
MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING
Held on Tuesday 8th June at 10.30 a.m.

Present: Lord Edward Faulks (Chairman)
Lara Fielden
Charles Garside
Eddie Gray
Matthew Lohn (*Left the meeting @ 11.15*)
Ian MacGregor
Brendan McGinty
Barry McIlheney
Mehmuda Mian
Ruth Sawtell
Claire Singers
Martin Trepte

Attending: Charlotte Dewar – Chief Executive Officer
Jane Debois – Head of Standards and Regulation
Vikki Julian – Head of Communications
Michelle Kuhler – PA/minute taker
Tonia Milton – Head of Systems
Lauren Sloan – Head of Complaints

1. Welcome and Apologies

No apologies were received.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 March 2021 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's Report – oral

The Chair noted recent press coverage about IPSO and updated the Board on a recent meeting that he and the Chief Executive had had with the Regulatory Funding Committee.

He noted that Peter Wright and Janette Harkess's terms on the Complaints Committee would expire in September and welcomed any encouragement by Board members to potential candidates.

He congratulated Ian MacGregor on his reappointment to the Board for a further term.

The Chair finished by also congratulating Eddie Gray on his appointment as Chair of the Government's Antivirals Taskforce.

6. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive updated the Board on recent recruitment and staff changes within IPSO.

Recruitments were under way for a new lay member of the Board and for a new Chair of the Appointment Panel. The Appointment Panel search would be supported by a consultant.

Jonathan Bell in the Systems team would shortly be leaving IPSO. Recruitment of his successor was under way. Molly Richards had recently joined as a new Complaints Officer and was progressing well.

Robert Morrison, the incoming Head of Complaints, would start in early August.

The Chief Executive discussed results of the most recent quarterly staff survey.

The Chief Executive took questions from the Board.

The Board noted the report.

7. Complaints Report

The Chief Executive introduced the report. She noted that the team was in transition to a new Head of Complaints. She praised the work of the Complaints Officers, and particularly their support for her and one another. She noted that the team dynamic was a tribute to the former Head of Complaints.

The Chief Executive took questions from the Board.

The Board noted the report.

8. External Affairs Report

The Head of Communications presented a paper reviewing IPSO's communications and external affairs activities and noted recent meetings of relevance, including with Alex Davies-Jones MP and Brendan Cox.

The Head of Communications took questions from the Board.

The Board noted the report.

9. Risk report

The Chief Executive updated the Board on updates to the risk register.

The Chief Executive, and Senior Management team took questions from the Board.

The Board noted the reports.

10. Draft 2020 Accounts and audit findings report

Matthew Lohn, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, introduced the audit findings report. He updated the Board on IPSO's new auditors, Sayer Vincent. He noted that the audit had identified a few small areas in which procedures could be tightened up, but overall the findings were very positive.

A member of the Board congratulated all those involved and expressed support for the meticulous work done by the auditors.

A member of the Board highlighted a recommendation that IPSO should review the employment status of some contractors. The Chief Executive confirmed that this would be done.

The Board approved the 2020 draft accounts.

11. Finance and Budget reports

The Chief Executive presented the finance reports to the Board, including a recommendation that IPSO should make a repayment of £53,000 to the Regulatory Funding Company.

The Chairman and Chief Executive took questions from the Board on the reports.

The Board approved the repayment of £53,000 to the Regulatory Funding Company.

The Board noted the reports.

12. Health and safety update: Transition to hybrid working

The Head of Systems introduced her report. She noted that staff wellbeing would be a critical concern during the transition to more in-office working.

She explained the process that IPSO had followed in preparing for this transition, which included one-to-one meetings with all staff, and noted some concerns that had been raised through this process.

She also outlined preparations for upcoming hybrid Board and Committee meetings.

The Head of Systems took questions and suggestions from the Board.

13. Any other business

A member of the Board noted the issues raised by historic social media posts. The Head of Communications gave the feedback on IPSO policies and practices.

14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 27th July.

Michelle Kuhler

PA to Chairman and CEO