Editors' Code of Practice Committee

EDITORS' CODE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION

EXPLANATORY

1. The Code of Practice (The 'Code') resulted originally from the Government's acceptance of the report of the Committee on Privacy and Related Matters (June 1990) wherein it was recommended that the Press Complaints Commission "should publish, monitor and implement a comprehensive code of practice for the guidance of both the press and the public." In his Report into the Culture, Practices and Ethics of the Press (November 2012), Lord Justice Leveson acknowledged the central position of the Code in press regulation: 'The new regulatory regime must have a standards code. The current Editors' Code has been widely praised by those in the industry. It has been developed by the industry over the last two decades and has adapted to take account of new concerns and issues that have arisen… I recommend that the standards code must ultimately be the responsibility of, and adopted by, the Board advised by a Code Committee which may comprise both independent members of the Board and serving editors.'

2. The Code belongs to and is the responsibility of the newspaper and magazine publishing industry. The Independent Press Standards Organisation ('IPSO') is charged with administering the self-regulatory system according to the Code. IPSO's Articles of Association refer to the Code as 'the Editors' Code of Practice adopted by [IPSO] on the date of adoption of these Articles and any amended version or replacement of that code that is written by the Editors' Code of Practice Committee, approved in accordance with the articles of association of the Regulatory Funding Company and adopted by [IPSO's] Board.'

3. The Regulatory Funding Company ('RFC') acts on behalf of the industry in matters relating to self-regulation. Its members are the Regulated Entities which have 2 entered into the Scheme Membership Agreement with IPSO either directly or as a member of a group.

4. The RFC has the responsibility of convening a committee of editors and independent members (the 'Committee') for the task of reviewing and maintaining the Code. The RFC

does this by approving this Constitution and providing the required funding, allowing the Committee to act independently but under the auspices of the RFC.

5.
(a) When the Code has been agreed by the Committee and approved by RFC following consultation with Regulated Entities, it shall be submitted to the Board of IPSO for adoption.
(b) Copies of the Code shall carry the words – 'Adopted by the Independent Press Standards Organisation on [date]' or equivalent wording.

6. The Code is reproduced by IPSO on its website and is thus available to the public.

7. Copies of the Code, as revised from time to time, are distributed by the RFC to its members.

REMIT

8. The Committee shall review and, where appropriate, revise the Code and submit any revisions to the RFC for approval. This will normally be done on an annual basis.

9. The Committee shall take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the Code continues to set appropriate and relevant standards of editorial practice, protecting both the rights of individuals and the public's right to know.

10. The Committee shall hold a public consultation on a triennial basis and give due consideration to representations received by it, in particular ensuring it receives the 3 views of IPSO. Submissions received during a consultation will normally be published after they have been considered by the committee, unless those making submissions have asked that they be treated in confidence.

11. The Committee may at the request of IPSO fulfil any other functions that are ancillary to the above functions.

MEMBERSHIP

12. The Committee shall comprise 15 members of whom:

(a) 10 shall be senior editorial figures from printed newspapers, magazines and publications available on electronic services published by Regulated Entities which are bound by Scheme Membership Agreements with IPSO (the "Industry Members") of whom:

i. 4 shall be editors of national newspapers;

ii. 4 shall be editors of regional newspapers;

iii. 1 shall be an editor of a Scottish newspaper; and

iv. 1 shall be an editor of a magazine.

(b) The Industry Members shall be elected by the members of the RFC in accordance with Articles 36-39 of the Articles of Association of the RFC.

(c) 5 members shall be people who are independent of the press (the "Independent Members") of whom:

i. 1 shall be the Chair of IPSO;

ii. 1 shall be the chief executive officer of IPSO; and

iii. 3 independent members of the public shall be chosen by the Appointment Panel established under Article 26 of Articles of Association of IPSO in accordance with the Appointment Principles, as defined in the Articles of Association of IPSO. They shall not be persons connected with IPSO, unless they were appointed before this amendment was agreed.

TERMS OF OFFICE

13. Each of the members, other than the Chair and chief executive officer of IPSO (who serve ex officio) shall be elected or appointed for a five year term, renewable by vote of the Committee for a maximum of another three years. The starting date for the operation of this clause shall be the date of the first meeting of the committee after it was reconstituted to include independent members.

14. An Industry Member elected under paragraph 12(a) shall cease to be a member of the committee when they cease to hold a qualifying position in accordance with that paragraph,

save where that industry member is the Committee Chair. In these circumstances the member may remain the Chair with the agreement of the Committee and relevant RFC members for a maximum period of three years, although in exceptional circumstances the committee may request an extended term.

An editor already serving on the committee who is elected to the position of chair will begin a new five-year term, renewable for a further three years. If circumstances require it the committee may request that the term of an independent lay member be extended for a maximum of one year.

CHAIR

15. The Industry Members of the Committee shall elect one of their number to be Chair. If the Chair cannot for any reason chair a meeting, a majority of the Industry Members may elect another Industry Member to (a) chair that meeting and (b) deal with any necessary matters relating to the business to be conducted at that meeting which the Chair would ordinarily deal with.

SECRETARY

16. The Committee shall appoint a secretary. The appointment must be approved by the Board of the RFC before taking effect.

BUDGET

17. The Secretary shall prepare an annual budget which he or she shall submit to the Committee and the Board of the RFC for approval. If it is approved, the necessary funds shall be provided by the RFC.

18. Expenditure may be approved in accordance with the budget by the Secretary and the Chair of the Committee. No expenditure beyond the approved budget shall be authorised without the approval of the Board of the RFC.

MEETINGS

19. Meetings shall be called by the Secretary annually or

(a) as decided by the Committee, or
(b) on the instructions of the Chair, or
(c) at the request of the Board of the RFC.

20. Six members of the Committee, of whom at least 4 shall be Industry Members, shall constitute a quorum.

21. The Chair shall have the power to invite one or more senior industry experts to attend and participate in meetings of the Committee as co-opted members. Any person so invited shall not have any voting rights and shall not count in the quorum.

22. Minutes of Committee meetings shall be provided to the RFC and IPSO in addition to members of the Committee.

VOTING

23. The Code is a voluntary code accepted by the industry and matters relating to its content should be resolved by consensus.

REPORTING

24. The Committee shall maintain a website on which it shall make public any amendments to the Code, together with summaries of the reasons for any such amendments being made.

ALTERATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION

25. Any alterations the Committee may wish to make to this constitution must be approved by the Board of the RFC in accordance with the RFC Articles of Association.