BOARD PAPERS

86th Press Recognition Panel Board Meeting

Tuesday 9 December 2025

PRESS RECOGNITION PANEL BOARD MEETING

86th Meeting of the Press Recognition Panel
10:30 – 13:00 Tuesday 09 December 2025
Mappin House, 4 Winsley Street, London, W1W 8HF

AGENDA

	Public session		**Indicative timings**
1.	**Welcome**	Chair	10:30 – 10:30
2.	**Apologies for absence**	Chair	10:30 – 10:30
3.	**Declarations of interest**	Chair	10:30 – 10:35
4.	**Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2025, outstanding actions and matters arising** *For noting*	Chair	10:35 – 10:40
5.	**Chief Executive's report, November 2025** Paper PRP40(25) *For noting*	SU	10:40 – 10:45
6.	**Finance report, November 2025** Paper PRP41(25) *For noting*	SU/JS2	10:45 – 10:50
7.	**Board Remuneration and Roles** Paper PRP42(25) *For decision*	Chair	10:50 - 11:10
8.	**Any other business and close of public session** *Including comments from the floor*	Chair	11:10 – 11:15
	Confidential session		
9.	**Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2025, outstanding actions and matters arising** *For noting*	Chair	11:15 – 11:20

10.	**Chief Executive's report, November 2025** Paper PRP40(25) *For noting*	SU	11:20 – 11:30
11.	**Finance report, November 2025** Paper PRP41(25) *For noting*	SU/JS2	11:30 – 11:35
12.	**Annual Board effectiveness evaluation** Paper PRP43(25) *For discussion*	Chair	11:35 – 11:50
13.	**Draft SORR planning** Paper PRP44(25) *For discussion*	SU	11:50 – 12:10
14.	**Research** Paper PRP45(25) *For discussion*	SU	12:10 – 12:25
15.	**Strategy session** *For discussion*	Chair	12:25 – 12:40
16.	**Forward Plan** Paper PRP46(25) *For noting*	SU	12:40 – 12:45
17.	**Any other business and close of meeting**	Chair	12:45 – 12:50

Date and time of next meeting: Wednesday 11 February 2025, 10:30 – 13:00
Location: Mappin House, 4 Winsley Street, London, W1W 8HF

PRP INDEPENDENTLY OVERSEEING PRESS REGULATION

Minutes of the 85th Meeting of the Press Recognition Panel

20 October 2025

In attendance

Board members:	Kathryn Cearns (Chair), Mark Williams, Annie Mullins, Zahera Harb, Suzanna Rab, Hayley Stallard
Executive members:	Susie Uppal, Wendy Collinson; John Speed and Patrick Reeve (online, for part of the meeting only).

BOARD MEETING – PUBLIC SESSION

Welcome

1. The Chair welcomed the Members and Attendees to the 85th meeting of the Press Recognition Panel and opened the meeting at 10.30 am.

Apologies for absence

2. None.

Declaration of Members' interests

3. None.

Matters of the meeting held 2 September 2025, outstanding actions and matters arising

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2025 were noted as being factually correct. The Chair agreed to sign a copy of the minutes as a correct record.

Chief Executive's Reports for September & October 2025

5. The Board noted the contents of the Chief Executive's reports and papers for September and October 2025 with thanks.

Finance Report for September 2025

6. The Board noted the contents of the Finance report for September 2025 and supporting annexes for the period ending 30 September 2025 along with the reforecast. The Board noted the underspend on strategic research.

Cyclical Fees Review

7. The Board considered the results of the consultation on the Cyclical Fees Review, which closed on 10 October, and the two recommendations for decision outlined in the Cyclical Fees Review paper and annexes.

8. The Board noted that only one response to the consultation was received, which was from Impress.

9. The PRP Executive noted the decisions to be made:

   10.1 Does the Board approve the draft response to the consultation, as outlined in Annex A, and the discretion set out for the Board to be able to agree payment by instalments; and

   10.2 Does the Board approve Impress' request to pay the fees in quarterly instalments for the next 3 years or alternatively accept the PRP Executive's recommendation for Impress to pay in two equal 6-monthly instalments, with effect from 3 November 2025, in line with the funding Impress receives.

10. The Board considered all the documentation provided including the response from Impress.

11. They were content, for the reasons set out by the Executive, that they should have a discretion to consider a request for payment by instalments on the terms recommended by the Executive. They considered it important for any request to be made annually so that changes in circumstances could be considered.

12. On this occasion, they would exercise that decision to allow the sum payable on 3 November to be paid in two equal instalments 6 months apart with the first instalment being paid by 3 November. They considered the request by impress to make quarterly payments but were not convinced by the arguments put forward.

    i. *Is it in the interests of the effective operation of the Charter to allow the request?* Whilst allowing Impress to manage its cash flow was agreed to be beneficial both to the regulator and the operation of the Charter, the Board did not consider it appropriate to allow quarterly payments per year when Impress received its IPRT funding twice-yearly. Whilst holding money back may allow Impress to earn some interest, the Royal Charter requires the PRP to obtain value for money (article 11.2) and for the fees to be index-linked (article 11.5).

ii. *Would allowing the instalments compromise the PRP's independence or effective operation?* The PRP's current level of reserves were deemed to be sufficient for it to continue to operate, should Impress miss or not be able to make a payment over the next 12 months.

iii. *Will the regulator be able to meet its financial obligations in accordance with criterion 6 of Schedule 3 to the Charter for the full year?* During its cyclical review of Impress in February 2025, the PRP was satisfied that the regulator remains able to meet its financial obligations under the Charter. This was confirmed by Impress in its response to the recent consultation.

13. The Board considered the impact of altering the schedule of instalments in the future on current and new press regulators signing up to the PRP. Although they are different scenarios, discretionary decisions are exceptional and not guaranteed in the future and the default position was payment in one instalment.

14. The Board agreed with the Executive's analysis that it was in the interests of effective operation of the Charter to agree to 6-monthly instalments. They noted Impress' request for quarterly instalments but also noted that Impress receives its grant from IPRT in two annual instalments. In the circumstances they considered that allowing payment in two instalments for this year was appropriate.

15. The Board **agreed** the draft decision paper and the amendment to the PRP's fee scheme allowing the proposed changes to fee payments, so it can permit instalment payment approved annually of up to 4 times a year at its discretion.

16. The Board **agreed** that the decision paper and the amendment to the PRP's fee scheme be published on its website.

17. The Board **agreed** to allow Impress to pay in two equal, 6-monthly instalments from 3 November 2025, for one year, to be confirmed in writing by the Chief Executive.

18. The Board **agreed** to waive the requirement for the regulator to have given six months written notice of the request on this occasion, although this set no precedent for the future.

Any other business and close of public session

19. None.

BOARD MEETING – CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

Matters of the meeting held 2 September 2025, outstanding actions and matters arising

20. The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2025 were noted as being factually correct. The Chair agreed to sign a copy of the minutes as a correct record.

Chief Executive's Reports for September & October 2025

21. The Board noted the contents of the Chief Executive's reports and papers for September and October 2025 with thanks.

22. Redacted.

    23.1 Redacted.

    23.2 Redacted.

    23.3 Redacted.

        23.3.1 Redacted.

    23.4 Redacted.

    23.5 Redacted.

        23.5.1 Redacted.

        23.5.2 Redacted.

        23.5.3 Redacted.

        23.5.4 [Post-meeting note: Redacted]

    23.6 Redacted.

    23.7 Redacted.

    23.8 Redacted.

    23.9 Redacted

    23.10 Redacted.

24 Redacted.

    24.1 Redacted.

24.2 Redacted.

24.3 Redacted.

24.4 Redacted.

Finance Report for September 2025

25 The Board noted the contents of the Finance report for September 2025 and supporting annexes for the period ending 30 September 2025.

26 Redacted.

26.1 Redacted.

26.2 Redacted.

Risk Register Review

27 Redacted.

28 Redacted.

29 Redacted.

30 Redacted.

31 Redacted.

32 Redacted.

32.1 Redacted.

32.2 Redacted.

32.3 Redacted.

32.4 Redacted.

33 Redacted.

Updated Publications Policy

34 Redacted.

35 Redacted.

36 Redacted.

a. Redacted.

b. Redacted.

c. Redacted.

d. Redacted.

e. Redacted.

