



Steering Board Meeting Note

Date: Wednesday 19 January 2022

Time: 10.00 – 15.00

Location: Remote

Chair: Harry Rich

Attendees Steering Board Members: Laurie Benson, David Holdsworth, Harriet Kelsall, Andrew Lawrence, Tim Moss, Shahid Omer (BEIS Sponsor), Kevin Orford & Lopa Patel.

Attendees Non-Board members: Paula Brooks, Maria Ciavatta (CEO Office), Neil Hartley, Karen Powell, Amy Morse, Sophie Reynolds & Lisa Robinson (Secretariat)

Additional attendees for Strategy Refresh Workshop: Sian-Nia Davies, Pippa Hall, Chris Mills, Adam Williams

Shadows/Observers: Edward Rose, Joanne Palmer, Zoe Little

Apologies: Hilary Newiss, Ada Jabaru (apprentice)

Presenters: Andy Bartlett, Paula Brooks, Marcus Evans, Beth Kenure, Craig Seer, Nicola Tappern

Chair's introduction

1. Harry Rich welcomed everyone to the meeting including the three observers Edward, Joanne, and Zoe.

Apologies

2. Apologies were received from Hilary Newiss and Ada Jabaru.

SB(22)01 Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting

3. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record. There were no matters arising from the previous meeting for discussion.

Actions

4. There were no open actions.

Declarations of interest

5. The Chair invited declarations that were not already on the register of interest, or which were particularly relevant to today's agenda. None were raised.

Governance and Performance

SB(22)02 Executive Board Report

6. Tim Moss presented this item and talked the Steering Board members through the highlights of the Executive Board Report (EBR). He flagged an issue with the designs DEPS system that would be presented in full to Audit and Risk Committee in February, noting that implications and remedial actions were being explored.
7. Tim highlighted the busy policy agenda including:
 - Exhaustion regime decision deferral
 - Artificial Intelligence Call for Views closed
 - Standard Essential Patents Call for Views launched
 - Designs Call for Views to be launched soon
 - Counter-infringement Strategy announcement coming up
8. Tim said there had been a successful candidate for the People and Places Director position and they would be joining the IPO in May.
9. The Board queried if there was any movement on the Government Property Agency (GPA) transfer. Tim explained that the aim was to get a clear plan in place by financial year end, with work ongoing with BEIS, GPA and HMT (HM Treasury) to clear the outstanding issues and queries.
10. The Board commented on the excellent development of the Futures work including the metaverse aspect. Tim said that increasing capability and capacity in this area was planned as part of the organisational design work.
11. The Board noted the delay on the IPO Places Strategy with regards to the Levelling Up agenda and agreed that when the timing was right this should be discussed at a future Steering Board meeting.
12. The Board discussed whether the increased headcount at the IPO was a risk; Tim confirmed that the IPO was excluded from the headcount targets that other government departments were part of, but that business cases for new roles would need to be very clear on the business need due to the likelihood of increased scrutiny.
13. The Chair thanked the Executive Board for the report.

Action 1: Secretariat to add IPO Places Strategy and Levelling Up to the Steering Board work programme.

SB(22)03 Operation Genoa Case Study

14. Marcus Evans, Head of Intelligence, joined the meeting to present a case study on Operation Genoa which was undertaken in September 2021 as a joint endeavour between the IPO Intelligence Hub and the Northwest arm of the Police Intellectual Crime Unit (PIPCU). He explained over 200 tonnes of counterfeit goods were seized, which equated to a £500million

cost to industry. Marcus explained the learnings and next steps from the operation. He noted the success of subsequent engagement with self-storage companies with an increase in uptake of the IPO tick box scheme Keep It Real.

15. The Chair thanked Marcus for the case study presentation and asked Board members to contact Marcus directly with follow up questions if necessary.

SB(22)04 BEIS update

16. Shahid Omer presented the update from the BEIS sponsorship team and gave an update on BEIS and Ministerial priorities. He noted that whilst some items did not impact the IPO directly it was useful for the Board to understand the wider context.
17. Shahid said the public statement on the direction of travel of the levelling up agenda was planned for February and noted his team would work closely with the IPO to align the IPO Places Strategy to the agenda.

