



Minute

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of IPSA Thursday 22 April 2013

Present	Sir Ian Kennedy, Chair Sir Neil Butterfield Liz Padmore Anne Whitaker Tony Wright Andrew McDonald, Chief Executive Nick Lee, Head of Board and Chief Executive Office	Mark Anderson, Head of Communications Belinda Brown, Head of Performance and Change Victoria Elliott, Change Manager [item 5] Linda Everet, Head of Internal Audit [item 5] Philip Lloyd, Director of Finance and Corporate Services John Sills, Director of Policy and Communications Briony Carew, Assistant Policy Manager Tony Lord, Head of Policy Lucy Pickering, Assistant Policy Manager
Apologies	Peter Davis, Compliance Officer	
Status	Final for publication after 11 July 2013.	
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1. Welcome

1.1. The Chair welcomed the Board to the meeting.

1.2. There were no new declarations of interests.

2. Pay and pensions: Note of Board away day, 16 April 2013

IPSA/130422/4 – Note of away day, 16 April 2013

2.1. The Director of Policy and Communications reported that the proposed timetable for the publication of the consultation document had been revised so as to allow for the parliamentary recess between 31 May and 3 June 2013.

2.2. The Board agreed to:

- approve the note of the away day of 16 April 2013; and to
- revise the timetable for publication of the consultation document to reflect the dates of parliamentary sittings.

Andrew McDonald to circulate draft narrative by 26 April 2013.

3. Pay and pensions: Reporting

3.1. The Board noted that there was currently no consistent mechanism by which MPs could report to their constituents on the performance as an MP.

3.2. The Board agreed that:

- more work should be done to explore whether MPs might report to their constituents their work over the course of the preceding year;
- it would not be for IPSA itself to impose a mechanism for such reporting, although it might wish to define the broad parameters of how such a mechanism might function;
- any such mechanism should not favour any particular approach to the work of an MP or party, and should recognise the range of different approaches taken by MPs to their work;
- it would be important early to engage with the relevant interested parties so as to secure their agreement and support for any such a proposal; and

- it would be open to IPSA to reassess any proposed remuneration package if such a mechanism were not to be agreed – either in principle or in practice – by an appropriate deadline.

Andrew McDonald to begin work to explore the options with respect to the reporting of MPs' parliamentary activities.

4. Minutes of previous meetings, action list and matters arising

IPSA/130422/1A – Minutes of a meeting of the Board of IPSA, 26 February 2013;
IPSA/130422/1B – Minutes of a meeting of the Board of IPSA, 27 February 2013;
IPSA/130422/1C – Minutes of a meeting of the Board of IPSA, 18 March 2013;
IPSA/130422/1D – Minutes of a meeting of the Board of IPSA, 21 March 2013;
IPSA/130422/1E – Minutes of a meeting of the Board of IPSA, 27 March 2013;
IPSA/130422/1F – Minutes of a meeting of the Remuneration Committee of IPSA, 27 March 2013; IPSA/130422/2 – Action list

- 4.1. The Board agreed to carry over the minutes of the meetings of the Board and Remuneration Committee for 26 February – 27 March 2013 inclusive, for consideration and approval at the meeting of the Board on 22 May 2013.

Members of the Board to provide comments on draft minutes of Board meetings to Nick Lee by 11 May 2013.

Action list

- 4.2. The Board noted that:

- those actions relating to the Board's forward agenda and programme of work would be considered at the meeting of the Board in June 2013, where a proposed plan for the Board's work through to the end of the financial year would be available; and
- a set of frequently-asked questions and standard responses for use at meetings with interested parties would be circulated in advance of the next meeting of the Board, due to take place on 22 May 2013.

Mark Anderson to arrange for circulation of frequently-asked questions and standard response to the Board.

5. Annual Report and Accounts *[as Audit and Risk Committee: Anne Whitaker in the chair]**IPSA/130422/3 – Annual Report and Accounts 2012/13*

5.1. The Change Manager reported that:

- work was currently under way to prepare the Annual Report and Accounts for sign off by the Chief Executive following discussion at the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee in June 2013; and
- because the accounts for 2012/13 had not yet been closed or audited, the accounts were at an early stage and further drafts would be brought to the Committee at later meetings.

5.2. The Board (as the Audit and Risk Committee) agreed:

- to note the draft Annual Report and Accounts; and
- separately, to provide comments and feedback on the draft to the Change Manager.

Board members to provide comments on the draft Annual Report and Accounts.**6. Report of the Compliance Officer***IPSA/130422/7 – Report of the Compliance Officer*Jim McGovern MP

6.1. The Board noted that:

- following a ruling by the First-Tier Tribunal in the Compliance Officer's favour, there had been some public criticism of the legal costs arising from the Compliance Officer's decision to uphold a decision by IPSA not to allow one leg of a journey made for party-political purposes;
- the case in question had been brought by Mr McGovern *against* IPSA, and so the costs that IPSA had incurred were a direct result of his decision to appeal the Compliance Officer's decision, as he himself had acknowledged;
- the Compliance Officer had sought a resolution of the dispute without recourse to the courts, and had proposed entering into a Consent Order so as to avoid incurring further legal costs, but this proposal had been disregarded by Mr McGovern; and
- while it was a matter for the Compliance Officer to judge whether to defend particular cases brought against him, it was only proper – given IPSA's duty to

safeguard public funds – that he should defend his decisions and, in doing so, uphold the rules governing the *MPs' Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses*.

6.2. The Board agreed to note the report of the Compliance Officer.

7. Finance Report

IPSA/130422/8 – Finance Report

7.1. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported that:

- with respect to subhead A (MPs' pay, pensions, costs and expenses) the management accounts for 2012/13 suggested the forecast for expenditure under this subhead had been set prudently and that there would be sufficient headroom within it;
- subhead B (IPSA's own administrative expenditure) would be underspent, although the precise level of this underspend was not yet clear; and
- with respect to subhead D, relating to additional costs arising from Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, an expected underspend reflected the timing of appeal hearings and the fact that some costs which had been factored into 2012/13 budgets would now be incurred in 2013/14 instead.

7.2. The Board agreed to note the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services.

Philip Lloyd to circulate a note explaining how accommodation fit-out costs had been charged.

8. Chief Executive's report

IPSA/130422/9 + annexes A – D – Chief Executive's report

8.1. The Chief Executive introduced a report setting out developments over the previous month and reported, in particular, that:

- he would appear the following day before the Information Tribunal to give evidence relating to IPSA's appeal;
- along with the Director of Policy and Communications, he had appeared on 25 March before the Administration Committee to discuss induction arrangements for new MPs. Members of the Committee had raised a range of issues at that meeting, not all of which had been directly related to the matter in hand;

- along with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, he had appeared on 16 April 2013 before the Speaker's Committee for the IPSA to discuss IPSA's Estimate for 2013/14;
- further work was in hand to prepare for the possibility of IPSA's being required to publish receipts; and
- with respect to the transitional mortgage interest subsidy, legal proceedings would be issued shortly in the High Court against Stewart Jackson MP, who had failed to repay any of the amount owed to the taxpayer with respect to his property in Peterborough.

Contingency

8.2. The Board noted that:

- a small number of MPs had sought additional funding for staffing, citing an increased casework burden; and
- many of these burdens arose because of changes (such as closures of Citizens Advice Bureaux) in public services beyond IPSA's control.

8.3. The Board agreed that it would inappropriate for IPSA to provide further contingency funding for MPs solely on the basis of increased casework, given the significant increase in staffing budgets made in 2012/13.

9. Any other business

9.1. There was no other business.

Meeting closed.