



Press Recognition Panel
Mappin House
4 Winsley Street
London W1W 8HF

Permanent Secretary, HM Treasury
Sir Tom Scholar

By email only

20 December 2018

Dear Sir Tom,

It has been brought to my attention by the NAO that the Ministry of Justice have stated in their departmental accounts that from 1 April 2018, the Press Recognition Panel (PRP) has been designated as within the 'Departmental Boundary' following a decision by HM Treasury.

The Royal Charter on the Self-Regulation of the Press (establishing the PRP) had been carefully designed to ensure that the PRP remained separate from Government or any government department. The specific role and remit of the Lord Chancellor in acting as the initial conduit for funds (now long passed) is clearly stipulated in the Charter.

Whilst we note the decision of HM Treasury, it is the Board's view that the PRP should not be included in any Departmental Boundary not least because to do so risks giving the false impression that there is some ongoing relationship between the PRP and the Department. The Charter ensures that there is no implication of governmental control or influence. Independence and transparency are fundamental to the way in which we operate. The PRP is entirely independent of the government, Parliament, the press or any other such interest.

My letter will be published on the PRP website in accordance with our policy on openness and transparency.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Wolfe', with a large, sweeping circular flourish on the left side.

David Wolfe QC
Chair of the Press Recognition Panel