37 Redacted.

37.1 Redacted.

37.2 Redacted.

37.3 Redacted.

37.4 Redacted.

37.5 Redacted.

37.6 Redacted.

37.7 Redacted.

38 Redacted.

39 Redacted.

40 Redacted.

Forward Plan

41 The Board noted and agreed with the matters being proposed for December 2025:

Any other business and close of meeting

42 None.

43 The Chair closed the meeting at 12:23.

Drafted by: Wendy Collinson, Executive Administration Manager

Signed by: Kathryn Cearns, PRP Chair

PRP40(25)

PRESS RECOGNITION PANEL BOARD

Chief Executive's Report – November 2025

Meeting: By email, 30 November 2025

Status: For noting

Lead responsibility: Susie Uppal, Chief Executive

Contact details: Susie Uppal, Chief Executive

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the Board on executive activity since the November 2025 report.

2. The Board is invited to note the contents of the Chief Executive's report and note the latest position regarding the PRP's finances.

Executive Summary and Board Matters

3. The Board is being updated in respect of organisational matters.

Operational Updates

Finance Update

4. A bank-reconciled set of management accounts as at 31 October 2025 is attached at **Annex A**. The management accounts also include the original budget for the year to March 2026, and the 6-month reforecast carried out in October 2025.

5. The deficit for the period to date is £44,849 against a year to date forecast deficit of £42,525. This represents a negative variance of £2,324 compared to the year-to-date forecast. The variance is largely due to additional Executive team costs in October which are expected to balance out later in the year.

2024/25 Annual Report and Audit (ARA)

6. Alex Clark handed over the NAO's audit leadership responsibility for the PRP to Alistair (Ali) Morgan at the end of October. Ali will lead on the 2025/26 audit.

7. The NAO issued its invoice regarding the 2024/25 audit, on 14 November for £16,500 (including VAT). It aligns with the quotation provided in the NAO's Audit Planning Report in April 2025, and the invoice has been paid.

YouGov polling report

8. On 5 November, the PRP published a new report based on YouGov polling into the public's attitude towards press intrusion, accountability and regulation. The report was sent to a wide range of media including National Newspapers, broadcasters, online news publishers, podcasts and regional and local outlets as well as the Press Gazette. The report was covered by a number of publications, though not by any national newspaper, and despite initial enthusiasm from Radio 4's The Media Show and The Guardian's media editor, they were unable to cover the subject due to a lack of space. We placed an opinion piece from the PRP's Chair in the Press Gazette, the first time that publication has covered the PRP for some time, and an opinion piece from Board member Zahera Harb in The Conversation. Zahera's article was also republished by Inforrm. Alongside the media release, we released data and accompanying text in multiple social media posts, together with a blog post. We will continue to create social media posts based on data from the report to ensure its longevity.

Communications

9. On 5 November 2025, we circulated a press release (**Annex B**) about our YouGov polling to our contacts issued a letter (**Annex C**) to parliamentarians, and sent a further letter (**Annex D**) to 170 PRP contacts.

10. Our press release was picked up by a range of outlets, including the Swansea Standard, Inforrm, QueerAF, and the West Wales Chronicle, each highlighting different aspects of the data.

11. As of 24 November, our X thread announcing the polling had received 1,708 views and 99 engagements, our Bluesky thread had received 7 engagements, and our LinkedIn post had reached 205 members with 37 engagements.

12. Two op-eds responding to the polling were also published: we put out an article in the name of our Chair Kathryn Cearns OBE in Press Gazette on 12 November, 'The public haven't been fooled: it's time to stop pretending Leveson lessons were learned', and Board member Dr Zahera Harb wrote in The Conversation on 17 November, 'Seven in ten people think the papers regularly publish false information – we need to improve press regulation'.

13. We promoted these two comment pieces on social media: Kathryn's op-ed on 12 November (213 LinkedIn views and 38 engagements), and Zahera's article on 17 November (61 views and 6 engagements on X; 4 engagements on Bluesky; 129 views and 22 engagements on LinkedIn).

14. Other organisations and outlets further amplified the findings. Impress posted on X (177 views), Bluesky (6 engagements) and LinkedIn; Inforrm highlighted the polling on Bluesky; the Media Reform Coalition shared it with 343 views on X; Press Gazette posted on Bluesky (5 engagements) and X (1,149 views); the Swansea Standard shared the polling on X (37 views); and The Conversation UK featured it on Bluesky (46 engagements).

15. On 12 November, we attended the Press Justice Project's Politicians and the Press event, which brought together legal experts, parliamentarians, journalists, and campaigners to examine this unique relationship. Discussions highlighted the legal framework affecting press scrutiny of politicians; the deteriorating quality and depth of political journalism; the pressures created by social media, AI-generated content, and platform-driven news cycles; and some post-match analysis of ITV's The Hack. Speakers described a fragmented and inconsistent regulatory environment. Concerns were raised about regulatory gaps, regulatory capture, the limited capacity of regulators to challenge powerful media organisations, and the absence of mechanisms equivalent to fit-and-proper tests or plurality rules for the online news landscape. Contributors questioned whether unified or modernised regulation could better protect the public, while others emphasised the importance of media literacy and education, noting the difficulty of ensuring effective accountability across modern news and social media ecosystems.

Cyclical Fees Review

16. The PRP's Call for Information on a variation to the fee scheme for regulators closed on 12 October, during which time only one response was received, Impress. At its meeting on 20 October, following analysis of the results, the Board:

    10.1 approved decision paper PRP36(25) and the amendment to the PRP's fee scheme allowing the proposed changes to fee payments; and

    10.2 agreed to allow Impress to pay in two equal, 6-monthly instalments from 3 November 2025 for one year, and to waive the requirement to have given 6 months' written notice of request

17. The Chief Executive notified Impress of the PRP Board's decision on 27 October. Lexie Kirkconnell-Kawana and Caron Bradshaw both expressed their gratitude to the PRP Board and arranged for the first half-yearly instalment of £147,906 to be paid. The Chief Executive confirmed receipt of the funds on 30 October.

18. The decision paper and the amendment to the PRP's fee scheme was published on its website on 27 October.

Consultation on the Royal Charter and online and digital news related material

19. Following the Board's feedback on the draft consultation document, the final version was published on the PRP website on 10 November 2025 and is due to run for 6 weeks, ending on 19 December 2025.

Redacted

20. Redacted.

21. Redacted.

22. Redacted.

- Redacted;
- Redacted;
- Redacted.

23. Redacted.

24. Redacted.

25. Redacted.

Letters

26. Redacted.

27. Redacted.

28. Redacted.

External Matters Update

29. **Annex M** includes an update on key external matters relevant to our work.

Devolved Nations

30. There are no implications/differences in relation to the areas of work covered in this paper and the devolved nations.

Communications

31. There are no other issues to report which have communications implications, so far as I am aware.

Risks

32. There are a range of risks involved in the areas of work covered in this paper.

33. The repeal of Section 40 represented a risk to the wider Recognition System. Without a suitable alternative being put in place, there continues to be little advantage for news publishers to join an Approved Regulator. This means that there is little prospect that the Recognition System can gain sufficient traction with the industry to work as intended and the public will not be protected from press harm.

