

PRP

INDEPENDENTLY
OVERSEEING
PRESS REGULATION

PRESS RECOGNITION PANEL

BUSINESS PLAN

2016/17

Chair's foreword



The independent Press Recognition Panel (PRP) was created as a legal body on 3 November 2014. Our role is to consider whether or not press regulators meet the 29 recognition criteria in the Royal Charter. This business plan sets out our programme of work for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

Last year the PRP successfully put in place a process for recognising regulators. I would like to thank Susie Uppal, our Chief Executive, and her dedicated team for the work they did to consult on and develop the system.

I would also like to thank everyone who has contributed to and informed our work so far. During 2015/16 we met and heard from campaign groups, media organisations, academics and commentators.

Over the coming year, I look forward to continuing to meet people who might have useful insights to share. I want to ensure that we are aware of and are able to consider the full range of views that affect our work.

The Board and I have upheld our commitment to operating independently, fairly, openly and transparently. These values will continue to underpin everything that we do. We will continue to strive for the best value for money over the next 12 months. We are well aware that our funds have come from the public purse. We remain committed to independently overseeing an effective system of press self-regulation in the UK. A key focus for 2016/17 will be to develop our business strategy and ensure that we are financially stable in the longer term.

The recognition system and the Royal Charter sit within a wider legislative landscape, which includes the provisions within the Crime and Courts Act 2013. In October 2015, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport said that he was not convinced that it was the time right for the introduction of the costs shifting provisions within the Act. The PRP has no influence over the timing of the commencement of those provisions. We will continue to operate the recognition system in accordance with the Royal Charter. I am looking forward to the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Wolfe', written over a faint circular watermark or logo.

David Wolfe, Chair

Chief Executive's introduction



This Business Plan sets out details of the activities that the PRP will undertake in 2016/17, and it builds on the work that we have done to develop, consult on and successfully implement a process for receiving and assessing applications for recognition from press regulators.

During our first full year of operation I have developed a small, flexible team, and over the next 12 months we will maintain our pace of delivery to ensure that the PRP remains in a strong position to deliver a robust and effective recognition system.

A key focus will be to develop and adopt a system for reviewing approved regulators, in order to ensure that any approved regulators continue to meet the Royal Charter's recognition criteria. Our proposals will be important to how we operate and we will consult publicly on them. Indeed, throughout the next year we will build on our record of gathering the widest range of thoughts and opinions possible to ensure that everyone who is affected by our work has an opportunity to inform what we do.

In September 2016 we will publish a report on the extent to which the recognition system has succeeded in its aims, as we are required to do by the Royal Charter. Ahead of this we will launch a call for information inviting people to share their views on the recognition system with us.

I will continue to ensure that the PRP has all the necessary people, resources, systems and processes in place to enable it to operate efficiently and effectively. We have received the sum of £3m, and later in 2016/17 we will consult on our fee-charging structure and review our longer term funding position.

I am confident that our focussed and committed team will be able to deliver a robust and effective recognition system.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susie Uppal'.

Susie Uppal, Chief Executive

Our mission and values

The Press Recognition Panel is the independent body set up by Royal Charter to ensure that regulators of the UK press are independent, properly funded and able to protect the public. The PRP works in the public interest by supporting and promoting a free press in a free and fair society.

We will perform our duties:

INDEPENDENTLY - using to the full the complete freedom we have from state, government or any other interest, and expressing our views honestly and courageously

FAIRLY - guided by the principle of understanding the public interest and always putting it first

OPENLY - asking questions, using the widest possible range of evidence available to us to make our decisions, and explaining them clearly

TRANSPARENTLY - wherever possible holding our meetings in public, publishing our papers, and making our meetings formal and documented – ensuring that the public and those we serve can see how we are putting our principles into practice.

Highlights of 2015/16

The PRP's Business Plan for 2015/16 set out objectives for the year which reflected our focus on ensuring we had the basic systems and processes in place to operate effectively as an organisation and on preparing to receive and consider applications for recognition from press self-regulators by autumn 2015.

In June 2015 we launched our public consultation on the recognition application process with a panel discussion event hosted by the London School of Economics. We then held a series of consultation events in Belfast, Birmingham, Cardiff, Durham, Glasgow, London and Manchester which were attended by a range of people including journalists, members of the public, academics and members of interest groups. We also ran a live, interactive webinar session which was made available afterwards on our website.

These events provided the opportunity for lively discussion about our proposals and this was fed back into our consultation. In September 2015 we announced that regulators could apply to the PRP for recognition, if they wished.

In January 2016 we received an application for recognition from IMPRESS. We subsequently launched a call for information during which we invited third parties to review the application and share additional information with us that they are aware of that has not been included, but which may be relevant to the recognition assessment. At the time that this business plan was produced, IMPRESS's application was undergoing assessment by the PRP.

In February 2016 we launched our consultation on our proposals for reviewing approved regulators. The Royal Charter requires us to review approved regulators to ensure they continue to meet the Royal Charter's recognition criteria. The Royal Charter also requires us to undertake ad hoc reviews in exceptional circumstances and where there is a significant public interest in undertaking a review. We will announce our final decision on our approach to these reviews later in 2016.

