

*Minutes of the Editors' Code of Practice Committee meeting at the offices of the News Media Association, 292 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, on June 20, 2018.*

**Present:**

Chair: Neil Benson

Christine Elliott, independent lay member; Chris Evans, Daily Telegraph; Martin Ivens, Sunday Times; David Jessel, independent lay member; Donald Martin, Newsquest Scotland; Sir Alan Moses, Chairman, IPSO; Mike Sassi, Nottingham Post; Gary Shipton, Johnston Press; Kate Stone, independent lay member; Matt Tee, CEO, IPSO; Harriet Wilson, Condé Nast Publications; Ted Young, Metro.

Attending: Jonathan Grun, Secretary

**Apologies:** Apologies were received from Ian Carter, The KM Group

**Chair's opening remarks**

Neil Benson thanked the committee for their help in amending the constitution to enable him to remain in post following his retirement from Reach. On behalf of the committee he also expressed thanks to Hugh Whittow for his service to the Code Committee before his retirement from the Daily Express.

He said the committee had a number of important issues to consider, including starting a review of Clause 12 (Discrimination).

**Minutes** of the meeting on September 20, 2017 were noted, having been approved earlier by email.

**Matters arising:** There were no matters arising.

**Secretary's Report**

The secretary reported that meetings had been held with the Muslim Council of Britain, Samaritans and Public Health England and further meetings would be held to improve mutual understanding of key issues.

Neil Benson commented that the meetings had been very positive and he recommended the training that Samaritans offer newsrooms.

**Possible revision of Clause 11**

The secretary reported that IPSO had commented in a recent adjudication that the scope of Clause 11 (Victims of sexual assault) appeared to be ambiguous (*Warwickshire Police v Daily Mail* <https://www.ipso.co.uk/rulings-and-resolution-statements/ruling/?id=16830-17>). IPSO questioned whether the clause applied to the process of newsgathering as well as publication. The committee agreed that it would review the clause and consider whether it should be amended.

**Kerslake Report**

The Kerslake report on the Manchester Arena bomb contained allegations of bad behaviour by unidentified sections of the media. The secretary commented that sadly the lack of detail in the report made it impossible for IPSO to investigate the allegations.

The committee noted IPSO's detailed plan of action in response to the Kerslake Report and agreed to support initiatives, including a Society of Editors cross media roundtable and the production of guidelines on reporting major incidents for editors and the public based on the current Editors' Code. The committee noted that the Code has robust clauses covering privacy, harassment, intrusion into grief or shock and hospitals.

**Discrimination – review of Clause 12**

The chair told the committee that he had undertaken to review Clause 12 (Discrimination) when he gave evidence to the Home Affairs Committee investigation on hate crime. He had stressed the difficulty in extending the Code to cover groups and the need to protect freedom of expression.

The committee agreed to consider the review when it was completed and also to further consider its response to the Home Affairs Committee's investigation when it was published.