Recommendations

34. The Board is asked to note the contents of the Chief Executive’s report.

Attachments

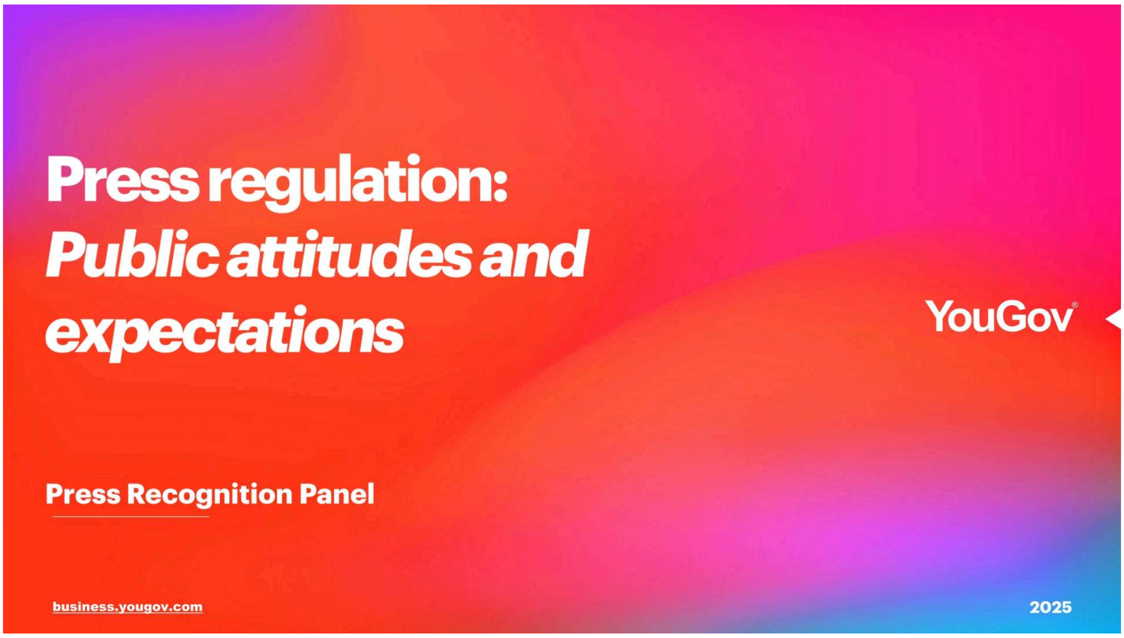
Annex A: Management Accounts as at 31 October 2025.
Annex B: Press Release – YouGov polling report, 5 November 2025.
Annex C: Letter to Parliamentarians – YouGov polling report, 5 November 2025.
Annex D: Letter to PRP contacts – YouGov polling report, 5 November 2025.
Annex E: Redacted.
Annex F: Redacted.
Annex G: Redacted.
Annex H: Redacted.
Annex I: Redacted.
Annex J: Redacted.
Annex K: Redacted.
Annex L: Redacted.
Annex M: External matters update – November 2025.

Press Recognition Panel
Period ended 31st October 2025

	7 months to October 2025			Full year to March 2026	
	Actual £	Reforecast Oct 2025 £	Variance £	Budget £	Reforecast Oct 2025 £
Income					
Subscription fees	169,578	169,578	-	291,896	291,896
Bank interest	31,520	31,295	225	44,525	50,670
Total Income	**201,098**	**200,873**	**225**	**336,421**	**342,565**
Expenditure					
Board and Committee costs					
Salaries & NIC	48,228	48,892	664	84,370	84,647
Travel & Subsistence	1,012	1,138	126	1,920	1,888
Other costs	-	-	-	3,500	3,500
Total Board and Committee Costs	**49,240**	**50,030**	**790**	**89,790**	**90,034**
Communications					
Publications	-	-	-	3,750	2,450
Website and Upgrades	344	343	(1)	2,474	1,587
Total Communications Costs	**344**	**343**	**(1)**	**6,224**	**4,037**
Other costs					
Executive team costs	146,586	143,896	(2,690)	260,825	254,491
HR & Recruitment	479	1,018	539	2,137	1,735
Strategic research	13,800	13,800	-	54,000	43,800
Office costs	3,958	3,968	10	7,498	7,207
Meeting rooms	3,769	3,376	(393)	4,043	4,479
Travel & Subsistence	919	784	(135)	2,240	1,784
IT Hardware	1,433	1,433	-	1,920	1,433
Information Technology	4,586	4,630	44	7,920	8,230
Accountancy	14,924	14,927	3	32,533	32,411
Audit Fees	-	-	-	16,500	16,500
Printing & Stationery	999	299	(700)	2,605	1,599
Insurance	3,113	3,112	(1)	5,201	5,303
Legal	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
Subscriptions & publications	1,671	1,657	(14)	2,115	2,558
Finance charges	126	125	(1)	180	175
Sundry expenses	-	-	-	8,049	9,677
	196,363	**193,025**	**(3,338)**	**417,766**	**401,382**
Total Expenditure	**245,947**	**243,398**	**(2,549)**	**513,780**	**495,453**
Surplus / (Deficit) for the period	**(44,849)**	**(42,525)**	**(2,324)**	**(177,360)**	**(152,888)**
Reserves Bfwd	**1,894,436**	**1,894,436**			
Reserves Cfwd	**1,849,587**	**1,851,911**			

PRP

INDEPENDENTLY OVERSEEING PRESS REGULATION



Majority of UK public back independent press regulation free from government and industry control, YouGov polling finds

Six in ten believe publishing false or misleading information and failing to represent people or groups fairly is becoming more common

5 November 2025: The British public supports independent regulation and accountability for the UK's news publishers by an organisation separate to both the government and the industry itself, according to new polling by YouGov for the Press Recognition Panel (PRP), the independent body which oversees the system of press self-regulation in the UK.

The research, conducted in the wake of ITV phone hacking drama *The Hack*, explores whether unethical press practices persist in today's media landscape. It reveals that the public believes instances of press intrusion, publishing false or misleading information, or failing to represent individuals and groups fairly have become more common. The events in the series led to the Leveson Inquiry and subsequent industry-led steps to curb wrongdoing.

Headline findings from the report include:

Support for a fully independent system of regulation

Around four in five (82%) support major news sources – including newspapers, magazines, and online outlets – being regulated. Over half (54%) believe the press should be regulated by a fully independent body, with one in five (22%) supporting regulation by a government-backed regulator like Ofcom, and just 3% saying it should be carried out by an industry-led body – an example of this would be IPSO. When it comes to complaints resolution, just 4% say an industry body should be the final arbiter, compared to around 8 in 10 (76%) who say it should be a fully independent regulator (45%) or a statutory body not linked to the industry (31%).

Feelings that breaches of ethics are becoming more commonplace

Four in five respondents believe journalists often invade people's privacy and 7 in 10 (72%) say the press often publishes false or misleading information and fails to correct mistakes. Despite the measures put in place by the industry following the Leveson Inquiry, 6 in 10 people believe the press publishing false or misleading information (63%) and failing to treat individuals and groups fairly (60%) is becoming more common.

Perceptions of bias and influence

Around 8 in 10 believe politicians (77%) and rich people (83%) have a big or very big influence on the press. Three-quarters (79%) believe politicians and the press often make informal arrangements or 'deals' for more favourable coverage or political influence.

Unequal treatment of the ordinary public

Only one in four respondents say the press pays attention to complaints from ordinary members of the public, while four in five believe complaints from rich people would get attention. Only one in five (21%) think an ordinary person would receive a correction to a false or misleading story, compared with around two-thirds who believe a celebrity (62%) or politician (65%) would. Over half (60%) say they are not confident they would know where to make a complaint if they wanted to complain about a news story they thought was unfair or inaccurate.

Kathryn Cearns OBE, Chair of the Press Recognition Panel, said:

“This research shows a clear public demand for press regulation that is independent, effective, and accountable, and overwhelming opposition to industry-run models such as IPSO acting as the regulator and final arbitrator of complaints.

“The issues raised in ITV’s *The Hack* are not confined to the past. Despite the Leveson Inquiry and subsequent industry-led changes, most people think press intrusion and the publication of misleading information are actually increasing and that ordinary people would struggle to get redress when things go wrong. A large majority view the current system as biased in favour of the rich and powerful and that politicians and the press do deals with each other in return for favourable coverage.

“The public want change. The framework for genuinely independent regulation already exists, but successive governments have reneged on pledges to properly back it, with most of the press choosing not to participate as a result. That leaves the industry operating without proper accountability and the public unprotected. For the sake of the victims of press harm, and to prevent further erosion of public trust in the press at a time when people are turning to an array of unregulated sources for news, we can’t allow this drift to continue.”

The PRP is calling on news publishers to join a recognised independent regulator, work towards reforming IPSO so that it can meet the Royal Charter criteria, or come together to form a new body that could seek recognition. It is also urging the Government to play its part by encouraging news publishers to make this change and exploring further measures to promote accountability and protect the public from press harm.

The PRP is also inviting people and organisations to share their views through its ongoing Call for Information on press regulation in the UK. The responses will inform its next Annual Report on the Recognition System and help identify practical steps to strengthen accountability and public confidence at a time when concern about press standards is high.

Read the full YouGov polling report.

…/ ends

Media contact:

Mark Ogle, mogle@pressrecognitionpanel.org.uk

Notes to editors:

Methodology

YouGov surveyed a sample of 2,035 members of the general public within the UK (aged 18+) between 30 September and 12 October 2025. All respondents were sourced from YouGov's panel of over 400,000 active panel members in the UK. The sample was designed to be representative by age, gender, region, ethnicity, and social grade.

