26 October. The full statement and CSPA comment is in Group Circular 997 available on the CSPA Website cspa.co.uk

It included briefing on:

Capita Contract Performance and Government oversight;

Operational Challenges and Technology Failure

Constituent Cases and Compensation Issues

Accountability and Contractual Penalties

Transparency, Communication and member Support

Impact on Vulnerable Constituents

Future Monitoring and Government Commitment.

I give below, with the help of AI, a summary of what it said.
The Government remains concerned about serious failures by Capita in administering the Civil Service Pension Scheme, including delays, incorrect payments, poor communication, and inadequate technology. Following missed recovery targets, the Cabinet Office increased oversight, deployed 150 staff, appointed independent advisers, and withheld nearly £10 million in payments. MPs highlighted numerous cases of hardship affecting pensioners, bereaved families, and vulnerable individuals. Capita remains contractually responsible for resolving issues and compensating affected members where appropriate. The Government has committed to fortnightly performance updates, continued monitoring, and consideration of all options, including contract termination or bringing the service back in-house.

CSPA View on the Statement and Progress

CSPA's priority remains ensuring that members' concerns are heard, understood and addressed. While the Minister's statement acknowledged the scale of the challenges facing the Civil Service Pension Scheme, many members continue to experience unacceptable delays, poor communication and uncertainty over their pension benefits. We remain focused on securing the level of service members deserve and ensuring that those who have suffered hardship receive appropriate support. We have been able to help in many cases.

CSPA meets weekly with officials from both the Cabinet Office and Capita to raise individual member

cases, monitor progress against recovery plans and challenge ongoing service failures. We are also engaging with MPs across Parliament to highlight the wider issues affecting scheme members and to ensure these concerns remain firmly on the political agenda.

In addition, CSPA has written to Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP, Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, and Simon Hoare MP, Chair of the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, offering to share the experiences and concerns of pension scheme members and pensioners as part of any further scrutiny of Capita's performance. We have received positive responses and meetings are being arranged in the coming weeks.

We welcome the Minister's commitment to increased transparency, regular performance reporting and stronger oversight of Capita's delivery. However, progress will be measured by results. CSPA will continue to press for improvements until service standards are restored and confidence in the scheme is rebuilt.

For further information, read Civil Service Pensions Taskforce Update #19. The update sets out Capita's revised recovery plan, the latest performance figures and updated delivery timescales for key projects, including the 2015 Remedy (McCloud) programme. If you need a copy of the Update please contact me.

If you are affected and not getting anywhere CSPA may be able to help. Contact me at cspaglos@gmail.com or visit the CSPA website cspa.co.uk.

Budget 2026

Announcements significant to pensioners:

A new Pensions Tax Allowance to prevent pensioners from paying income tax solely because of State Pension increases. It is applied up to annual incomes of up to £13,037.

The Triple Lock will change in 2030 to the Double Lock i.e The State Pension will rise each year by the highest of inflation, 2.5% or the amount needed to maintain the State Pension's value relative to

earnings over time. This will save the Government £15 billion annually or pensioners will be worse off by that amount!

The Casey review on Adult Social Care and the NHS is to be brought forward to 2027;

Energy Bills and Cost of Living . The VAT rate of 0% will be extended to July 2027.

£100 direct payments from January 2027 to households in Council Tax Bands A-D in England.

The Budget does offer some help to Pensioners but the Social Care reform is still some way off.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is on Thursday 3 December when Ian Boskett will talk about the Great Train Robbery in 1963. I have heard the talk before and it is extraordinary how many coincidences there are that link Cheltenham and Gloucestershire to this robbery, and as it is December there will be mince pies. The talk will last longer than usual but we aim to finish by 12.15.

The AGM will be held on 11 March 2027

As usual the group meets at the Civil Service Sports and Social Club, Tewkesbury Road, Cheltenham GL51 9SL at 10 for 10.30

We look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Alastair Goldie

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