
MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING
Held at Gate House, on Tuesday 14th December at 10.30 a.m.

Present: Lord Edward Faulks (Chairman)
Matt Brown (*remotely*)
Charles Garside (*remotely*)
Eddie Gray
Sarah Lee (*remotely*)
Michaela McAeer (*remotely*)
Ian MacGregor
Brendan McGinty
Barry McIlheney (*remotely*)
Claire Singers
Martin Trepte (*remotely*)

Attending: Charlotte Dewar – Chief Executive Officer
Jane Debois – Head of Standards and Regulation
Vikki Julian – Head of Communications
Michelle Kuhler – PA/minute taker (*remotely*)
Tonia Milton – Head of Systems
Robert Morrison – Head of Complaints

1. Welcome and Apologies

Welcomed everyone to the last Board meeting of the year, in particular the new Board members, Matt Brown and Michaela McAleer. There were apologies received from Matthew Lohn.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st September were approved.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's Report – oral

The Chairman updated the Board on recent legislative developments and noted that he had spoken at a debate on Friday at the House of Lords on freedom of speech, at which he drew the House's attention to the important work that IPSO does.

The Chairman updated the Board on a meeting that he had attended alongside the Chief Executive and Head of Complaints with staff at national newspaper publishers who handle IPSO complaints. The chief Executive and Head of Complaints also provided feedback on the meeting.

The Chairman invited the Board to approve the following reappointments: a second three-year term to the Board for Martin Trepte, and a second three-year term to the Complaints Committee for Andrew Brennan, David Hutton and Mark Payton.

The Chairman noted that Matthew Lohn's first term as a Board member was due to end January and that he would not seek reappointment to a further term. He expressed his appreciation for Matthew's contributions to IPSO as a Board member and, previously, founding Complaints Committee member.

The Board thanked Matthew Lohn for his contributions to IPSO.

The Board approved the reappointments for Martin Trepte, Andy Brennan, Mark Payton and David Hutton.

6. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive noted that the structure of the meeting agenda had changed slightly and invited any comments on the change.

She asked for the Board's approval for Sarah Lee to join the Audit and Risk Committee; Martin Trepte to join the Remuneration Committee; and Charles Garside to join the Remuneration committee.

The Board approved the appointments of Sarah Lee, Martin Trepte and Charles Garside to these Subcommittees.

The Chief Executive updated the Board on recent recruitment.

The Chief Executive took questions and received congratulations on recent staff survey results.

7. Operations and performance report

The Head of Complaints provided the Board with an update on complaints work and the restructure of the Complaints team to recreate the Senior Complaints Officer tier. He noted that a new Complaints Officer would join in the New Year, bringing the total staff up to seven. He noted that the complaints team have started a training program with an external trainer. The team had also had a training session on legal issues relevant to their work.

The Head of Complaints took questions from the Board.

The Head Standards highlighted the launch of an IPSO module on the National Council for the Training of Journalist's training platform.

The Head of Communications noted the Chief Executive's recent appearance on BBC Breakfast discussing privacy notices. The piece appeared several times during the morning.

The Board noted the feedback and report.

8. Strategic context

The Head of Communications presented to the Board on IPSO's engagement with the public and Westminster stakeholders.

The Board discussed the report.

9. Risk report

The Chief Executive introduced her report and reviewed the significant risks and took questions from the Board.

The Board noted the reports.

10. Finance and audit reports

The Chief Executive presented the management accounts, noting that a significant surplus was anticipated for the end of the year, despite some delayed spend hitting in the last quarter.

She noted that IPSO had commissioned a review of pay banding.

The Board noted the reports.

11. Standards monitoring

The Chairman introduced a discussion of standards issues relating to the Jewish Chronicle. He asked if anyone felt there were any conflicts of interest in respect of correspondence received in relation to this matter.

Ian McGregor noted that The Daily Telegraph, where he is employed as Editor Emeritus, has written about IPSO's engagement with the Jewish Chronicle. He informed the Board that he has no editorial role at The Daily Telegraph and had no involvement in any coverage. He did not consider that he had a conflict of interest but wished to declare the connection.

Charles Garside noted that he had previously been employed by the Daily Mail but did not consider that any conflict of interest prevented him from being involved in the discussion. He noted that he had left his employment at the Daily Mail three years previously.

The Chairman agreed that neither of the members had a conflict of interest that should prevent them from participating in the discussion.

The Board was asked to consider what action was appropriate regarding the Jewish Chronicle. It noted the nature of the standards concerns raised; the nature of IPSO's response up to the present; submissions it had received on the matter; and the relevant IPSO Regulations.

The Head of Standards reviewed in detail the timeline of the complaints and IPSO's response, which had included engaging directly with the management of the Jewish Chronicle and implementing a training programme for all staff.

The Board discussed the report.

The Board noted the action previously taken to address standards concerns and decided that it would be disproportionate to launch a standards investigation before the effect of this intervention was clear. It asked the Head of Standards to monitor the position closely for six months and report back to the Board on the results of this review, at which point it would consider the matter further.

12. 2022 Objectives and draft budget

The Chief Executive introduced the report, which reviewed the main developments of 2021 and set out objectives and activities for 2022, including the development of a long-term strategy.

The Chairman noted that the Chief Executive had acted as Head of Complaints as well as Chief Executive for a period in 2021 and expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Board.

The Chief Executive took questions about the draft budget and objectives.

The Board approved the draft 2022 budget and objectives.

13. Any other business

The Chairman updated the Board on external developments.

14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 8th February 2022

Michelle Kuhler, PA to Chairman and CEO