About the Press Recognition Panel

The Press Recognition Panel (PRP) is an independent body set up to ensure that regulators of the press and other news publishers are independent, properly funded and able to protect the public, while recognising the important role carried out by the press and other news publishers.

We were created as a result of the Leveson Inquiry into press standards. The Leveson Inquiry followed widespread concern about unlawful activities carried out by some sections of the media, such as phone hacking. Lord Justice Leveson published his report into the culture, practices and ethics of the press in November 2012.

PRP INDEPENDENTLY OVERSEEING PRESS REGULATION

Majority of UK public back independent press regulation free from government and industry control, YouGov polling finds

Dear <<Formal Salutation>>,

I am writing to share the findings of new YouGov research commissioned by the Press Recognition Panel (PRP), revealing ongoing public concerns about problematic press practices, political influence over news publishers, and uneven access to justice, alongside overwhelming public support for stronger, independent regulation of the press.

Key findings include:

- A majority of people believe problematic practices – such as false or misleading reporting and unfair treatment of individuals and groups – take place in the press and are becoming more common today.
- Four in five say the press pays attention to complaints from the rich and powerful, compared with only one in four who think it listens to ordinary members of the public.
- Around four in five believe politicians and wealthy individuals have significant influence over the press.
- Three-quarters believe politicians and the press make informal 'deals' to secure favourable coverage and political influence.
- Four in five people support all major news sources – including newspapers, magazines, and online outlets – being regulated.
- More than half (54%) want that regulation to be independent of both government and the press industry, with one in five (22%) favouring a government-backed model.
- Just 3% support regulation by an industry-run body, such as IPSO.

Read the full YouGov polling report.

These findings come as ITV's phone-hacking drama *The Hack* has once again highlighted the human impact of press harm and the unfinished business of ensuring the public is fully protected and able to get redress. They show that public trust in journalism depends on a clear separation between political and editorial interests, and on a system of regulation that commands confidence precisely because it is independent of both.

The PRP was established by Royal Charter in 2014 to oversee that system. Our role is not to regulate the press but to provide assurance that any regulator claiming independence meets the rigorous criteria set out after the Leveson Inquiry. The framework for this exists in the form of the Recognition System; however, the failure of successive governments to incentivise participation in the system means that most major news publishers continue to operate outside it.

This means the public is not protected in the way that was intended following the Leveson Inquiry, should things go wrong. Frequently, the only route to redress is through the courts – a process that is complex, time-consuming, costly, and beyond the reach of most ordinary people.

In light of these findings and the ongoing challenges they highlight, we invite further evidence and views through our Call for Information on the effectiveness and future direction of press regulation, which remains open until 19 December 2025. This will inform our next Annual Report on the Recognition System and help identify practical steps to strengthen accountability, protect the public, and rebuild confidence in the press. We welcome contributions from Parliamentarians and others with an interest in these aims.

The public's expectations are clear, and Parliament's leadership on these matters is crucial to ensuring that the press remains both free and fair, and that everyone, not only the powerful, can expect truth and justice from our media.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We would be happy to arrange a conversation if you wish to discuss any of these issues further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Cearns OBE
Chair
Press Recognition Panel

PRP

INDEPENDENTLY OVERSEEING PRESS REGULATION

Majority of UK public back independent press regulation free from government and industry control, YouGov polling finds

Dear Subscriber <<Last Name>>,

I am writing to share the findings of our new YouGov research, which confirms that, more than a decade after the Leveson Inquiry, widespread public concern persists that problematic practices continue to occur in the press and are, in fact, becoming more common.

The polling shows strong public support for press regulation that is genuinely independent of both government and the press industry, as well as an overwhelming rejection of industry-led models. There is a clear gap between the public's expectations of press regulation and successive governments' failure to fully implement the Leveson Inquiry's recommendations.

Key findings include:

- A majority of people believe problematic practices – such as false or misleading reporting and unfair treatment of individuals and groups – take place in the press and are becoming more common today.
- Four in five say the press pays attention to complaints from the rich and powerful, compared with only one in four who think it listens to ordinary members of the public.
- A large majority believe politicians and the press make informal 'deals' to secure favourable coverage and political influence.
- Four in five people support all major news sources – including newspapers, magazines, and online outlets – being regulated.
- More than half (54%) want that regulation to be independent of both government and the press industry, while one in five (22%) favour a government-backed model.
- Just 3% support regulation by an industry-run body, such as IPSO.

Read the full YouGov polling report.

The findings come as *The Hack* – ITV's powerful new drama about the phone-hacking scandal – has reopened public debate about press conduct and accountability. While the series looks back at past events, many of the issues it portrays are far from resolved. The public believes that unethical practices persist and that access to justice depends too much on who you are and how much influence you have.

A free, trusted, and accountable press is essential to democracy. The framework for truly independent regulation – the Recognition System established after the Leveson Inquiry – already exists, but much of the press (including all of the national newspapers) has so far refused to join it. This research shows the public wants that to change. The Government must take steps to rebuild public confidence and counter perceptions of undue influence.

We are now inviting your views on press regulation in the UK through our Call for Information, open until 19 December 2025. We welcome written submissions, case studies, and personal experiences, and would be happy to arrange a conversation if you wish to discuss any of these issues further.

Thank you, as always, for your interest and support for our work.

Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Cearns OBE
Chair
Press Recognition Panel

Update on key external matters

1. The update on key external matters is a research-informed piece based on a sample of information available in the public domain.

Commercial Landscape

2. Press Gazette reported that the Daily Express, Daily Star, Daily Mirror, Daily Record and the Financial Times all saw both their weekday and Saturday circulations decline by double digits year on year (YoY) in October 2025. Across weekday circulation, the Daily Express recorded the biggest YoY fall, down 20% to 97,319 average issues. The Daily Mirror declined the most in Saturday newspaper circulation, down 18% year on year to 225,257. The Daily Record had the lowest weekday (36,487) and Saturday circulations. The Daily Mail continues to have the highest Saturday circulation (1,046,644), despite a 7% year-on-year decrease, and the highest weekday circulation (down 8% to 531,607). Across all national newspapers that provide ABC figures the biggest year-on-year declines were among Sunday titles. Reach's Sunday People saw the steepest drop year on year by almost a quarter (24.2%) to 37,897 average circulation per issue.

3. Press Gazette reported that the Daily Star led the UK's top 50 news websites for year-on-year growth in September, with audience up 150% to 7.7m and minutes spent rising 160% to 29.4m. Among major brands, all of the top ten recorded year-on-year audience increases, led by The Telegraph, Daily Express, and Guardian. Reach titles dominated the biggest growth list, with strong gains for Cosmopolitan, Bristol Live, Examiner Live, Chronicle Live, My London, the Liverpool Echo and Wales Online.

4. HoldtheFrontPage reported that regional publisher National World is to be rebranded as Iconic Media. Iconic Media is the name of the Irish newspaper publisher owned by Malcolm Denmark, who took control of National World in May. Now it has been confirmed that National World's 200-plus local and regional titles in the UK are to come under the 'Iconic' brand.

5. As reported by Press Gazette, Daily Mail publisher DMG Media has launched two dedicated social publisher arms. The team at DMG New Media are now producing all content for the Daily Mail, Daily Mail UK and Mail Sport accounts on Tiktok and Instagram, including news content and original, talent-led videos. They are also launching several smaller specialist channels, including personal finance, entertainment, and gaming. Health, wellness, technology, food, and climate are set to follow. Nick Moar, head of DMG New Media responsible for all of its content and operations, said that the Daily Mail's social channels have a combined 150m followers in total, growing by two million every month. Around 65-70% of the audience are Gen Z (currently aged up to 28).

6. The Telegraph reported that the publisher’s underlying operating profit remained flat at £54.6m in 2024, with revenue edging up just 1.2% to £279.4m as uncertainty over its ownership continued to constrain strategic decisions. Despite this, subscriptions grew 5% to 1.09m, driven by an 18% rise in digital subscription revenue to £81m, offsetting print decline. The accounts reveal the protracted takeover dispute has now cost the company over £30m in advisory fees.

7. The Guardian reported that Lord Rothermere’s Daily Mail & General Trust (DMGT) has struck a £500m deal to buy the Telegraph titles. DMGT has entered a period of exclusivity with RedBird IMI, which has been seeking a buyer since being forced to put the papers up for sale last spring, to complete the terms of the transaction. The two parties say they expect this process to “happen quickly”. However, the deal is likely to trigger an in-depth investigation by the media regulator Ofcom and the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). DMGT owns titles including the Daily Mail, Metro, the i Paper, and New Scientist, and already handles the advertising contract for the Telegraph titles.

