

Minutes of Internet Watch Foundation Board Meeting

Tuesday, 27th January 2004 at 10 a.m.

New Cavendish Club, 44 Great Cumberland Place, London W1H 8PS

- Present:** Roger Darlington (Chair), Christine Atkinson, Michele Elliott, Mark Gracey, Howard Lamb, Sonia Livingstone, Tink Palmer, Jim Reynolds, Nick Truman, Ian Walden
- IWF Staff:** Peter Robbins (Chief Executive), Tony Fagelman, Fay MacDonald, Brian Wegg
- Apologies:** None

Item 1- Apologies and introduction

Chair welcomed the new Board members, Christine Atkinson, Michele Elliott, Tink Palmer and Ian Walden to their first meeting and introduced Tony Fagelman, new General Manager, and Fay MacDonald, Communications Co-ordinator. There were no apologies.

Item 2 – Minutes of last Meeting

Board approved the minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 14th October 2003.

Item 3 - Matters Arising

Responses to the identified “ACTIONS” from the last minutes were summarised:

- Item 3 – matters arising – Appointment vetting would be covered in more detail under item 9 on the agenda. The meeting noted that Board appointments were subject to police checks and the form required was for a Data Protection NIC check which could be obtained from a local police station. Cambridgeshire forms were available to Board members as examples but the form number appeared to be different in each constabulary.
- Item 3 – matters arising – Draft policy on the vetting of appointments presented under item 9 on the agenda.
- Item 5 – CEO’s report – Offer by an IWF sponsor to commission some research on behalf of the IWF. Chief Executive outlined the background to the offer and it was noted that the companies involved in carrying out the research normally complete secondary research by analysing existing data.

ACTION 1: Relevant URLs to be forwarded to all Board members; Board to receive an update at the next meeting

- Item 6 – Hotline feedback to reporters – Draft reply being produced by Hotline staff. Chief Executive described the background to the item and the increased proportion of reporters who expected to receive feedback from their report. He described the progress on drafting a standard reply and outlined some of the issues that had arisen.

ACTION 2: Industry representatives to forward examples of their standard responses to the reports they receive on abuse, security issues and unacceptable use.

ACTION 3: Executive to produce standard Hotline replies and forward a draft to all Board members.

There were no other matters arising.

Item 4 – Election of Vice-chairs

Sonia Livingstone was proposed as Non-industry Vice-chair and Mark Gracey proposed as Industry Vice-chair. There were no other nominations and both were duly appointed.

Item 5 – Chair’s report – see attached

Chair introduced his report, highlighted some events and invited questions. Chair announced that he was delighted to have been appointed to the Consumer Panel for the new regulator Ofcom which covers broadcasting and telecommunications in the UK.

5 i) - An Ambassadorial role on behalf of the IWF

Following a discussion the meeting concluded that a person or a pool of appropriate people carrying out such a role could be of great value in helping to raise the profile of IWF. The

role needed clarification and definition and the meeting reached a consensus that consultation should take place with other stakeholders on this matter.

**ACTION 4: a) Industry representatives to consult via Funding Council;
b) Next Board to discuss further as a matter arising.**

(Fay MacDonald will produce a briefing paper as a basis for consultation)

Item 6 – Chief Executive’s report – see attached

Chief Executive introduced his report and highlighted particular issues.

Board noted the encouraging progress with the bid for EU funding but the uncertainty on whether the bid would be met in full or when IWF would receive instalments under the contract.

Chief Executive described the IWF event at the House of Lords which was designed to bring together directors and senior staff from search engine companies in order to discuss ways of making searching the internet safer. The event was attended by a range of interested groups. Chief Executive outlined some of the work IWF was carrying out in partnership with some search engine companies.

Board considered the wide range of benefits available to companies through IWF membership and discussed IWF assets and expertise. It was concluded that these matters should be considered in more detail at a future Board meeting.

6 i) Subscriber Spreadsheet

The number of subscribing members was currently 38 companies with discussions underway with a further 12 companies.

