

Editors' Code of Practice Committee

Minutes of the Editors' Code of Practice Committee meeting held at the offices of the Newspaper Society/NPA, 18-20 St Andrew Street, London, on 29 November 2011.

Present:

Chairman: Paul Dacre (NPA)

Geordie Greig	(NPA)	Colin Grant	(NS)	Lisa Burrow	(PPA)
Jonathan Grun	(NPA)	Ian Murray	(NS)	Harriet Wilson	(PPA)
Richard Wallace	(NPA)	Mike Sassi	(NS)	Damian Bates	(SNS)
John Witherow	(NPA)	Hannah Walker	(NS)		

Attending: Lord Hunt (Chairman, PCC); Stephen Abell (Director, PCC); Ian Beales (*Secretary*).

Apologies were received from Neil Benson.

Membership: The Chairman welcomed Lord Hunt, newly-appointed Chairman of the PCC.

Minutes of the meeting on 24 March 2011 were approved and signed.

Matters arising:

- The secretary reported on his meeting with representatives of Engage.
- It was agreed that the new rule on positioning of adverse adjudications should take effect from 1 January 2012.
- The secretary said the Scottish Government's defamation of the dead inquiry's decision had been deferred pending the outcome of the Leveson and other regulatory inquiries. It was agreed the current Code remedy should be stressed in the next *Editors' Codebook*.

Leveson Inquiry: The Chairman and Lord Hunt outlined current proposals being considered to strengthen self-regulation: by reinforcing compliance, including the introduction of a Standards Body, an Ombudsman, an investigatory panel to inquire into systemic and serious abuse, and possible financial sanctions. Measures to promote compliance were discussed. It was agreed:

- The secretary should prepare a paper setting out the options for change by the Code Committee, including admitting lay members and an independent code review.
- The public interest panel of the Code should be amended to help promote compliance, to take effect from 1 January 2012.
- Issues of contempt and payments to police should be deferred pending the formation of a new standards body.
- Further measures to encourage compliance via the Codebook and online should be explored.
- A submission would be submitted in response to the Leveson's Key Questions survey.

Prior notification: The committee noted the European Court of Human Rights' ruling rejecting Max Mosley's case for a law on prior notification.

The Editors' Codebook: The secretary said the Codebook would be updated on key cases and changes. Other methods of giving online guidance were also being developed.

Code suggestions: A number of suggestions for Code changes were considered. Decisions will be incorporated into the Annual Code Review.

Annual Code Review: It was agreed the review would be announced on December 5.