

TO: IPSA Board **DATE:** 11 November 2010

FROM: Andrew McDonald

TEL:

SUBJECT: Chief Executive's Report

ANNEXES: Publication briefing paper

Issue

1. Chief Executive's Report for the IPSA Board meeting of 16 November 2010

Timing

2. To be taken at the meeting on 16 November

Report

Publication

3. Work on publication is progressing well and the team is on target to deliver as planned by Monday 29 November.
4. The work includes the extraction of data and publication to the website, quality assurance and reconciliation work between validation and finance. Work is under way to prepare the support services for an expected increase in queries about publication. Modelling of the possible volume of Freedom of Information requests is also in hand.
5. Attached to this report is a briefing paper, including screenshots/mock-ups of what the publication website will look like. If Board members have any early comments on these, I recommend we take these during the meeting on Tuesday. We then propose to demonstrate the website to Board members on Thursday 25 November when the

live data has been loaded onto the reconfigured website. Following the demonstration, we will look to the Chairman to give the Executive the green light to go live.

6. In order to give Members of Parliament as much notice of publication as possible, the proposal is that we issue a letter to them on Wednesday 17 November along the lines of the attached briefing paper, and state that we will publish on Thursday, 2 December. This gives MPs two weeks to prepare. We do not believe it advisable to give them less notice than this.

[REDACTED]

7. [REDACTED]

8. [REDACTED]

9. [REDACTED]

10. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

11. [REDACTED]

12. [REDACTED]

Information Commissioner's Office

13. The Information Commissioner has confirmed that it will tomorrow publish on its website an undertaking agreed last week, following the data breach in July.
14. The undertaking commits IPSA to specified steps to improve compliance. We have already taken the relevant measures. Nevertheless there will be some adverse comment in the press/Parliament even though this is an old story.

15.

16.

Correspondence

17. Thirty-five items of correspondence are currently outside the five working day target. Scott is also working on improving the integrity of the reported data in this area.

Information line

18. The Information Line received a total of 702 calls (an average of 140 calls per day) between Thursday 4 – Wed 10 November. The average answer rate was 95%. This is in line with recent volumes.
19. Speed of answer remains a concern. We are struggling on most days to answer 20% of calls within 60 seconds on the MP line. The Payroll line does not have this issue. With current demand, resourcing and call handling times, this situation is unlikely to change dramatically. The shorter hours for the 'phone line will come into force in January.
20. Work on creating a comprehensive Knowledge Base (for use both by MPs and IPSA staff) continues; we expect this to be available on the IPSA website in December and it is expected that this will positively impact call demand (which in turn should positively impact answer time).

Policy

21. A draft of the scheme consultation document is now largely complete. It will be shared with the Board in its current form, for out of committee comments, and will be taken substantively at the next Board meeting.
22. The face-to-face surgeries pilot has now finished. Policy colleagues will continue to be available to provide such meetings on an ad hoc basis.

23. The policy team met HMRC to discuss dispensations for MPs and for IPSA and tax guidance for MPs. The latter will be published in the next couple of weeks.
24. John Sills, [REDACTED] and I met George Reid, the Chairman of the Welsh Assembly Remuneration Committee. This Committee will fairly soon publish its recommendations. They cover all aspects of Assembly Members' pay and expenses. The Committee is holding a Colloquium with the Hansard Society on the role of Assembly Members in early December. IPSA hopes to send a delegate to attend this.
25. Regional visits to MPs' offices are being set up as part of the review. [REDACTED]

Performance and Governance

26. Belinda has, with Philip, met a number of Board members to talk through some early thoughts on IPSA's future organisational design. This will be discussed further at the Board meeting.
27. Work continues on the KPIs and on the presentation of the performance statistics. You will see these in the monthly data pack that will be sent to you separately on Friday, 12 November. This pack will also include the monthly finance report.

[REDACTED]

28. [REDACTED]

29. [REDACTED]

30. [REDACTED]

31. [REDACTED]

Andrew McDonald

11 November 2010

Copies: SLT