Our objectives for 2016/17

Our objectives for 2016/17 reflect our focus on ensuring we have the systems and processes in place to operate effectively as an organisation and meet our Royal Charter obligations.

We will:

1. operate a system for dealing with applications for recognition from press self-regulators and exercise our oversight role
2. use insight from those who have an interest in our work to inform what we do

We will do this by:

3. ensuring our systems and processes are effective and provide value for money
4. developing a highly motivated, diverse and professional staff team
5. ensuring we work flexibly and adaptably

What we will deliver

Objective 1 - operate the system for dealing with applications for recognition from press self-regulators and exercise our oversight role

To achieve this objective we will	Timetable
Ensure we continue to be in a position to receive and determine any applications for recognition	Throughout the year
Develop plans for deploying a whistleblowing hotline to receive concerns about approved regulators' compliance with the Royal Charter criteria	July/August 2016
Develop plans for receiving complaints about approved regulators	June/July 2016
Adopt a process for ad hoc and cyclical reviews	Summer 2016
Publish our first annual report on the success or failure of the recognition system	Autumn 2016
Develop, consult on, and adopt a fee charging scheme for regulators	December - March 2017

Objective 2 - use insight from those who have an interest in our work to inform what we do

To achieve this objective we will	Timetable
Continue to meet stakeholders who have an interest in our work	Throughout the year
Maintain an awareness of the regulatory, press and public policy environments	Throughout the year

What we will deliver continued

Objective 3 - ensuring our systems and processes are effective and provide value for money

To achieve this objective we will	Timetable
Develop a long term strategy for the organisation	October / November 2016
Prepare and publish our 2015/16 annual report and accounts	July 2016
Review our communications plan to support the organisation's objectives	October / November 2016
Strive to achieve value for money on all goods and services purchased	Throughout the year
Ensure that our staff have the resources and support they need to work effectively	Throughout the year

Objective 4 - develop a highly motivated, diverse and professional staff team

To achieve this objective we will	Timetable
Recruit staff fairly and openly and in accordance with our policies on diversity and equality	Throughout the year
Work in a supportive, collaborative and flexible way.	Throughout the year
Build on the knowledge of our staff to enhance the quality of our work.	Throughout the year

What we will deliver continued

Objective 5 - ensuring we work flexibly and adaptably

To achieve this objective we will	Timetable
Ensure we have the right combination of skills and experience in our team at the right time to support delivery	Throughout the year

Our equality objectives

1. We will ensure that the PRP complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010)
2. We will ensure our consultation activity is inclusive and actively seeks the views of a diverse audience

Equality objective 1 - We will ensure that the Panel complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010)

To achieve this objective we will	Timetable
Build consideration of equality and diversity into our everyday work and as we develop our systems and processes	Throughout the year
Monitor and report on progress against our equality objectives as part of our annual report and accounts	Throughout the year

Equality objective 2 - We will ensure our consultation activity is inclusive and actively seeks the views of a diverse audience

To achieve this objective we will	Timetable
Provide access to information and the ability to respond in different languages and formats when required	Throughout the year
Actively work to ensure a wide range of stakeholders feed into our work through our consultation and engagement activity	Throughout the year

Managing performance and risk

Governance

The functions of the PRP are determined by the Royal Charter as public functions. We have established robust governance arrangements appropriate to our business, scale and culture. The arrangements combine efficient decision-making with accountability and transparency. The Board reviews its governance framework on an annual basis.

Organisational risk

We have a risk management policy and strategic risk register which is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee and reviewed quarterly at Board meetings. The Board has agreed to take a cautious approach to managing risks and is mindful of risks to delivery, reputation and the operation of the organisation.

Reporting

Our Board meets regularly to oversee the delivery of the work set out in this plan. Regular reports on progress against our objectives are considered by the Board.

As set out in the Royal Charter we will:

- Report annually to Parliament and the Scottish Parliament on our activities;
- Publish reports of any cyclical or ad hoc reviews we carry out;
- Publish a report, after 12 months of operation and then annually, on whether there is a recognised regulator and if, in the opinion of the PRP, the system of regulation covers all recognised publishers.

The Board has also decided that it will voluntarily send copies of reports laid before Parliament and the Scottish Parliament to the Welsh Assembly and Northern Ireland Assembly for information.

Our finances

The PRP was created as a legal body on 3 November 2014. The Royal Charter required the Exchequer to give the PRP sufficient money for it to set up and operate for its first three years. The Exchequer has granted the PRP £3m, and this has been received in full by the PRP. In 2016/17 the PRP will consult on the fees that we will charge to recognise regulators.

The PRP constantly strives for the best value for money on the good and services it purchases, and in accordance with the Royal Charter's requirement, the PRP's finances are managed in accordance with the general principles of Managing Public Money.

Budget for the year to 31 March 2017

	£	£
Income (bank interest)		2,400
Expenditure		
Board (salaries and expenses)	(67,224)	
Communications	(40,734)	
Operational costs	(647,730)	
Total expenditure		(755,688)
Deficit for year		(753,288)
Reserves brought forward at 31 March 2016		1,952,953
Reserves carried forward at 31 March 2017		<u>1,199,665</u>



Press Recognition Panel
contact@pressrecognitionpanel.org.uk

pressrecognitionpanel.org.uk