

**PRESS RECOGNITION PANEL**  
**Minutes of the 31st meeting of the Press Recognition Panel Board**  
**held on 4 July 2017 at Mappin House, 4 Winsley Street, London W1W 8HF**

**Present:** David Wolfe QC (Chair), Carolyn Regan, Harry Rich, Emma Gilpin-Jacobs and Harry Cayton.

**Apologies:** Tim Suter

**In attendance:** Susie Uppal (Chief Executive), Saima Ansari, Simon Edwards, Paul Nezandonyi, Adam Gibbs and John Speed.

**BOARD MEETING – PUBLIC SESSION**

**Welcome**

1. The Chair **welcomed** Members and attendees to the thirty first meeting of the Press Recognition Panel Board. The Chair also **welcomed** James Connal (Capital PR) as the member of the public who was in attendance and content to be named as having been present.
2. The Chair **noted** that apologies had been received from Tim Suter.

**Declaration of members' interests**

3. There were no new declarations to note.

**Minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2017, outstanding actions and matters arising**

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2017 were **noted** as factually correct. The log of outstanding actions was **noted** and **agreed**.
5. The Board **noted** that there were no other matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the Agenda.

### **Chief Executive's report – June 2017 – Paper PRP26(17)**

6. The Board received a paper which provided an update on Executive activity since the last CE Report for May 2017.
7. The Chief Executive updated the Board on matters since her report was drafted:
  - the Judicial Review took place on 29 and 30 June and judgement has been reserved. It was not known when this may be handed down.
  - Further to para 7 of the Report, the Scotsman had not yet published a letter from the Chief Executive clarifying the role of the PRP.
8. The Board **noted** that it would be helpful to continue to receive monthly Chief Executive reports. The Board noted the contents of this report with thanks.

### **Finance report May 2017 – Paper PRP27(17)**

9. The Board received a paper which provided an update on the financial position as at 31 May 2017 and **noted** the bank reconciled set of management accounts.
10. The following points were raised in discussion:
  - the Board **noted** the latest financial position as at 31 May 2017;
  - the Board **agreed** that a formal report on pensions from a Financial advisor was not required; and
  - **approved** NEST as the organisation's nominated workplace pension scheme for auto enrolment.

### **Executive analysis of the IMPRESS Code – Paper PRP28(17)**

11. The Board confirmed that they had not had individual or collective discussions on IMPRESS' standards code (Code) prior to the Board meeting.
12. The Board **noted** that the Code was being considered in accordance with the process for regulators varying the way they meet the recognition criteria contained in the PRP guidance on cyclical and ad hoc reviews.
13. The Board discussed whether the PRP should conduct a call for information. The Executive's view was that, taking into account the PRP guidance, the extent and detail of IMPRESS' consultation and the responses they had received, a call for information was not necessary. It

was observed that sufficient opportunity had been provided to the public to respond and IMPRESS' consultation distribution list was comprehensive. The Chief Executive confirmed that the PRP had not received any complaints in relation to IMPRESS' consultation process.

14. The Board **agreed** that in view of the adequacy of the consultation, the PRP did not need to undertake its own call for information.
15. The Board **noted** that the Executive's assessment process involved consideration of the seriousness of any potential breach of the criteria and the likelihood of future compliance, and giving a 'traffic light' rating in accordance with the PRP's published risk matrix. The relevant recognition criteria in respect of the new Code were criteria 7, 8 and 11 and these were considered individually by the Board.
16. The Executive's analysis confirmed that the IMPRESS Code Committee drafted and finalised the Code for IMPRESS' Board approval. The Code was adopted by the IMPRESS Board on 14 March 2017. The Board was satisfied that the process adopted by IMPRESS complied with criterion 7.
17. The constituent elements of criterion 8 were considered by the Board. The Board observed that the IMPRESS Code does not specifically mention the words "freedom of speech" but was satisfied that freedom of speech is sufficiently taken into account in the drafting of the individual clauses of the Code and the Code overall as required by criterion 8.
18. The Board **noted** and **agreed** with the analysis that there was no serious risk that the Code did not comply with criteria 8A, 8B, 8C or criterion 11.
19. The Board **noted** and **agreed** with the Executive's conclusion that following the guidance on ad hoc and cyclical reviews, there was a low likelihood of any breach of the criteria and therefore a high likelihood of compliance. The Board **agreed** that there were no exceptional circumstances and no significant public interest in an ad hoc review being undertaken.
20. The Chief Executive confirmed that the operational effectiveness of the Code would be considered by the Executive at the cyclical review stage.