SB(22)05 Draft Corporate Plan for Comment

18. Karen Powell presented the item, noting that the Executive Board had agreed the document was to set high level priorities and ministerial targets and as such was not a detailed corporate plan but rather a corporate priorities document. Karen asked the Board if the priorities were appropriate, if there were any surprises, or anything missing. She asked for comments on the proposed ministerial targets noting that these would be presented to Minister Freeman at the end of January for input.
19. The Board commended the document as being straightforward and clear in the way it was presented. The Board said the key activities set out with the desired outcomes would make it useful for IPO people to use.
20. The Board queried the ministerial target on the Copyright framework noting it appeared very dependent on the commitment of other organisations and thus may be difficult for the IPO to deliver. Tim confirmed this was a risk, but it was high priority for the Minister hence being presented as an option.
21. The Board discussed the Net Zero target with some noting that it felt narrow and under-ambitious. It commented that the IPO's education remit could be used to inspire more green innovation. Tim confirmed that whilst the IPO does want to support green innovation there was more work needed to understand how the IP system can be used to have an impact, so it was not a viable target for the next financial year.
22. The Board queried if there was a mixed message on patent examination timeliness, noting the 42-month deadline put forward seemed very long. David Holdsworth explained this is a standard timeframe internationally, and was in line with what many customers wanted. He said research was being undertaken to explore if different customer needs and expectations of patent timeliness could be accommodated.

23. The Chair asked for clarity on what workstreams were ongoing but not at the high priority level included in the draft. He asked that as the document was concluded, its clarity as a working document be maintained in both structure and design. The Chair thanked Karen for presenting the paper and asked the Board to send detailed comments via email.

Action 2: Steering Board members to send any detailed comments on the Corporate Priorities to Karen Powell.

SB(22)06 People Survey

24. Beth Kenure joined the meeting to present the People Survey results and engagement plan. She highlighted the engagement score had been maintained which was excellent news given the difficult year. The scores across key themes were broadly comparable to the previous year, and focus areas for action were to remain the same:

- Leadership and managing change
- Organisational culture and behaviours
- Workload and how we work.

25. Beth explained the plan to explore differences in groups, particularly those who have different experiences to the majority. She noted the detailed analysis would be presented to Brilliant Place to Work Committee and would be monitored there throughout the year. It was noted that qualitative follow up was also completed at directorate and team level.

26. Beth asked the Steering Board to comment on the action areas and highlight any trends for further investigation. Tim asked the Board if they had experience regarding leadership and managing change that could be applied to the IPO.

27. The Board noted that the results were reassuring and reflected well on the IPO's leadership. It was good to see there was no complacency in the organisation regarding addressing key areas. The Board agreed the action areas felt appropriate, in particular the focus on the impact of hybrid working.

28. The Board queried why the completion rate was down 12% and discussed the possibility of completion targets; Paula explained this approach had been used in the past, but the IPO had moved away from this.

29. The Board noted that whilst the benchmarking with BEIS was useful it would be good to see the comparison with other executive agencies and partner organisations when available.

SB(22)07 Organisational Design

30. The observers were not in attendance for this item. Tim Moss and Paula Brooks presented an update on Organisational Design work to gain Steering Board insight on the proposed board-level structure and target operating model. Paula explained the reasoning behind the work was to look ahead to how the organisation should be set up for growth given the ambitions for

enforcement activity and other work planned, as well as the impacts of the transformation programme. Paula explained the design principles, scope, and process to the Board.

31. The Board reviewed the preferred option for high level organisational structure. It commented that the proposed structure does not make it clear that the IPO is focused on the customer. Tim explained that the customer was fundamental to the structure but acknowledged that this was not presented clearly enough and required further thought.
32. The Board discussed whether the proposed structure was radical enough, noting that it appeared iterative and overly complicated particularly with regards to policy areas; however, it recognised that this may be the most appropriate move at this time. Tim said that radical ideas were welcome, noting the importance of getting the changes right, and extended an invitation for further individual discussions with Board members. The Chair welcomed this but considered that proposals on structure had to be primarily for the executive team.
33. The Chair recommended that the Executive Board consider if their planned timeline for completion of the Organisational Design work was appropriate or if it should be changed to allow more thought by the executive team and input from Steering Board.

Action 3: Executive Board to consider if planned timeline for Organisational Design work needs amending to allow for executive review and Steering Board input.

