



The Institute of Professional Investigators

5 Westcott, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL7 2PP

**Minutes held of the IPI Annual General Meeting
Friday 19th November 2021 by Zoom at 11.00am**

Present: Board members; Richard Cumming (RC), Brian Collins (BC), Steve Smith (SS), John Bateman (JB). Guy Cooper, Glyn Evans (GE). The following members also joined the Zoom AGM meeting; George Roberts, Luke Parrish, Graham Dooley, John Warrink, Michael Pettitt, Debbie Craven.

Apologies received from; Simon Smith, Richard Newman, Nick Adair, Sue Ward, David Palmer, Simon Bennett, Chris Jolley, Ian Bignold, Richard Lee, Kevin Williams, Keith Coventry.

1. **Introduction** to the meeting made by GE who welcomed everybody to the meeting and also explained that for convenience the meeting would be recorded.
2. **Principal's address** - Richard Cumming;

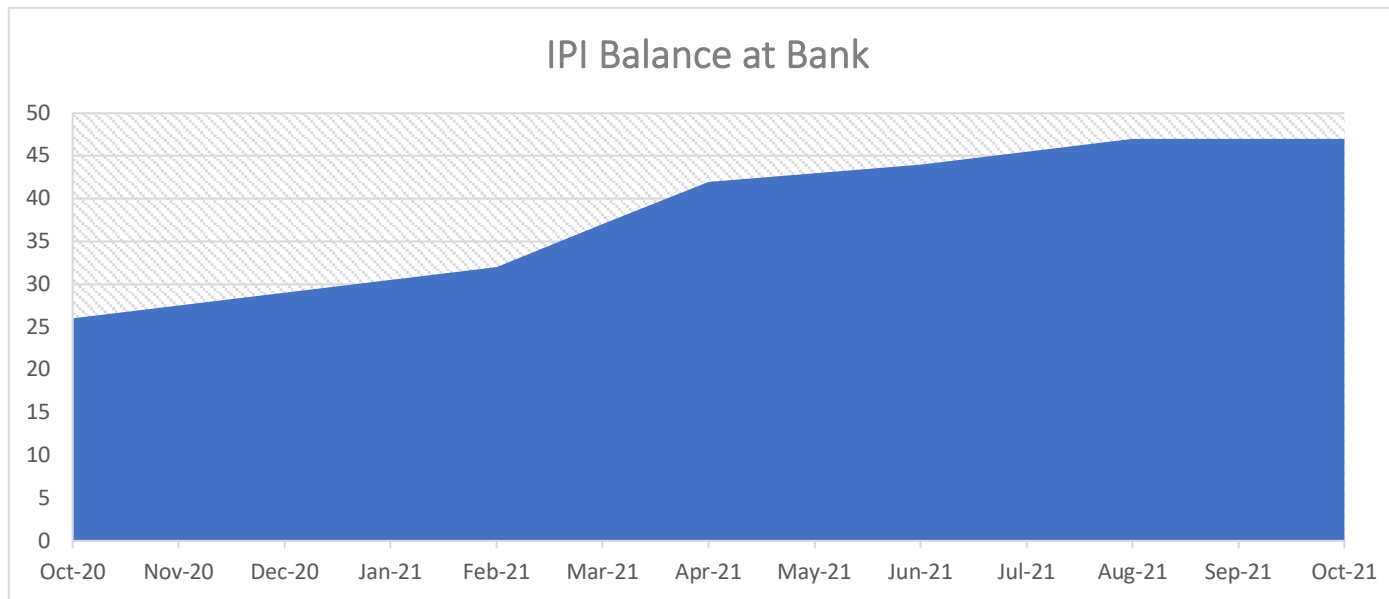
Welcome to our second virtual AGM and I hope that you are all safe and well as we enter the second winter experiencing the pandemic. I believe that things are improving in our profession and I hope that members are now better able to find work to support their families in these continuing difficult times.

Last year I reported on how we had streamlined our operation which enabled us to reduce membership subscriptions from £170 to £140 with other membership classes being reduced accordingly [Associate £140 to £115, Retiree £80 to £65]. I also reported on our upgraded website, ID cards, corporate membership and members' WhatsApp group.

We haven't rested on our laurels and have got some exciting news on the expansion of our training portfolio and our hopes for the future.

Finances

Firstly though, you will be pleased to hear that our streamlined governance structure has been reflected in our bank balance and profitability – more of this later.



As I called out last year, it's not our intention to retain any more than necessary in the bank, hence our reduction in fees and canvassing for ideas on subsidised courses which would benefit members.

You will be receiving some information regarding an OSINT course shortly and your views would be appreciated.

Membership

We have sought to simplify the membership categories, you will all be familiar with the categories of Associates, Members and Fellows. We have also had Life Members, Honorary Members and Companions. We have now designated the post nominal of Companion (CIPi) to include these membership categories which can be awarded in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Board.

We believe that our history, standards and training regime may qualify us to apply to become the Chartered Institute of Professional Investigators and have drafted a letter of application to the Privy Council to pursue this goal on behalf of all members. If successful, you may have to change your business cards to MCIPi or equivalent, but we think that this would be a great stride forward in recognition of our Institute.

Training

More on this later, but we have recently achieved a significant goal through much hard work by the Board – which is membership of ELCAS (Enhanced Learning Credits Scheme). This basically enables us to offer our courses to retiring members of the armed services who

receive funding from the MOD. It was a high bar to achieve this status, but we are hoping that it will enable us to expand our training portfolio and membership.