Legal

8. The Guardian reported that Christopher Jefferies, the retired teacher wrongfully arrested in 2010 for the murder of his tenant Joanna Yeates, has secured a settlement with News Group Newspapers (NGN), which has agreed to pay “substantial damages” and issued a formal apology for unlawful invasion of his privacy by agents of the defunct News of the World. While NGN did not admit liability for alleged phone-hacking or voicemail interception relating directly to The Sun, it acknowledged the News of the World’s intrusion into Jefferies’ private life and the “distress caused” by it. In an interview with ITV News, Jefferies said the government must find the “moral courage to stand up to organs of the press who are far more powerful than they ought legitimately to be”.

9. The Guardian reported that private investigator Gavin Burrows, a key witness in the privacy lawsuit brought by Prince Harry and others against Associated Newspapers Limited (ANL), has recanted his earlier statement implicating the publisher in unlawful information-gathering. Burrows originally swore in 2021 that he participated in activities such as voicemail hacking and bugging cars on behalf of ANL, but in a new witness statement filed in September 2025 he said the 2021 document was forged, his signature not genuine, and the language inconsistent with his style. He now asserts he never carried out illegal work for ANL and denies ever working for the Mail.

10. Press Gazette reported that the Manchester Evening News has apologised and agreed to pay £16,000 in damages to Bob Vylan frontman Pascal Robinson after wrongly stating he had “performed Nazi salutes on stage”. The allegation, sourced from comments by the Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester, was shown to be false: the gesture in question was a sun salutation used as part of a mindfulness routine at the start of the band’s shows. The MEN removed the claim from its article and published corrections both on its website

and on X, acknowledging the error. Robinson said the misrepresentation of a peaceful, symbolic movement as a fascist salute was “painful and outrageous”, while his solicitors described the accusation as “extremely serious and damaging”.

Political

11. Maya Ellis (Labour, Ribble Valley) tabled a question asking the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department plans to support updating the legal definition of a newspaper to allow local councils to place public notices with eligible online news outlets.

    Ian Murray (Labour, Edinburgh South) responded: “The Government is concerned about the sustainability of local journalism and DCMS is developing a Local Media Strategy, in recognition of the importance of this vital sector. We also recognise that local press continues to play a vital role in informing local communities, and that public notices play an important role in helping inform the public of decisions made by their council which may affect their quality of life, local services or amenities, or their property.

    However, we are also aware of concerns from some sectors about the audience reach of these notices and the desire for greater digitalisation. In this context, the sector’s Public Notice Portal is a welcome innovation, taking advantage of print publishers’ growing digital audiences and providing a centralised resource for all types of public notice. We also welcome the Portal's current expansion to include archive and consultation functions to help public bodies and commercial entities engage with the public more effectively.

    DCMS is monitoring the progress of the Portal, and the effect that it has on the audience reach of public notices. This type of industry innovation and collaboration is integral to securing the sector’s future. It will be taken into account in our planned review of public notices as part of the Local Media Strategy, which will more broadly consider the merits of making changes to existing requirements to place public notices in print local newspapers. More will be announced on the Strategy in the coming months.”

12. Sir John Hayes (Conservative, South Holland and The Deepings) tabled a question asking the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to support local media in (a) South Holland and the Deepings constituency and (b) Lincolnshire.

    Ian Murray (Labour, Edinburgh South) responded: “Sustainability of local journalism across the country is an area of particular concern for this Government, including in South Holland and the Deepings and more broadly across Lincolnshire. The Government understands the important work that local news does across the UK, including outlets such as the Spalding Guardian and the Lincolnshire Echo. We are developing a Local Media Strategy, in recognition of the importance of this vital sector. Our vision is a thriving local media that can continue to play an invaluable role as a key channel of trustworthy information at local level, reporting on the issues that matter to communities, reflecting their contributions and perspectives, and helping to foster a self-confident nation in which everyone feels that their contribution is part of an inclusive national story.

We are working across Government and with other stakeholders as the Strategy develops. DCMS ministers held a roundtable discussion with local news editors in the spring to discuss the planned approach and collaboration with industry on the Strategy. An industry working group has since been set up to consider the issues in more detail and has been meeting regularly since June. More will be announced on the Strategy in the coming months."

13. Andrew Rosindell (Conservative, Romford) tabled a question asking the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department has taken to help prevent British newspapers from being subject to foreign influence.

    Ian Murray (Labour, Edinburgh South) responded: "This Government is committed to a pluralistic media landscape, and it is vital that the UK has in place strong measures to protect this. The Foreign State Influence (FSI) media merger regime is a key part of this; it prevents foreign states from being able - directly or indirectly - to control or influence the policy of UK newspapers and news periodicals.

    In July 2025, DCMS passed targeted exceptions to the initial FSI newspapers regime, to allow certain state-owned investment funds - such as sovereign wealth funds or pension funds - to invest up to 15% in UK newspapers and news periodicals.

    The 15% threshold is below the level which the Competition and Markets Authority considers to typically give rise to material influence when assessing jurisdiction under the Enterprise Act 2002. This approach will still limit any scope for foreign state control or influence of news organisations while giving them much-needed flexibility to seek business investment that supports their long-term sustainability.

    In October 2025, DCMS laid before Parliament further changes to the Enterprise Act, proposing to apply a 15% cap on aggregate holdings of shares or voting rights in a newspaper owner by SOIs acting on behalf of foreign powers of different countries. It also introduces a requirement for SOIs acquiring more than 5% of shares or voting rights in a UK newspaper owner directly to give the Secretary of State a qualifying notification within 14 days of the acquisition being made, and publish appropriate details of that notification within the same timeframe. These Regulations will be debated when Parliamentary time allows, and subject to Parliamentary approval will come into force 31st January 2026."

14. Andrew Rosindell (Conservative, Romford) tabled a question asking the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions her Department has had with IPSO on (a) Chinese and (b) Emirati links to The Telegraph.

    Ian Murray (Labour, Edinburgh South) responded: “The Department for Culture, Media and Sport have had no discussions with IPSO about the Telegraph sale.”

15. Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated Life peer) tabled a question asking His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the use of artificial intelligence in news production and distribution complies with regulated media standards.

    Baroness Twycross (Labour Life peer) responded: “AI is a tool that could help the UK realise its full potential as a global creative powerhouse. While we should be aware of the risks of AI, we should also be positive about its possibilities. DCMS is working closely with DSIT and other departments on tackling harmful misinformation and the role our media sector plays in fostering a healthy online environment.

    The independent regulator Ofcom enforces standards on broadcast media through their Broadcasting Code, which includes rules that ensure that broadcast news is duly accurate and impartial. Ofcom has set out guidance around the use of synthetic media, including AI: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/about-ofcom/bulletins/broadcast-bulletins/2023/issue-471/note-to-broadcasters-synthetic-media-including-deepfakes-.pdf?v=329464. This is attached to this answer.

    The UK has a self-regulatory system for the press, which was established independently from Government to protect press freedom. The Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) and The Independent Monitor for the Press (Impress) are industry-led regulators for the press. They enforce codes of conduct which provide guidelines on a range of areas, including accuracy. Impress has also published specific guidance regarding best practices when using AI for news content creation: https://www.impressorg.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Impress-Best-Practice-Note-The-Use-of-Artificial-Intelligence-April-2025.pdf.”

16. Lord Bradshaw (Liberal Democrat) tabled a question asking His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the YouGov report Press regulation: public attitudes and expectations, published by the Press Recognition Panel on 5 November; and whether they plan to take further action in this area.

    Baroness Twycross (Labour) responded: “The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is interested in a range of evidence concerning public attitudes to news media and we have noted the publication of the report.

The UK has a self-regulatory system for the press, which is independent from Government. This is vital to ensure the public has access to accurate and trustworthy information from a range of different sources. Our aim as a Government is to ensure we strike the balance between freedom of the press and protecting the public from harm. We are carefully considering next steps to determine the best route forward to safeguard public trust in our news media."

17. Mr Angus MacDonald (Liberal Democrat, Inverness, Skye and West Ross-shire) tabled a question asking the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment her Department has made of the adequacy of media ownership rules in relation to companies with headquarters outside the UK.