SB(22)08 Transformation programme update

34. Andy Bartlett, Craig Seer and Nicola Tappern joined the meeting to present an update on the Transformation Programme. Andy explained the replanning exercise following the decision to change the approach to architecture and noted key achievements and priority areas going forward. He highlighted the collaborative approach to the work across the IPO and with delivery partners to meet the collective goals on timeliness, cost, and quality.
35. Nicola explained the key changes following the change in architecture decision:
- Consolidating data to a single workstream
 - Embedding Tech as a new workstream with interdependencies mapped
 - Adopting MI/BI as a workstream (pending approval of the business case)
 - Changing timeline of delivery, with overall timeline remaining the same.
36. The Chair asked Laurie Benson to comment given her role as a member of Transformation Programme Board. Laurie emphasised that the replan was positive and should give the Board confidence that assumptions were being tested at every step and changes made if necessary.
37. Andrew Lawrence commented as Chair of Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) and explained that the Internal Audit Report presented in the November meeting had raised questions for the Committee. He said Lopa Patel had met with the transformation team to resolve the queries and would present a report to ARC in February.

Information papers

SB(22)09 Board Risk Register and Watch/Worries

38. There were no comments on the Board Risk Register and Watch/Worries list. The Chair noted this gave assurance that the executive team were aware of risks and issues and were alerting the Steering Board to significant risks that would require their opinion. It was noted that the risk register was discussed fully at ARC meetings.

SB(22)10 Strategy Refresh

39. The Steering Board were joined by the rest of the Executive Board for a discussion and workshop on the Strategy Refresh. Tim introduced the session and asked the Board to give thoughts on the strawman document provided.
40. The Board agreed the structure and level of ambition were appropriate, noting that having one document with key themes and outcomes and a second document with more detailed actions was particularly useful.
41. The attendees broke into three groups to discuss each strategic pillar in more detail and raised the following points:

Delivering Excellent IP Services

- More needed on education as an inspirational tool and inspiring green innovation
- Be clear regarding actively supporting innovators and creators
- Build in value for money as part of services, ensure guidance is fit for purpose
- Actions could be prioritised

Creating a World Leading IP Environment

- Be more explicit rather than implicit on plans for e.g., future innovators, GDP.
- More needed on the social contract piece – ensure wording is right and customers described broadly enough
- Actions need to ensure the organisation knows how to meet the ambitions

Making the IPO a Brilliant Place to Work

- Ambition statement needs more of a sense of delivery, common purpose
 - Does “brilliant place” need rethinking given hybrid working?
 - Expectation around people being at their best – consider wording, e.g., creating an environment where people can thrive
 - Fit for future – consider cultural mindset towards change, link with social contract piece
42. The group confirmed they were broadly happy with the progress on the refreshed strategy, with concepts and ambition in the right place. Tim noted the next steps were to get thoughts from the Senior Leadership Group and aligning directorate business plans with the strategy which would assist with engaging the organisation.

SB(22)11 Shape and Role of Steering Board

43. The Chair introduced this item as an opening for thinking about the role and shape of Steering Board, given comments he noted in his initial discussions with both executive and non-executive directors upon joining the organisation. He explained the aim of the process was ultimately to reach a shared understanding on Steering Board's place in the IPO's governance structure and consider if a change was needed. The key principle from his perspective was that governance must support organisational purpose.
44. The group noted that non-executive involvement in work outside of Steering Board meetings had increased in recent years but there were further opportunities to add value. The Chair was keen that this should be done in a way that supported the organisation, rather than simply to engage interested members. They agreed this should be grown through interaction between the executive and non-executive. It was noted that it may be advantageous for Steering Board to be more accessible and visible to the organisation as a whole.
45. The group discussed the possibility of becoming a unitary board noting both positive and negative aspects to this. It was noted that there were different levels of understanding of the Steering Board's role and governance processes. The Chair highlighted that this raised questions on how well Steering Board supported the Executive Board and whether responsibilities were being fulfilled.
46. Shahid noted that he would discuss the points raised with the BEIS sponsorship team and feed back to the Board on the BEIS position.
47. The Chair thanked the group for their input and said he and Tim Moss would decide how to continue the discussion in the March Steering Board meeting.

Action 4: Shahid Omer to discuss Role and Shape of IPO Steering Board item with BEIS Sponsorship team and provide feedback.

Action 5: Harry Rich and Tim Moss to decide on approach to discussion on Steering Board shape and role, alongside effectiveness review feedback, for the March Steering Board meeting.

Reflections of the meeting and close

48. The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and asked the Board to reflect on positives about the meeting and things that may be done differently.
49. Members said the discussion on strategy was positive with good alignment, the quality of open discussion was high throughout the meeting, and the inclusion of a case study was particularly valued. Members said the morning meeting felt rushed and more time for discussion would have been appreciated.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 29 March 2022