



Report to the IMPRESS Board from the from the IMPRESS Appointments Panel recommending the appointment of new Board members

There were 37 applicants for our advertised vacancies. The Appointment Panel met on 3 October to shortlist. We assessed the candidates against our recruitment criteria and found we had remarkably consistent views, and decided there were six candidates worth interviewing. It was agreed that the Interviewing Panel would comprise Caroline Instance, Walter Merricks and Jean Gray.

Lee went through all the selected candidates' twitter feeds and identified those that might trigger any reason for caution. Only one was prolific, but there was nothing unexpected nor really problematic. It gave us a specific question to be asked at interview.

Ed spoke to all the candidates ahead of the interviews and covered the following ground:

- Board impartiality requirements;
- Significance of the Code of Conduct. All candidates were sent a copy of it;
- Media scrutiny of board social media activity and other public statements;
- Background to the 2017 impartiality review. All candidates have been sent a copy of the report;
- The interview process and timetable;
- The main strategic challenges for IMPRESS.

As previously we used the same set of questions for all candidates (listed below) but spent most time on their digital/business development credentials. Sometimes their answers led to a different sequencing of the questions or wording to cover the same ground.

1. Why do you want to do this role, what will you get out of it?
2. If you were to describe IMPRESS succinctly to a friend, what would you be saying to them?
3. What will success look like for IMPRESS?
4. Was there anything in your recent conversation with Ed Proctor COO about Impress and the role that particularly interested or surprised you?
5. How would you describe the difference between being an Executive and a Non-Executive Board member?
6. What ethical dilemmas have you faced in your business life and how did you resolve them?
7. What has been the most important experience in your career that will help you should you be appointed to the Board?
8. Can you give an example of a difficult decision you have had to make recently?
9. Please describe an occasion in your career when you were involved in business growth
10. How do you see the news landscape evolving?

11. Is there anything you currently do that you would have to consider doing differently if appointed?
12. Individual IMPRESS Board members have been targeted by supporters of the alternative regulatory regime - is there anything from your past that such press might use against you?

All interviews lasted around 45 minutes. There was strong consensus amongst the interviewing group. We decided that of the six candidates, two were not appointable. Though both presented well and gave intelligent and reasoned answers to all the questions, their depth of experience of business development and the digital space was limited. They lacked board experience and were not able to demonstrate that they would have something valuable to add to the skills mix or diversity of the Board.

Two other candidates, while appointable, lacked the strengths that were offered by **Pam Vicks** and **Shelina Janmohamed**, but might have been considered if the preferred candidates did not accept appointment.

Pam Vicks was mature, confident and self-motivated. She has a strong track record in business development with a PR/marketing background. She was capable of working with a range of people to get things done. While lacking in knowledge of press regulation she has an understanding of the changing nature of the news/information landscape. Her non-executive Board experience has been mainly advisory, but she has executive experience at a Board level and runs her own business.

Shelina Janmohamed was personable, articulate and intelligent but also demonstrated emotional awareness and depth of feeling. She had strong grounding in digital marketing, with involvement in business development. Shelina writes, but is not a journalist, and expressed a strong commitment to IMPRESS. She understands partiality and balance, and produced a good written application, clear uncluttered cv. Shelina has worked on a trustee board during a challenging period, can work effectively as part of a team and would bring a different perspective to Board thinking as a Muslim woman. She accepts the risk that she may be the target of press attention.

The Interviewing Panel recommended the appointment of **Pam Vicks** and **Shelina Janmohamed**, and this view was endorsed by the IMPRESS Appointment Panel by email. In the view of the Panel, both are individuals who can act fairly and impartially in the decision-making of the Board. Walter Merricks spoke to both of the selected candidates and they are willing to take the appointment. Satisfactory references have been received.

The Appointment Panel therefore nominates **Pam Vicks** and **Shelina Janmohamed** for appointment to the Board.

Caroline Instance
Chair, Appointment Panel, 30 October 2019