

IPSA Implementation Programme

Third meeting of the IPSA Implementation Programme Board – Minutes

09:00-11:00, Tuesday 27 October 2009

LG Room 3, 102 Petty France, London

Present

Andrew McDonald (IPSA interim Chief Executive)
Vijay Rangarajan (Constitution Director, MoJ)
Marco Pierleoni (DG Finance and Commercial, MoJ)
Geraldine Terry (NED)
Keith Coleman (NED)
Pam Bland (MoJ Communications Directorate)
Duncan Campbell (HR adviser)
Matthew Hamlyn (HoC IPSA Team)
Paul Kett (Programme Director)
Simon James (Programme Team)

James Gerrard (Programme Team)
Simon Edwards (Programme Team)

Charlotte Baker (Programme Team and Minutes)

The Programme Board meeting was chaired by Andrew McDonald, Programme SRO.

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 As membership of the Programme Board has been revised, the Board was welcomed and full introductions were made.

2. Previous Minutes and Actions

2.1 The Minutes from PB02 were approved.

2.2 The Terms of Reference proposed for the Board were accepted.

2.3 The Proposal on the Publication of Board Documentation was discussed further and it was noted that the overall approach of embedding a culture supporting transparency was key. The Board agreed that it was preferable to publish documents after decisions had been made so as not to constrain discussion and that there should be a presumption of disclosure at an appropriate time. Where possible a plan for publication should accompany documents as generated. The related issue of FOI requests was raised and it was suggested that early publication of documents might reduce the amount of later FOI requests.

Action: Agreed that the proposals for publication of Programme Board documentation should be implemented.

3. Design Parameters for business process design

3.1 The Board discussed and advised on a number of design parameters to support the development of IPSA. It was recognised this discussion was a preliminary one which might well be informed by the CSPL report which was imminent, and further work on business processes. The result of this discussion is detailed below:

1 - IPSA will operate the payroll for MPs and their staff

Agreed. The Board raised some presentational issues and highlighted the importance of ensuring that the employer onus remains with the MP.

2. IPSA processes will not take existing OD processes as a point of departure.

Agreed.

3. (a) Reimbursement will be the primary delivery channel (with direct payment of supplier for defined expenses.);

Recommendation agreed subject to clarification that only 'limited' suppliers would be paid directly.

3. (b) IPSA may offer Members the use of a procurement-type card.

Agreed the option should be retained.

4. Claims will be submitted electronically via a portal

Recommendation agreed but some concerns expressed that a paper-based contingency process might be disproportionately expensive.

5. Claims will be supported by original documents

Agreed.

6. Supporting documents will be scanned/redacted by IPSA

Agreed.

7. IPSA will carry out review of decisions taken at the request of MP.

Agreed - consistent with the legal requirements on IPSA to review claims. Further work was needed on the detail of the process and criteria for such reviews.

8. IPSA will ensure that expenditure is within limits through maintaining a budget line for each MP.

Agreed.

9. Claims will be subject to a combination of mandatory, risk-based and random checks.

Agreed.

10. IPSA will conduct audits of processed claims.

Agreed. It was noted work was needed on the relationship between audits by IPSA and investigations by the Commissioner.

11. MPs will directly input details of their financial interests via a portal.

Agreed.

12. The register will be made available via the IPSA website

Agreed.

13. IPSA will publish details of claims at a specified point in the claim submission process.

Agreed.

14. IPSA will support CPI investigations through providing access to necessary information and administrative support.

No concerns were raised.

15. IPSA should be clear about what advice and assistance (Both in relation to allowances and registration of interests) should be provided to Members.

Agreed. The Board suggested that the subject of advice needed to be explored thoroughly.

- 3.2 Comments made more generally by the Programme Board related to costing of the processes and that more work needs to be done to reflect cost when making assessments of different options.
- 3.3 It was also proposed by the Programme Board that the team try to draw out the culture change IPSA will implement through the business processes. This would include both processes which were straightforward and transparent, and which required responsibility for each claim submitted to be approved by an MP, even where the claim is prepared by a member of their staff.
- 3.4 In closing the discussion the Programme Board highlighted that none of the business processes could be certain until the recommendations from the CSPL were known.

4. Post OGC Gateway 0 review

- 4.1 The Board was invited to discuss the OGC Report response paper. Three areas, highlighted in Andrew McDonald's cover letter, were summarised to the Board who were then invited to comment.

- 4.2 The Board welcomed the review and noted the early actions arising from it.
- 4.3 Some questions arose around the scope of the transition project and whether it added an extra layer to the other team projects. It was agreed that more work needed to be done to clarify cut-off points between the IPSA team to the IPSA.

5. Engagement: approach to MPs

- 5.1 The Board was invited to discuss the plans for engagement with MPs and highlight any issues arising.
- 5.2 A distinction was drawn between the consultations the IPSA is legally obliged to undertake with MPs and engagement of MPs more generally. Three actions for the IPSA team arose from discussions;

Action: the consultation should be built into the wider communication and engagement plans.

Action: the focus of engagement should be on what MPs currently do and need, not on the system of allowances.

Action: more work was needed on who the service users of IPSA are (e.g. MPs staff) and how they can be reached.

6. Highlight report

- 6.1 The Programme Director updated the Board on the appointments process and highlighted the risks associated with the proposed timing of the announcement of a chair.
- 6.2 The Board was updated on funding arrangements for IPSA. The Programme Team would report to future Programme Board meetings how much has been spent on the implementation work to date.

7. Forward look

- 7.1 The Board agreed that an additional 'light touch' Programme Board meeting was needed in mid-November, after the appointment of the Chair and the publication of the CSPL Report. This meeting would include a discussion on the implications of the CSPL Report, and update on the Organisational Design work which was moving quickly.