    Ian Murray (Labour) responded: "The UK is open for investment from people around the world, provided that, in the case of investment in media sectors, their investment complies with the foreign state influence and public interest media merger regimes.

    The Culture Secretary considers all mergers involving any newspaper, broadcaster or news media enterprise that reach certain thresholds as set out in the Enterprise Act 2002. This legislation applies to all relevant investors, wherever they are based, or - in the case of companies - wherever their headquarters are located. We consider these regimes to be sufficient, but continue to keep them under review to ensure their effectiveness."

18. The Science, Innovation and Technology Committee said the government risks "further harm" from the viral spread of misinformation after ministers and Ofcom rejected many of the committee's recommendations to strengthen the Online Safety Act (OSA), including bringing generative AI platforms explicitly within scope and addressing the advertising-driven business models that incentivise algorithmic amplification of false content. The committee noted Ofcom had previously said the legal position on AI was "not entirely clear," yet the government maintains the OSA already covers AI-generated content and that it will keep advertising issues "under review." Chair Dame Chi Onwurah criticised the lack of concrete action and warned that, without plugging gaps, the UK could see repeats of misinformation-fuelled unrest like the 2024 summer riots.

19. The Second Report of the Speaker's Conference on the security of MPs, candidates and elections concludes that press coverage plays a significant role in shaping public attitudes toward MPs and can trigger or exacerbate abuse. It recommends that IPSO amend its code so headlines are accurate and clearly distinguish fact from comment when read alone, aligning with Impress. The report raises serious concerns about doorstepping at MPs' homes and calls for press regulation codes to prohibit doorstepping at residential addresses with no public-interest exemption. It also states that children, spouses, or family members should not be used as a means of gaining access to an MP.

20. During the debate on the Public Office (Accountability) Bill, several MPs – including Paula Barker (Lab), Jess Brown-Fuller (LD), Tom Morrison (LD), Nia Griffith (Lab), John McDonnell (Lab), Josh Newbury (Lab) and Seamus Logan (SNP) – highlighted how sections of the press, particularly The Sun, helped spread falsehoods about Hillsborough victims and reinforced the wider cover-up, arguing that this remains a powerful example of why press standards and accountability still matter. Several speakers pressed the Government to revive Leveson Part 2 to examine the relationship between the press, police, and politicians, while others criticised the weakness of IPSO, which they said has failed to provide meaningful redress or deter misconduct. The government responded by stating that media reform is "out of scope" of the Bill.

IPSO

21. IPSO has published new guidance for journalists setting out some of the key considerations for titles that publish reader comments and other user-generated content. The guidance is relevant to a range of user-generated content created by users of digital platforms, including website comments, online conversations between readers, as well as images and videos. This type of content, although not created directly by the publisher, still falls under IPSO's remit when the publisher has reviewed it and it remains online after the publisher has had the opportunity to moderate it. The guidance explores a range of considerations, from internal policies and moderation systems to social media responses and the relevance of awareness of complaints about such content.

22. Press Gazette reported that IPSO has rejected 123 complaints against a Mail on Sunday front-page headline that said punk duo Bob Vylan had "led 'death to Israelis' chants" at Glastonbury, ruling it was neither inaccurate nor misleading. Complainants argued no such chant was spoken and that the use of single quote marks implied a direct quotation, but IPSO found the paper had clearly set out the actual words used ("death to the IDF") and was entitled to characterise the chants within quotation marks as a summarised interpretation. Although acknowledging that this interpretation is "heavily disputed", IPSO said the headline was supported by the article's text and that the publication was within its rights to express its view on what occurred.

23. Press Gazette reported that Richard Tice, Reform UK's deputy leader, has won IPSO complaints against stories in the Sunday People and Daily Record. The stories claimed British Steel closed its Darlington plant "after a rent hike threat" from Quidnet Reit, where Tice is a director. IPSO found the coverage misleading and stated that the articles' denials, placed at the end, were insufficient to correct inaccuracies presented prominently in the headlines and X posts. Although Reach removed the articles and published corrections, IPSO ruled the corrections were not sufficiently prompt or prominent and concluded the titles had breached the Editors' Code.

24. The Telegraph reported that former attorney general Sir Michael Ellis KC has accused IPSO of “serious interference” in parliamentary reporting after it ruled against the paper for quoting Michael Gove’s Commons remarks about the Muslim Association of Britain. Ellis told a select committee the decision was “almost unprecedented” and amounted to a breach of parliamentary privilege. Writing in the Telegraph back in May, he warned of “mission creep” by regulators that could chill press freedom. Former attorney general Dominic Grieve also criticised the ruling, calling it “extraordinary” for penalising a newspaper simply for publishing parliamentary proceedings.

Campaigners’ news

25. Hacked Off reported that Dr Aidan Kelly, a clinical psychologist and director at Gender Plus, has described how misleading Daily Mail articles falsely alleging that he and colleagues were “doling out” puberty blockers have damaged his professional reputation and triggered an unjustified complaint to his regulator. Kelly, who worked at the NHS GIDS service, said the claims contradicted evidence in the Cass Review, which showed that only around a quarter of referred young people were ever prescribed blockers, and stressed that psychologists do not prescribe medication, with decisions made cautiously by endocrinologists after lengthy multidisciplinary assessments. He criticised IPSO’s handling of his complaint as legalistic and imbalanced, and ultimately secured a legal settlement with the help of the Press Justice Project.

26. Writing in the Liverpool Echo, Hillsborough campaigner Margaret Aspinall argued that “justice won’t be done” until The Sun is held to account for its role in spreading falsehoods. She described the newspaper as “South Yorkshire Police’s willing accomplices in the cover-up”, saying it “spread disgusting lies” that blamed victims and prolonged families’ fight for justice. Aspinall condemned the paper for lobbying to shut down Leveson 2, which would have examined alleged collusion between the newspaper and police. Aspinall urged the Prime Minister to deliver on promises and ensure that Leveson 2 proceeds, so that the media can be held fully accountable for its role in institutional failings and cover-ups.

27. Prime Minister Keir Starmer has given his backing to the News Media Association’s Journalism Matters campaign saying that journalism is “absolutely vital” to UK democracy, praising local reporters, editors and newsrooms for tackling misinformation, holding power to account and strengthening trust within their communities. He emphasised that “all news is local” and must remain so, and pledged that his government will “always defend” and work with the industry to support its work “day in day out”.

28. Hacked Off CEO Nathan Sparkes has said that The Telegraph’s sustained campaign attacking BBC standards is “deeply hypocritical”. He pointed out that the Telegraph, while criticising the BBC for alleged failings, has itself published major errors, such as a front-page story overstating the number of “illegal migrants” in London by misusing data. Sparkes also highlighted that the national

press enjoys state subsidies and tax advantages yet refuses to join a truly independent regulator – unlike the BBC, which is accountable to Ofcom.

29. Press Gazette reported that Owen Meredith is leaving his job as CEO of the News Media Association to join Mail publisher DMG Media as managing director, public policy, starting in May 2026. He will replace editor emeritus Peter Wright, who will be retiring after 47 years with the company. Meredith has led the NMA for five years, leading UK national and regional newspaper publishers' engagement with government and regulators. Wright has been editor emeritus for 14 years, during which time he played a leading role in setting up the Independent Press Standards Organisation. Prior to that, he was the editor of The Mail on Sunday for 14 years.

PRP41(25)

PRESS RECOGNITION PANEL BOARD

FINANCE REPORT – NOVEMBER 2025

Meeting: 9 December 2025

Status: for noting

Lead responsibility: Susie Uppal, Chief Executive

Contact details: Susie Uppal, John Speed (JS2)

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to update the Board on the finance and banking position as at 30 November 2025.

2. The Board is invited to note the latest financial position.

Background and analysis

Finance

3. A bank-reconciled set of management accounts as at 30 November 2025 is attached at Annex A. The management accounts also include the original budget for the year to March 2026 and the 6-month reforecast carried out in October 2025.

4. The deficit for the period to date is £54,417 against a year to date forecast deficit of £52,215. This represents a negative variance of £2,202 compared to the year-to-date forecast. The variance is largely due to additional Executive team and meeting room costs which are expected to balance out later in the year, partly offset by a provision for legal costs not yet utilised.

Devolved Nations

5. There are no specific implications/differences in relation to the areas of work covered in this paper and the devolved nations.

