
MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING
Held on Wednesday 10 April 2019 at 10.30 a.m.
Gate House, 1 Farringdon Street, London, EC4M 7LG

Present: Sir Alan Moses (Chairman)
Rick Hill
Anne Lapping
Matthew Lohn
Ian MacGregor
Charles McGhee
Mehmuda Mian
Ruth Sawtell
Claire Singers
Martin Trepte
Charlie Wilson

Attending: Vikki Julian – Communications Manager
Michelle Kuhler – PA/minute taker
Bianca Strohmann – Head of Complaints
Matt Tee – Chief Executive
Charlotte Urwin – Head of Standards

Observer: Lauren Sloan, Senior Complaints Officer

1. Apologies and Welcome

Apologies were received from Mike Soutar. The Chairman welcomed Lauren Sloan to the meeting, congratulating her and Holly Pick on their new roles as Joint Head of Complaints.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 February 2019 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's Report – oral

The Chairman updated the Board on the RFC Funding for the next five years, with all the Board members joining the Chairman in expressing their gratitude to Mike Soutar and Matt Tee for what they have done. He also updated the Board on a pending Judicial Review.

The Chairman on a meeting he had held with Level Up in relation to the concerns of newspaper reporting of domestic violence and homicide.

He updated the Board regarding the recent letter signed by a number of signatories in respect of Clause 12, informing the Board that he had personally written to all signatories inviting them to meet with him. A number of signatories had declined a meeting.

He finished by updating the Board on a meeting that he and Charlotte Urwin had with Fiyaz Mughal from Tell Mama and Faith Matters.

6. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive introduced his report. He updated the Board on the progress of recruitment for the new Chairman, advising Board members that the Appointments Panel hoped to have the new Chairman appointed by the end of June.

The Chief Executive took the Board through the process for making changes to the IPSO Articles, Scheme Management Agreement and Regulations. Once agreed by the IPSO and RFC Boards, the changes go to a vote of publishers. This will be carried out by an online voting form.

The Board also approved in writing a proposed change to the IPSO Articles of Association.

Finally, the Board agreed that the commitment to a five year funding agreement between the RFC and IPSO could be effected through an exchange of letters, which might be made public.

7. Complaints Report

The Head of Complaints introduced the report and took questions from Board members.

The Board noted the report.

8. External Affairs Report

The Communications Manager introduced her report. She informed the Board that we were now at full capacity for the IPSO lecture scheduled for 24 April.

She handed over to the Charlotte Urwin, Head of Standards who gave the Board an update on reporting on suicide and IPSO's agreement, following a meeting with representatives from the Samaritans, to update our guidance for editors and journalists to include information on reporting online challenges. A draft would be brought to the Liaison Committee.

The Board noted the report.

9. Finance, performance report and risk management

The Chief Executive introduced the reports. He gave the Board an overview of the finances. IPSO made a surplus on the month of £30.4k against a budgeted surplus of £17.1k. The variances against the budget were mainly small.

He updated the Board on the Performance Report which that showed IPSO on target with most performance objectives. He informed the Board that those in amber reflected a potential risk to achievement, but he hoped we would achieve all of them.

He finished by introducing the Risk Register. A number of information security risks had been added in line with the information security strategy. A member of the Board requested that the risk for retention and recruitment be increased along with updating the risk regarding judicial review.

A member of the Board recommended that IPSO introduce formal exit interviews to be carried out in future when a member of staff resigns. The Chief Executive agreed to implement this.

The Board noted the reports.

10. IPSO Funding 2020-2024

The Chief Executive introduced the paper, bringing the Board up to date on progress with the funding proposal. We had now reached informal agreement to an increase of CPI, but with reassurances about funding for exceptional items.

A final draft of the proposal would be reviewed by our solicitors and would be circulated via email to the Board.

The Board noted the report.

11. Global digital publishers

The Chief Executive introduced the paper, bringing the board up to date on the subject matter for those members that have not been with IPSO since the beginning of this issue in 2016.

He informed the Board that after a number of exchanges we had reverted with a slightly modified proposal. This slightly modified the definition of a global digital publisher.

The Board noted the report.

12. Guidance on major incidents

The Head of Standards introduced the paper. The guidance had been informed by complaints considered by IPSO, conversations with journalists and by the wider discussion of editorial standards when reporting on major incidents.

She updated the Board on the discussions held with a group of senior editors and compliance staff organised by the Society of Editors in March. Those at the meeting had been happy with the substance of the guidance.

The Head of Standards took suggestions and comments from the Board. It was agreed that a further draft would be circulated. She finished by informing the Board that IPSO hoped to publish the guidance in mid to late May along with a podcast.

13. Lessons learnt from research

The Head of Standards began by updating the Board on the transgender research tenders. The two companies had made presentations to the panel. We had asked for more information to finalise our decision.

She then went on to introduce the paper, highlighting the key learning points for the research project we had done with Sheffield University. These learning points would inform our approach to further research and had already been useful in steering our approach to commissioning the transgender research.

14. Reflections on Readers and Journalist Panels

The Head of Standards introduced the paper, informing the Board that under the terms of reference for the panels, the Chair of each panel is invited to address the Board each year.

She updated the panel on the changes to the Chair for the reader's panel and provided the background on the success and challenges for its second year.

She then handed over to Ruth Sawtell, who chairs the Journalist Panel. Ruth informed the board that the panel was a joy to chair, with a wide variety of journalists from magazines and newspapers. The panel members were enthusiastic about the work that IPSO does and had been very open in sharing their experiences.

The Board agreed that the attendance fee would remain as £200 per meeting.

15. Report of the Liaison Committee Meeting 5 February 2019

The Board noted the report and minutes from the Liaison Committee meeting 5 February 2019.

16. Any other business

The Chairman and all the Board thanked Bianca Strohmann, who would be leaving IPSO shortly, for all that she has contributed to IPSO. Everyone would be sorry to see her leave but wished her all the very best for the future.

17. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was to be confirmed.

Michelle Kuhler
PA to Chairman and CEO