

# 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 21 October 2010.*

## **Present:**

*Chairman:* Paul Dacre (NPA)

Geordie Greig	(NPA)	Neil Benson	(NS)	June Smith-Sheppard	(PPA)
Jonathan Grun	(NPA)	Ian Murray	(NS)	Harriet Wilson	(PPA)
Richard Wallace	(NPA)	Mike Sassi	(NS)	Damian Bates	(SNS)
		Hannah Walker	(NS)		

## **Attending:**

Baroness Buscombe (Chairman, PCC); Stephen Abell (Director, PCC); Ian Beales (*Secretary*).

**Apologies** were received from Colin Grant and John Witherow.

**Membership:** The Chairman welcomed Geordie Greig, Editor of the *Evening Standard* (NPA).

**Minutes** of the meeting on 10 April 2010 were approved and signed.

## **Matters arising:**

- It was agreed not to proceed with a report on moderating websites.
- It was agreed the Clause 1ii amendment should take effect from 1 January 2011.
- The secretary reported on PCC/Code Committee liaison since the Governance review and on the committee's formal response to the Select Committee.

**Code Committee website:** The secretary said the Chairman's Report attracted record hits.

**Bribery Act:** It was agreed that, while it was right that the industry and individual member organisations should make recommendations to the Government's consultation on the new Act, it was not appropriate for the Code Committee to do so at the present time.

**Witness payments:** It was agreed, at Lady Buscombe's request, that the secretary should communicate to the PCC the committee's view on payments to defendants, where proceedings were active.

**Adverse adjudications:** It was agreed that a proposed amendment to the Code preamble rules on publishing adverse adjudications should go out for industry and PCC consultation.

**Phone hacking:** The committee reviewed the Code's rules on phone hacking. It was agreed that the restrictions introduced in August 2007 were explicit and comprehensive. In view of the current police investigation, no further change was recommended, but developments should continue to be very closely monitored.

**Transparency:** It was agreed the committee's Agenda and Minutes should in future be published online.

**Online Codebook:** The secretary reported on a major revision of *The Editors' Codebook online*, which would be posted on the committee website, incorporating *inter alia* new guidance on prior notification, social networking sites, headlines, and photography.

**Suggestions from the public:** Four suggestions were considered. Decisions will be incorporated into the annual Code Review.