



Minute

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of IPSA

Tuesday 17 April 2012, 3.00pm

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| Present | Sir Ian Kennedy (chair) Jackie Ballard Sir Scott Baker Ken Olisa Isobel Sharp Andrew McDonald, Chief Executive Belinda Brown, Head of Performance and Change [items 4 – 9] Bob Evans, Director of Finance and Corporate Services [items 1 – 4, 9] Anne Power, Director of Communications [items 1 – 6] | John Sills, Director of Policy [items 1 – 8] Scott Woolveridge, Director of Operations [item 8] Peter Davis, Compliance Officer [item 7] Mark Anderson, Communications Manager [items 1-6] Louise Edwards, Policy Manager [items 1 – 3, 8] Lucy Pickering, Assistant Policy Manager [items 1 – 3] Nick Lee, Head of Board and Chief Executive Office |
| Apologies | None. | |
| Status | Final for publication. | |
| Publication | For publication. | |

1. Welcome

1.1. The Chair welcomed the Board to the meeting.

1.2. There were no new declarations of interests.

2. Minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

IPSA/170412/1Ai – Minutes of a meeting of the Board, 8 March 2012; IPSA/170412/1Aii – Minutes of a meeting of the Board, 21 February 2012

2.1. The minutes of the meetings of the Board of 21 February 2012 and 8 March 2012 were approved for publication, subject to a number of minor amendments.

Nick Lee to arrange for the publication of the minutes of the meeting of the Board of 21 February 2012 and 8 March 2012.

Matters arising

2.2. The Director of Communications reported that the new publication website had now gone live, and would be publicised alongside the next tranche of claims due for publication in May.

2.3. The Board agreed to schedule a further discussion of engagement with the Speaker's Committee for the IPSA.

Nick Lee to schedule a further discussion of engagement with the Speaker's Committee for the IPSA.

3. Pay and pensions

IPSA/170412/2 + annexes A – D – Pay and pensions workshop

3.1. The Director of Policy introduced a paper setting out:

- a note of the Board's earlier discussion at its workshop on 3 April 2012;
- a copy of the terms of reference for the review of pay and pensions alongside an outline project plan; and
- a set of proposals for the engagement of stakeholders as part of this work.

3.2. The Board agreed that, given the timescales involved in the work, it would be helpful to have as complete a draft of the consultation document as possible for consideration at its meeting in September 2012.

3.3. The Board approved the project's outline plan, which forms the basis for the work on pay and pensions over the next year.

3.4. The Board noted the plan for engaging stakeholders and agreed that:

- Board members would seek to meet with interested parties throughout the exercise;
- it was important to speak to a range of individuals and groups, including those with a direct interest (MPs, ex-MPs and prospective candidates), those with expertise (such as experts on pay and pensions) and those who might have an informed view (such as leaders in the public and private sectors);
- engagement of the public would form a separate and critical part of the work on pay and pensions;
- engagement with MPs should be at a number of different levels, including bilateral and group meetings, but should also take into account the IPSA-MP liaison group; and
- panels would be used as a means to gain access to expertise effectively that might not otherwise be available.

Mark Anderson to provide, for the meeting of the Board on 15 May 2012, a list of questions to be asked of stakeholders in discussions of pay and pensions.

4. IPSA Estimate 2012/13

IPSA/170412/3 + annexes A – C – IPSA Estimate 2012/13

4.1. The Board noted that:

- a slightly-revised Estimate had been submitted to the Speaker's Committee for the IPSA, including an increase in the budget for the work on pay and pensions which was offset by further savings elsewhere in the Estimate;
- the Estimate now included a like-for-like comparison of the kind proposed by the National Audit Office;
- the Estimate also included a slightly increased budget for remuneration of the Board, reflecting higher-than-expected outturn in 2011/12 and an anticipated

higher-than-previous level of activity for the Board as part of work on pay and pensions; and

- the Estimate would be considered at the meeting of the Speaker's Committee for the IPSA on 18 April 2012 although it was unclear when the Committee would take a final decision on it.

