

Minutes of the IPSA Board Meeting – 19 October 2010

Present:	Sir Ian Kennedy (Chair)	Andrew McDonald (Chief Executive)
	Scott Baker	Philip Lloyd (Director of Finance)
	Jackie Ballard	John Sills (Director of Policy)
	Ken Olisa	Anne Power (Director of Communications)
	Isobel Sharp	Louise Edwards (Policy)
		Lucy Pickering (Policy)
		Ruth Sloan (Head of Support Services)
		Belinda Brown (Secretariat)
		Martyn Taylor (Secretariat)

1. Welcome

1.1. The Chair welcomed Board Members.

2. Minutes and matters arising

Paper: Minutes; Note of Board away day; Board update

2.1. The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 21 September.

2.2. The Board also approved a note of the Board's away day on 22 September, which set out a revised Board process. The Board requested that the process set out that minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee are circulated to Committee members within five working days of a meeting of the Committee be adopted.

2.3. The Board welcomed the new Board update that included certain management information.

2.4. The Board requested a paper on MPs pay and pensions for the November Board meeting.

3. Financial Report

3.1. The Financial Report, a new standing item on the agenda for Board meetings, was considered by the Board. It covered the period to the end of the second quarter of 2010/11 and forecast to the end of the year.

3.2. The Board noted IPSA's financial position and that efficiencies are being sought as part of the current organisational review. The Board also agreed that decisions it makes need to take close account of costs.

4. Annual review of the scheme: consultation paper

Paper: IPSA/191010/3

4.1. The Board welcomed the paper, noting the balanced tone in which it had been written. The Board commented as follows:

- the questions set out in the consultation document should be phrased so as not to restrict the Board from making changes should further evidence be presented during the course of the consultation process;
- it would be important to establish some sense of where the public is on the question of balancing risk around the rules of the expenses scheme, and in particular around the question of whether the public favours a more costly but lower risk model, or a lower cost but higher risk model;
- contributions to the consultation by members of the public are important, but could be hard to achieve. Inclusion in opinion polling companies' consumer panels should be explored;
- if the outcome of the review were to result in any additional costs to the public purse, these costs should be set out explicitly and the reasons for them clearly set out;
- the question around the employment status of MPs' staff should be set out in the consultation paper. This was particularly relevant in the light of the pay freeze in large parts of the public sector;
- the document should set out clearly those areas where MPs have felt particular pressures since the introduction of IPSA's expenses scheme.

5. Publication programme

Paper: IPSA/191010/4

5.1. The Board considered a paper setting out options for the publication of information on MPs' expenses claims, as follows:

- the Board agreed that IPSA would publish detailed transactional data, along the lines of the model of the Scottish Parliament;
- the Board recognised this option carried certain risks and sought assurances around the validation process;
- the Board felt it was important for IPSA to start publishing claims as soon as possible; and
- in addition to the publication of MPs' expenses claims, the Board asked for the other items set out in IPSA's publication schedule also to be published soon.

6. IPSA's support services

Paper: IPSA/191010/5

- 6.1. The Board considered a paper on the future of IPSA's support services in the light of IPSA's financial position for the remainder of the financial year. The Board agreed that the hours of service of IPSA's information line should be reduced in due course and that greater multi-skilling of the support service team would help in the management of correspondence and telephone calls.
- 6.2. The Board considered that emails remained important for maintaining an audit trail and that it was therefore not possible to move to offering advice on specific questions over the telephone.
- 6.3. The Board further agreed that IPSA should explore further options for a service where a single proxy or advisor would support numerous MPs.

7. IPSA's key performance targets and indicators

- 7.1. The Board considered and agreed revised key performance targets and indicators.

8. IPSA's Annual Report and Accounts

- 8.1. The Board agreed the draft Annual Report and Accounts.

9. Chief Executive's Report

- 9.1. The Chief Executive advised the Board that a new Director of Operation, Scott Woolveridge, would be joining IPSA on 25 October

10. Any other business

- 10.1. There was no other business.

The meeting was closed.