Communications

6. There are no specific communications implications to draw out.

Risks

7. A robust position in relation to the PRP's finances is required in order to avoid reputational damage and to ensure compliance with HM Treasury's *Managing Public Money*.

Recommendations

8. The Board is invited to **note** the latest financial position regarding the PRP's finances.

Timeline for future work

9. JS2 Ltd will continue to provide updates on the PRP's financial position at meetings of the Board.

Attachment

Annex A – Management accounts as at 30 November 2025

PRP42(25)

INDEPENDENTLY OVERSEEING PRESS REGULATION

PRESS RECOGNITION PANEL BOARD

BOARD REMUNERATION AND ROLES

Meeting: 9 December 2025

Status: for decision

Lead responsibility: Susie Uppal, CEO

Contact details: Wendy Collinson, Executive Administration Manager

Purpose

1. The Board are **invited** to undertake the annual review of remuneration rates for the Board, Independent members, and Executive.

2. The Board are **asked** to consider the minimum time commitment for future work planned.

3. The Board are **asked** to discuss and decide the rate, if any, which should be applied to staff costs of living rises.

4. The Board are **asked** to discuss and agree the renewal of the of the Senior Independent Board Member and Independent Member on Industry matters roles.

Executive Summary

5. The Terms of Membership of the PRP, including remuneration, are delegated to the Board under the terms of the Charter (para 5.3):

   ‘The Board may make arrangements to pay or make provision for paying, in respect of any Member, such amounts by way of allowances or gratuities as the Board determines. The amount of any such allowances or gratuities shall be set having regard to the prevailing rates payable to the members of boards of public sector bodies’.

Background

6. The rates continue to be reviewed annually in accordance with the Remuneration policy. The Board’s remuneration, with the exception of the additional payment for the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) detailed below, reflect increases agreed by the Board at its meeting on 10 December 2024, having remained unchanged for 8 years since the PRP came into legal existence on 3 November 2014.

7. At its meeting held on December 2020, the Chair noted that there was a regular cycle of work that was broadly shared between the Board members. The Board discussed and agreed that the process of paying remuneration as an annual sum (£6,000), in twelve equal instalments, continued to provide the most efficient method as it was administratively less burdensome.

   The Board agreed that it was important to benchmark the rates on an annual basis to ensure that they remained current and adequate, with due regard to the role and nature of the organisation.

8. At its meeting held on 15 December 2021, the Board discussed member rates and time commitment, and the following was agreed:

   - Remuneration for Board members would remain at £6,000 per annum but for a minimum commitment of 15 days, reduced from the previous commitment of 20 days a year. This rate was to be reviewed periodically.

   - The Independent members, remuneration would be increased to £400 per day from the start of the new financial year.

   - The Chair’s remuneration would remain at £30k but would be for a minimum commitment of 50 days per year, reduced from the previous commitment of 60 days per annum.

9. At its meeting held on 13 December 2022, the Board discussed members rates and time commitment, and the following was agreed:

   - That no additional uplift in member remuneration should be applied, and that if significant additional work is required by a Board member over and above the agreed minimum 15 days per annum it will be considered by the Board on a case-by-case basis.

   - The Board agreed to award the Chief Executive a cost-of-living increase of 4%.

   - The Executive Administration Manager joined the PRP on the 17 November 2022 and therefore did not qualify for an increase.

10. At its meeting held on 12 December 2023, the Board discussed Board member and Executive remuneration, and noted and agreed the following:

    - That the Board had not received an increase in 8 years and that nationally salaries have exceeded 7% over the previous 12 months, and that this was lower than headline annual inflationary increases.

- The Board unanimously agreed a modest and reasonable increase of 7.5% from the 1 April 2024 for all Board members, the Chair and Independent members to keep pace with inflation. The Board members annual salary increased to £6,450 based on a notional rate of £430 per day for a minimum time commitment of 15 days per annum. The Chairs salary increased to £33,750 based on a notional rate of £645 per day for a minimum time commitment of 50 days per annum.

- The two salaried members of the Executive were awarded a cost of living uplift of 7.5% from 1 April 2024.

- Mark Williams as Board member with Financial Responsibilities carries out additional duties as required by the Royal Charter and that these duties equate to an additional 3 days per annum, the Board unanimously agreed to award Board member Mark Willilams with 3 additional days per annum from 1 January 2024.

11. At its meeting on 10 December 2024, the Board discussed Board member and Executive remuneration:

    - The Board **agreed** to increase the Board members and Independent members daily rate by 2.79%, taking the daily rate from £430 to £442 per day from the 1 April 2025.

    - The Board **agreed** to increase the Chair's daily rate by 2.79%, taking the daily rate from £645 to £663 per day from the 1 April 2025.

    - The Board discussed the time commitment for 2025 and **agreed** that whilst some of the members undertake additional variable duties for ARC and NOMCO (when required) that these are not deemed overly onerous. However it was noted that more involvement might be required during the Cyclical Review period and that this would be kept under review and flexed as required. The Board **agreed** that the time commitment currently set for the members and the Chair was reasonable and no changes were required.

    - The Board discussed the Executive salaried staff's remuneration and **agreed** an inflationary increase of 2.79% from the 1 April 2025.

    - The Board unanimously **agreed** that the Chief Executive should write to Chris Waiting formally offering him the role of an expert advisor. The Board agreed the role would be paid at the rate of £430 a day, rising to £442 from 1 April 2025. The Board **agreed** a time commitment of a maximum of 10 days. The role and time commitment will be reviewed again in 12 months' time.

12. **Annex A** includes examples of remuneration paid to Chairs and Board members of various bodies. There is no direct comparator with the PRP in terms of size and complexity.

Audit and Risk Committee Remuneration

13. The Board is asked to consider whether the remuneration paid to the Chair of the ARC remains comparable with market rates, see Annex A.

    At its meeting of 2 September 2025, the Board invited Harry Rich to further extend his appointment as Independent Chair of ARC from 30 September 2025 to 30 September 2026. Harry agreed to continue in his role and continued to be paid £442 per day for a notional eleven days per year.

14. Board members Mark Williams and Annie Mullins, as members of the ARC respectively, have additional duties in relation to the quarterly ARC meetings and preparation of the Annual Report and Financial Statements (ARA) and are not remunerated for this role.

Nominations Committee remuneration

15. The daily remuneration rate for the Independent member of the Nominations Committee is £442, and the rate remains comparable in view of the requirements of the role.

16. The PRP Chair also Chairs the Nominations Committee, with Board member Suzanne Rab (from 11 September 2023) serving as a committee member, and no additional remuneration is paid for this commitment.

17. Board member Suzanne Rab chaired the Nominations Committee in respect of the Chair's recruitment in 2023 and as above, no additional remuneration was paid for this commitment.

***Senior Independent Board Member* remuneration**

18. The purpose of the Senior Independent Board Member is to act as a sounding board for the Chair; serve as an intermediary for other Board members, formally manage the appraisal of the Chair's performance annually.

19. It was agreed by the Board at its meeting on the 11 September 2023 that Zahera Harb would assume the position as Senior Independent Board Member from 11 September 2023 to **30 September 2025**. No additional remuneration is paid for this commitment.

20. The Board is **invited** to consider extending the appointment term of Zahera Harb as Senior Independent Board Member:

- from 30 September 2025 to 01 September 2027, aligning with the end of Zahera’s first 5-year term as Board member, or
- to 31st December 2026, allowing for an 8-month grace period for the Board to appoint and handover to a new Senior Independent Board Member, should Zahera not continue in the role.

Board Member with specific responsibility for financial matters

21. It is estimated that the additional duties undertaken by the Board member with financial responsibilities, as required by the Charter, are circa 3 days annually, in addition to general Board member commitments. In December 2024, Mark Williams estimated in that the additional duties continue to take circa 3 days annually. At its meeting on 10 December 2024, the Board discussed and agreed that the time commitment currently set for members and the Chair was reasonable and no changes were required. The Board is **asked** to confirm that this remains appropriate.

Independent Member on Industry Matters

22. At its meeting on the 11 September 2023, the Board agreed that recruitment of someone with industry expertise would be helpful to strengthen the PRP and agreed to recruit someone specifically with broad knowledge and background in media.

23. The Board unanimously agreed at its meeting on 9 December 2024, that the Chief Executive should write to Chris Waiting formally offering him the role of an expert advisor with effect from 7 January 2025 for an initial term of 12 months, ending on 7 January 2026.

