



## Minute

### Minutes of a meeting of the Board of IPSA Wednesday 22 January 2014

Present	Sir Ian Kennedy, Chair	Mark Anderson, Head of
	Sir Neil Butterfield	Communications [items 1 – 3]
	Liz Padmore	Belinda Brown, Director of People,
	Anne Whitaker	Performance and Pay
	Tony Wright	Philip Lloyd, Director of Finance
		and Operations [items 1 – 6]
	Andrew McDonald, Chief Executive	John Sills, Director of Policy and
		Communications [items 1 – 6]
	Nick Lee, Head of Board and Chief	
	Executive Office	Briony Carew, Policy Manager
		[items 1 – 3]
	Peter Davis, Compliance Officer	Tony Lord, Head of Policy [items 1
	[item 4]	– 3]

### Apologies

Status	Final for publication as approved at the meeting of the Board on 4 March 2014.
Publication	For publication no later than 19 March 2014. Sections 4 and 7 not for publication.

## 1. Welcome

1.1. The Chair welcomed the Board to the meeting.

### Declarations of interests

1.2. There were no new declarations of interest.

## 2. Minutes of previous meetings, action list and matters arising

2.1. The Head of Board and Chief Executive Office reported that the monthly action list would be considered at the meeting of the Board on 29 January 2014.

## 3. Annual reporting: Discussion and next steps

### *IPSA/140122/2 + annex A and B – Annual reporting*

3.1. The Head of Policy introduced a paper setting proposals for annual reporting by MPs. He noted, in particular, that:

- work, led by Tony Wright, had been carried forward so as to develop a proposal for a voluntary mechanism for annual reporting by MPs, to sit alongside data on the annualised costs and expenses published by IPSA each September;
- this work had included consultation with MPs, academics and House of Commons officials to develop the plans; and
- following the Board's discussion of annual reporting, proposals as to how to develop, operationalise and communicate the agreed approach would be brought to a subsequent meeting of the Board for discussion.

3.2. The Board noted that:

- a working group on annual reporting, chaired by Tony Wright, had met twice and had agreed the outline proposals in the paper before the Board;
- the proposed approach to reporting would have three components – details of MPs' costs and expenses, a commentary from the MP, and data from the House of Commons about their activities; and
- the proposals were for a voluntary reporting mechanism: MPs would not be required to submit a report, although IPSA might wish to indicate (if no report were received) that an MP had decided not to do so.

3.3. The Board agreed to endorse the proposed approach to annual reporting. It also agreed that:

- it would be important to pilot the proposals further, and to discuss them with groups of MPs and others so as to identify any issues that might arise;
- when publicly launching the proposals, it would be helpful to provide MPs with fictional examples of how reports might be completed, not least so as to address any misunderstandings about the nature of the proposed reports;
- important questions arose as to the appropriate approach to the moderation (if any) of reports – not least in order to avoid IPSA's being drawn into editing or becoming directly responsible for reports prepared by individual MPs. Further consideration of these questions was needed; and
- in particular, further work was needed to consider what criteria might be applied so as to determine what content would or would not be acceptable in annual reports and what the legal consequences for IPSA would be of facilitating reports by MPs if they contained inappropriate content.

**Tony Lord to bring forward proposals for the development, implementation and communication of annual reporting by MPs.**

## 5. Chief Executive's report

*IPSA/140122/5 + annex A – Chief Executive's report*

5.1. The Chief Executive introduced a report setting out his work over the preceding month. He reported, in particular, that:

- along with the Director of Finance and Operations and the Director of People, Performance and Pay, he would be giving evidence with respect to the Supplementary Estimate at a private meeting of the Speaker's Committee for the IPSA on 28 January;
- a dip in IPSA's performance with respect to correspondence during the month reflected the significant volume of e-mails received regarding MPs' pay and pensions. While this influx had had an adverse effect on performance against the target for correspondence, IPSA remained on track to achieve its key performance indicator (KPI) target for correspondence across the course of the financial year;
- the House of Commons was carrying out work to re-let the tender for the House of Commons Travel Office. He hoped that IPSA would be in a position to work closely and constructively with the House on this, although a recent exchange with the chair of the Administration Committee had not been encouraging. IPSA *had* been invited to contribute to the development of the invitation to tender, and it would do so while making clear that any tender was not being let on IPSA's behalf; and
- work continued to identify a potential tenant for IPSA's accommodation in Portland House.

### Louise Mensch

5.2. The Board noted that:

- in a recent column in *The Sun*, Louise Mensch (a former MP) had claimed that an error by IPSA in the most recent round of publication had led to the publication of inaccurate data about her claims;
- those allegations, which were untrue, were based on a blog which the author of the blog knew to be inaccurate but had chosen in any case to publish; and
- in contrast to what Ms Mensch claimed in her article, IPSA had neither published the data to which she referred nor ascribed the alleged error to a 'data cleansing' issue.

5.3. More generally, the Board noted that, where inaccurate stories were printed, it was often not straightforward to secure rebuttals or timely corrections.

5.4. The Board agreed to note the report of the Chief Executive.

**6. Any other business**

6.1. There was no other business.