5. Board members' networks

IPSA/170412/4 – Board networks

- 5.1. The Director of Communications introduced a paper setting out how the Communications team would support the Board in better using their networks to support IPSA's work.
- 5.2. The Board agreed the proposals for making better use of contacts, subject to a small number of minor amendments.

6. Polling of public confidence

IPSA/170412/Z1 + annexes A – B – Public confidence polling

- 6.1. The Director of Communications noted that recent polling by YouGov showed that public's confidence in the scheme of MPs' business costs and expenses had remained largely static, although the level of confidence among those who knew of IPSA was significantly higher than among those who did not.
- 6.2. The Board noted that an increase in the public's confidence was a key performance indicator for IPSA and that, therefore, it had missed its target for 2011/12.
- 6.3. The Board agreed that the public's confidence in MPs' business costs and expenses remained an important goal for IPSA as an organisation, although it was only able to influence (rather than control) the measure.

Belinda Brown / Anne Power to bring forward proposals for the revision of the KPI on the public's confidence as part of the Board's wider discussion of IPSA's strategy.

7. Report of the Compliance Officer

IPSA/170412/5 – Report of the Compliance Officer

7.1. The Compliance Officer reported that:

- one individual had appealed to the first-tier tribunal (a first for the organisation) following his decision not to overrule a review decision made by IPSA. He believed IPSA's position in relation to the case in question was strong; and
- he continued to experience a diminution in the number of complaints his office received.

7.2. The Chair thanked the Compliance Officer for his work during the period since he had taken office.

8. Chief Executive's report

IPSA/170412/7 + annex A – Chief Executive's report; IPSA/170412/8 + annexes A – G – Board Update; IPSA/170412/9 + annex A – Freedom of Information Requests, 2011/12

8.1. The Chief Executive reported that:

- IPSA had achieved all of its operational key performance indicators (KPIs) for 2011/12: this was a significant achievement;
- improvements in IPSA's administration (such as additional direct payment or procurement facilities) would henceforth be introduced twice annually, so as to reduce the risk of confusion among MPs and their staff arising from such changes; and
- he would be reporting back on changes to IPSA's staffing arising from the sustainability programme at the meeting of the Board on 15 May 2012.

Accommodation

8.2. The Director of Finance reported that:

- efforts to sublet part of IPSA's offices had so far not been successful, despite a significant number of viewings;
- if it was possible successfully to sublet in the next few weeks, a revised Estimate for 2012/13 would reflect this fact; and

- if it was not possible to let the office space in the forthcoming few weeks, it was likely that it would not be possible to do so until the Autumn.

Forward agenda

8.3. The Board noted the significant challenge facing any new Board members who might be appointed in January 2013, given the forward agenda for 2012/3.

Contingency

8.4. The Director of Policy noted that the vast majority of applications for contingency uplifts to staffing budgets should now no longer be required given the recent increase in staffing budgets.

8.5. The Board agreed that such applications should only, in future, be granted in well-evidenced, exceptional cases and that the panel should consider the scope of the contingency provisions as part of the next review of the MPs' Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses.

9. Finance report

IPSA/170412/6 + annex A – February management accounts

9.1. The Director of Finance introduced a report on IPSA's accounts as of the end of February 2012. A further report on the organisation's expenditure for the full financial year would be available in advance of the meeting of the Board on 15 May 2012.

9.2. The Director of Finance reported, in particular, that:

- expenditure on MPs' business costs and expenses showed a substantial underspend;
- expenditure on MPs' staff salaries was extremely close to that which had been forecast;
- expenditure on MPs' salaries was slightly below that which had been forecast perhaps as a consequence of lower-than-expected increments for Committee chairs; and
- he had not yet seen any evidence of a surge in claims towards the end of the financial year, as had been in the case the previous year.

10. Any other business

There was no other business.

Meeting closed