#### **Any other business and close of public session**

21. No further business was raised.

## **BOARD MEETING – CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2017 and matters arising**

22. The confidential section of the Minutes was **noted** as factually correct.

### **Audit and Risk Committee verbal update**

23. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) provided an update on the ARC meeting that took place earlier the same day. Redacted.

### **Draft Annual Report and Accounts 16/17 – Paper PRP29(17)**

24. The Chair of the ARC provided a brief update of the Annual Report and Accounts (ARA) process to date and the changes that have been agreed by the Committee. Kathryn Cearns had been unable to attend the meeting earlier the same day; however, she had provided her input both at the earlier meeting of the ARC on 13 June (during which the ARC had considered the draft ARA in detail), and also by correspondence. The ARC's recommendation was that the ARA is agreed by the Board subject to the consideration of any further comments from the NAO.

25. The Board considered the NAO's audit completion report and **noted** that for the third year running, the PRP accounts were certified with an unqualified audit opinion.

26. The Board **agreed** to delegate final sign off of the ARA to the Chair and Chief Executive, with the Chair of the ARC considering any further comments from the NAO. The Board thanked the Chief Executive and her team, the PRP's accountants JS2, members of ARC and the NAO for their work during the audit and in the preparation of the ARA.

27. The Minutes of the ARC meeting will be circulated to the Board once agreed.

### **Executive analysis on fees – Paper PRP30(17)**

28. Redacted.

29. Redacted.

30. Redacted.

31. The Board **agreed** to delegate final approval of the text of the decision document to the Chief Executive and the Chair.

**Executive analysis on IMPRESS Board media activity –  
Paper PRP31(17)**

32. Noting that any decision to undertake an ad hoc review under Schedule 2(8) of the Charter rests with the Board, the Board considered the Executive's assessment thoroughly and noted that, whilst it had initially appeared that there was a risk of a breach of criterion 23, that risk was now reduced (and anyway any such breach was not likely to be 'serious', as defined in the PRP's guidance) given the actions that had been taken so far (and as contemplated) by IMPRESS (most particularly in the adoption of the recommendations of its internal investigation) to remedy the position. However, a final view on those things cannot be taken until IMPRESS completes the implementation of the actions it contemplates. The Board also **noted** that, even were that not the case then, given that there is currently no realistic possibility of the any of the affected publishers applying for IMPRESS' membership, there would in any event be no public interest in carrying out an ad hoc review.
33. The Board asked the Chief Executive to get clarity from IMPRESS about the timescales for implementing the recommendations made following their internal review and whether and when the recommendations will be published to ensure that full implementation of those recommendations and further consideration of the position by the Board is not unduly delayed.
34. The Board **agreed** that a further update should be provided at its meeting on 23 August 2017.

**Initial approach to recognition reporting in 2017 – Paper PRP32(17)**

35. Redacted.
36. The Board **agreed** that a call for information should be undertaken based on a general question seeking to determine whether there are any particular areas that people would like the PRP to address.  
Post meeting note: the call for information commenced on 10 July 2017 and will close on 8 September 2017.
37. The Board did not think that it would be beneficial to undertake any other public opinion research or engagement activities to inform the report.

**Any other business and close of confidential session**

38. None raised.

### **Date and time of next meeting**

39. The next scheduled meeting of the Board will take place at 09:00 on Wednesday 23 August 2017 at Mappin House, 4 Winsley Street, London W1W 8HF.

Drafted: Saima Ansari  
Executive Administration Manager

Signed: David Wolfe QC  
Chair