6 ii) Briefing Note on Sex Offences Act 2003

Attention was drawn to the briefing note showing extracts from the Sex Offences Act 2003. In answer to questions, Chief Executive explained that although some assessments of content could be more straight forward as a result of the increase in the age of a child from 16 to 18 years in section 45, it was difficult to quantify the impact of the change.

Although grooming as defined under section 15 of the Act is outside IWF remit, Board noted the issues with regard to achieving a prosecution.

6 iii) MoU on role of IWF within S46 of the Act

Chief Executive outlined the purpose of section 46 which provides a statutory defence for IWF work. The draft Memorandum of Understanding between the CPS and ACPO concerning section 46 sets out the role of IWF and is supported by the government. The document is currently out to consultation. Chief Executive described the relationship and contact between IWF and the police, including reference to the POLIT which had been set up recently.

ACTION 5: CEO to invite Assistant Chief Constable Stuart Hyde, the senior police officer responsible for formulating police policy in respect of online child protection matters, to the next Board

6 iv) Annual Report for 2003

Communications Co-ordinator presented a draft layout for the 2003 Annual Report and asked Board members to feedback any comments on the layout and design as soon as possible.

ACTION 6: Board to feedback on Annual Report design and layout.

6 v) Significant trends in reports to IWF 2003

Board considered the trends in reports which had emerged in 2003. Chief Executive praised the work and co-operation of the UK internet industry in achieving a reduction in the UK hosted potentially illegal content from 18% in 1997 to 1% in 2003. The meeting expressed concern about the proportion of child abuse content being traced to the USA. Chief Executive explained that he had initiated discussions with US officials and this had helped to identify a weakness in the current procedures with regard to US hosted content. US based ISPs are expected to register with the Cybertipline but a very high proportion had not registered and an instruction to take content down cannot be issued by the Cybertipline to those ISPs that are not registered. The Home Office were supportive on pursuing the issue

and were considering G8 as a possible route. Board members were asked to take any opportunities of raising the concerns about the level of US hosted child abuse content.

6 vi) Safer Internet Plus – consultation feedback

Board noted the report.

Item 7 – Draft IWF Budget 2004/5 – see attached

Board noted the three budget levels and the trigger between each level. Board were assured that the draft “buoyant” budget was sustainable over a three-year period.

Following further discussions the meeting agreed the proposed budget

ACTION 7: a) **Adopt the three proposed budget levels as the IWF 2004/5 budget;**
b) **make no inflation increase to base level membership subscriptions in 2004/5;**
c) **investigate Charitable status in view of the developing situation and the potential tax position.**

Item 8 – IWF Code of Practice – see attached

The background to the Code and its production were outlined. Board had approved the Code at a previous meeting subject to the drafting of an annex which dealt with failure to comply and a review of the Code and annex by our Standing Counsel. Counsel had made some recommendations on terminology which did not change either the principles or procedures in the Code. The recommended changes had been made and all IWF funding members had been consulted on the amendments.

Following a further discussion Board approved the Code subject to the following amendment:

In the Compliance annex, “Compliance with the Code of Practice”, bullet point 6 and “Serious breach of the Code of Practice”, bullet point 2, the following is added to both paragraphs:

“Such judgement will be fully recorded and auditable.”

ACTION 8: The approved Code to be circulated to all members and interested parties.

Chair asked that his appreciation of the work of all Funding Council members in drafting and finalising the Code be recorded.

Item 9 – Vetting Policy for staff and Board appointments – see attached

The policy was approved.

Item 10 – Funding Council Constitution – update

Industry Board members outlined progress and explained that the proposed changes were now out to formal consultation as required under the present constitution. Elections to Board would take place following the adoption of the revised constitution and new Board members should be in place before the next Board meeting. Chair expressed his appreciation to Mark Gracey for his work in leading the review.

Item 11 – AOB

Chair asked the meeting to note the helpful briefing note on the INHOPE conference which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Item 12 - Dates of Board meetings for 2004 :-

Tuesday 27th April (location to be confirmed)

Tuesday 20th July

Tuesday 12th October

In order to facilitate team building and a more far reaching discussion on strategic issues, Board agreed that 20th July would be an all day meeting followed by dinner.

ACTION 9: Executive to confirm the arrangements with all Board members.

Meeting closed at 1-10 p.m.