The Board of Governors

All this has been achieved by our streamlined Board of Governors who have devoted significant amounts of their time and energy to getting us to this point, and I would like to personally thank all of them for their hard work and dedication. We also welcomed a sixth member of the Board, Guy Cooper, who we co-opted and will propose for formal adoption later in the AGM. Glyn Evans has been a lynchpin to the IPI in turning the tide of our finances and has been the only Board member who received a small recompense for his duties as Secretary General, being a token monthly payment of £200 and only 25% of what was paid previously. Given the success that we have achieved in streamlining the IPI, we have increased this to £400, which is still well below market rate for the role.

John Bateman is proposed to receive an honorarium payment of £1000 for the past year in which he has stepped up to provide the services previously provided by Regus at £200 per month - phone calls on a daily basis and providing a correspondence address for the Institute. Can I have a proposer and seconder – show of hands. **GE** proposed and seconded by **BC**. Unanimous show of hands in support.

I will hand over to my colleagues to give you a more detailed and eloquent report on the matters that I have touched on but would finally like to thank all our members for your continued support.

GE thanked RC for his report and also thanked RC for his stewardship throughout the year.

3. Minutes of last year's (2020) AGM;

GE explained that these minutes had been circulated to members and that they were also on the website. **GE** stated that all outstanding matters had been dealt with. Members present were asked if there were any questions arising from the minutes and following no questions, asked for a proposal to accept them as a true and accurate reflection. **BC** proposed and seconded by **RC** – show of hands gave a unanimous acceptance of the minutes.

4. Adoption of Accounts and Treasurers Report including Membership;

A full set of Accounts for Year Ending 31st March 2021 had been circulated via email prior to the meeting.

On the income side, the Board continue to actively seek ways to increase membership; be it corporate, company or individual. We also are keen to give more to the members in the way of help, guidance (useful template page on the website), and other value for money options (ie CPD opportunities). It was agreed by the board that the reduced membership fee would remain.

The Board are confident that the IPI will flourish with these changes and the positive signs are already there, showing a funds increase in the IPI account from the end of March 2019 right through to this current time and monies received are projected to increase further, which will benefit members. Our new accountants have done a sterling job and work well with the Board, providing excellent value for money. With no questions coming from members GE asked for adoption and acceptance of the accounts; RC proposed and Graham Dooley seconded – show of hands gave unanimous acceptance and approval.

5. **Membership:** A breakdown on current level of membership was given; Membership card printing had been affected by the pandemic still, but to help with the process, GE asked that members paid their subscriptions as close to 01/04 each year (following receipt of their invoices) and also to provide updated pictures (if required) in order that new cards could be processed in one go, allowing for ease of production, less costs to the IPI and generally easier processing.

6. **Election of Directors:**

GE outlined the re-election then stood down with RC taking over.

GE proposed to continue as SecGen by BC, seconded by Debbie Craven – unanimous approval and GE duly re-elected.

Guy Collins formally proposed by BC and seconded by GE. Unanimous show of hands and GC formally appointed.

7. **Training Report (Stephen Smith):**

Training and development of new and existing members continue to be key factors in ensuring the credibility and professionalism of the IPI and its membership. Our online IPI Foundation Course is continuing to prove popular and plans are afoot to hold the associated Skills for Justice (SfJ) Level 3 Award for Professional Investigators examinations in London and the Midlands in January/February 2022. More details will be circulated in due course. Some teething problems initially occurred with our qualification Awarding Organisation (IQ) being taken over by Skills for Justice. This has caused delays which along with Covid and obtaining premises and travel restrictions, has impacted upon our ability to hold the Professional Investigators Award SfJ assessments. These are two Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) papers taken under observed examination conditions. Furthermore, the SfJ Level 4 Award in Covert Surveillance Operations (Intermediate) we offer has just been subject to an External Quality Assurance session yesterday. I am pleased to report that our training team including IPI Board members Guy Cooper, Brian Collins and Glyn Evans were recognised for delivering high quality training experience. Finally, we have recently been approved as a training centre by ELCAS (Enhanced Learning Credits

Scheme). The ELCAS scheme is in place to promote lifelong learning amongst members of the Armed Forces. Under the scheme, members of the military can receive financial support to contribute towards their higher-level learning. We are now working towards having the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) courses we wish to offer accepted by ELCAS. Our website will be updated when this has been completed. Finally, my thanks to Duncan Place who manages the Foundation Course online training site and associated MCQ and to David Palmer CIPI for his role in the Person Tracing Course.

8 Any other Business; Nothing raised.

9. Date and time of next meeting.

Date of next AGM – hoping to be in person – this will be discussed nearer the time. Brian Collins stated that it may be a mix of both due to the distance persons will have to travel. Debbie Craven stated she first heard of AGM yesterday and would generally need more notice. Duncan was requested to send out invites sometime ago (and had) but there may be an issue with the website which we will look into and make necessary fixings and improvements. Brian Collins stated that the members 'WhatsApp' group will have information on it and also Brian will also send out information on this.

Graham Dooley stated that mixed zoom meetings are successful and this could be the way forward.

RC said 'Thank you' to everyone and all those members present and stated that any contributions are welcome at any time and the Board will assist/and discuss/act upon. He stated it is the members institute so any ideas or suggestions please let us know and we will do our best to move the Institute in the best way forward for our members. JB is always available for telephone and postal responses, GE via email (admin) and BC via social media.

Meeting concluded at 11.43 hours.