24. The Board agreed the role would be paid at the rate of £430 a day, rising to £442 from 1 April 2025. The Board agreed a time commitment of a maximum of 10 days. The role and time commitment would be reviewed again in 12 months’ time.

25. The Board is **asked** to decide:

    1. whether it wishes to extend Chris Waiting’s term, and if so by how long, and
    2. **confirm** if the remuneration terms remain appropriate.

Time commitment 2026

26. Six bi-monthly Board meetings are presently scheduled to take place in 2026, with monthly CEO and finance reports provided by the Executive in addition. The Board continue to receive daily press monitoring updates relevant to the PRP’s environment and are expected to read and digest these and stay abreast of all pertinent matters. The Chair and Board members are remunerated on the basis of a time commitment of a minimum of 50 days per

annum for the Chair and a minimum of 15 days per annum for members respectively.

27. It would be timely for the Board to review the planned work for 2026 in order to assess the future time commitment and to determine whether the current minimum time commitment remains reasonable. Pending any agreed changes to future work the Board should assume the work should be carried out within the current time commitment.

28. The Board will continue to fulfil its annual reporting requirements under the Charter concerning submission of the Annual Report and Financial Statements (ARA) and the State of Recognition Report (SORR).

29. As part of the Emergency and Disaster Recovery Plan, as recommended by the ARC and approved by the Board, the interim succession arrangements for the CEO would require the Chair (supported by the current Board members and supplies/contractors) to undertake the CEO's role should the CEO be unable to fulfil this role in an emergency.

Executive cost of living review

2025 Cost of living update

30. John Speed of JS2 has been asked to look into this matter. He has reported that in the year to September 2025, the CPI rate was 3.8%. CPI is the index used to calculate the indexation on the fee due from Impress in November 2025. The CPIH rate over the same period (which includes housing costs) was 4.1%. JS2 has relayed that within the other organisations they work with (all in the 'not-for-profit' sector), staff recruitment and retention have continued to improve and that with the economic uncertainty the job market is considerably slower than the previous year. Salary increases they have seen in the sector have generally been in the 3.0-4.0% range, unless specific other financial or operational pressures indicate a change outside of this range.

31. At its meeting on 10 December 2024, the Board discussed the Executive salaried staff's remuneration and agreed an inflationary increase of 2.79% from the 1 April 2025.

32. The Board is asked to **note** that the Executive Administration Manager was appointed on 11 August 2025 and is currently in a 6-month probation period. On successful completion, her remuneration is due to increase by 5% per annum.

33. The Board are **asked** to discuss and decide the rate which, if any, should be applied to Executive salaries.

Implications

34. The implications of decisions taken by the Board as set out in this paper are as follows:

- Budget – there is sufficient budget available to pay the range of rates set out in this paper.
- Legislation – the Charter gives the Board the power to set its own remuneration.
- Resources – no specific issues arise.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – no specific issues arise.

Devolved Nations

35. There are no identifiable implications/differences in relation to this area of activity and the devolved nations.

Communications

36. The Minutes of the open session will record the Board's decision on remuneration and will be published on the PRP's website. The Board's policy on remuneration will be updated as necessary following the Board's decision and brought to the Board for ratification as part of the annual policies and procedures review in Spring 2026.

Risks

28. There is a possible reputational risk of challenge with the Board setting its own remuneration; however, the Charter specifically makes this compulsory. The PRP operates in an open and transparent manner, continuing to proactively review costs and ensure compliance with good practice and HM Treasury's guidance *Managing Public Money*. The remuneration review is conducted during the open session of the Board meetings with papers considered in the open session published five days before the meeting.

Recommendations

29. The Board is invited to:

- **Review** the remuneration presently paid to the Chair, Board, Independent members (NOMCO, ARC and Industry Matters), Board member with financial responsibilities, Senior Independent Board Member and the Executive, and decide if any changes should be implemented.

- **Discuss** the anticipated work for 2026 and **confirm** whether the current minimum time commitment for the Chair and Board members remains reasonable.

- **Discuss** and decide the rate, if any, which should be applied to Executive staff cost of living rises.

- **Discuss** the renewal of the Senior Independent Board member's appointment term and **confirm** its renewal period.

- **Discuss** the value and remuneration terms of the Independent Member on Industry Matters role and **confirm** if any changes should be implemented.

Attachments

Annex A: Summary of PRP remuneration rates as of 1 April 2025 and examples of remuneration paid to Chairs and members of public bodies/authorities 2024/25 (reviewed and updated November 2025).

Annex A to PRP42(25)

PRP Board and Independent remuneration as of 1st April 2025

Role	Remuneration per annum (day rate)	Time Commitment per annum
Chair	£33,150 (£663)	Minimum of 50 days
Board Member	£6,630 (£442)	15 days
Senior Independent Board Member	N/a	
Board Member with specific responsibility for financial matters	N/a	
ARC member (Board)	N/a	
Independent – Chair of ARC	£4,862 (£442)	11 days
Independent – NOMCO	£442 day rate	5-7 days
Independent – Industry Matters	£442 day rate	Up to 10 days

Comparison examples - 2024/25

Examples of remuneration paid to Chairs and Members of public bodies/authorities 2024/25 (reviewed and updated November 2025).

Chair

2024/25	**Remuneration per annum (day rate)**	**Time Commitment per annum**	**Source**
Chair, Committee on Standards in Public Life	£36,000 (£600)	Up to 60 days	CSPL Annual Report 2024/25
2024/25	**Remuneration per annum (day rate)**	**Time Commitment per annum**	**Source**
Chair, Central Arbitration Committee	£25,357 (£423)	Up to 60 days	ACAS and Central Arbitration Committee Appointments
Chair, Social Security Advisory Committee	£35,200 (£366)	96 days (minimum 8 days per month)	Dr Stephen Brian reappointed Chair of Social Security Advisory Committee (15 Sept 2025)
Chair, Independent Reconfiguration Panel	£36,780 (£383)	96 days (minimum 8 days per month)	IRP Annual Business Review 2025/25
Chair, Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care	£37,719 (£	96 days (minimum 8 days per month)	PSA Annual Report 2024/25
Chair, RPA Management Board	£500 per day	Up to 18 days	Appointment of Non-Executive Chair of Rural Payments Agency (RPA) Management Board (16 Dec 2024)
Chair of the Parole Board	£500 per day	96 days	Chair of the Parole Board (28 October 2025

Board Members

2024/25	Remuneration per annum (day rate)	Time Commitment per annum	Source
Professional Standards Authority, Associate Member of the Board	£8,825 (£735)	Minimum of 12 days	Associate Board Member, Professional Standards Authority (March 2024)
Board Member, Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority	£550 per day	24-36 days	IPSA Operational Costs (April 2025)
Board Member, Charity Commission for England and Wales	£350 per day	24 days	Two Board Members appointed to the Charity Commission for England and Wales
Editorial Board Member, IPSO	£400 per day	For standards investigations	Editorial Panellists, IPSO (May 2025)
Complaints Committee Member, IPSO	£1,125 per month (retainer)	Attend 8-10 formal meetings plus weekly papers to review	Complaints Committee Member – Role Description
Board Member, IMPRESS	£4,495 (£187)	2 days per month	Information Pack for Candidates for the Board of IMPRESS

ARC Chair

2024/25	Remuneration per annum (day rate)	Time Commitment per annum	Source
Chair of the ARC, Institute of Regulation	£14,144 per annum, (£294)	Up to 48 days	Chair of the ARC, Institute of Regulation – job description (January 2024)
Chair of the ARC & Non-Executive Board member, Care Quality Commission	£62,400 per annum (£434)	Up to 144 days	Annual report and accounts 2023/2024
Audit and Risk Assurance Chair (ARAC) and Non-Executive Director, MoJ Departmental Board	£20,000 (£667)	30 days	Appointment details – Audit and Risk Assurance Chair (ARAC) and Non-Executive Director – Apply for a public appointment – GOV.UK

Independent Members

Role	2024/25 Remuneration per annum (day rate)	2024/25 Time Commitment per annum	Source
Information Commission Non-Executive Member, Information Commissioner's Office	£25,000 (£833)	30 days	Appointment details – Information Commission Non-Executive Members (7 roles) – Apply for a public appointment – GOV.UK
Independent Member, Parole Board	£320 - £365 per day	Minimum of 184 days	Parole Board Independent Members - Candidate Pack FINAL