

**IBCA Board - Minutes and Actions**  
**1 May 2025, 12:30 - 13:30**  
**Online**

**Board Members:**

1. Sir Robert Francis (SRF) - Interim Chair
2. David Foley (DF) - Interim CEO
3. Russell Frith - Chair of Audit & Risk Committee - Non-Executive Director
4. Deborah Harris-Ugbomah - Non-Executive Director
5. Helen Parker - Non-Executive Director
6. Sir Rob Behrens - Non-Executive Director
7. Richard Hornby - Interim Finance Director
8. Celine McLoughlin - Interim Director of Digital
9. Sindy Skeldon - Interim Director of Operations

**Attendees:**

1. Catherine Webster - IBCA Chief of Staff
2. **GRO-D** - Board Secretariat
3. **GRO-D** - Private Secretary to Sir Robert
4. John Kelly - Interim Director of Data
5. Rachel Forster - Interim Director of Communications
6. Shainila Pradhan - Programme Director
7. Gill Nicholson - Interim HR Director
8. Hannah Probert - Deputy Director, Strategy & Governance
9. Susan Harris - User Consultant
10. Clair Walton - User Consultant

**Apologies:** Gillian Fairfield - Interim Non-Executive Director  
Paula Sussex - Interim Non-Executive Director

**1. Welcome**

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the Extraordinary Board meeting following a meeting with the Minister for the Cabinet Office (MCO) and the Permanent Secretary (PUS) on 30 April.

**2. Chair and CEO's Summary of meeting with MCO and PUS**

- 2.1. The Chair began the meeting by acknowledging the ongoing concerns of the community over the pace of IBCA's delivery and the Minister's ambitions for faster payments of compensation.
- 2.2. He summarised the key points of the 30 April meeting. The package of proposals for faster delivery that had been presented by the IBCA Executive was colour-coded to highlight the levels of risk that the Minister would need to underwrite for them to move

ahead. The Minister expressed support for the green and amber-rated proposals and agreed with the Executive that the red proposals should not move forward.

- 2.3. The discussion with MCO and PUS had focused on what could be achieved by the end of the year, provided certain conditions outlined in the proposals were met and there was support from the Cabinet Office to release IBCA from some of its obligations via Ministerial direction.
- 2.4. If the outlined conditions were met, IBCA was confident that it could deal with claims from all of the living registered infected cohort, some of the unregistered living infected cohort, and start on the affected cohort before the end of the calendar year, all by continuing our test and learn approach.
- 2.5. IBCA had been clear that claims for estates could not start until 2026 and that prioritising the living infected would mean a slower process for the affected cohort. This would also mean that work on the supplementary route could not be started until next year.; The pace of progress was being discussed by the Inquiry, and clarity was needed on the Inquiry's view before work could be continued on planning for this.
- 2.6. The Minister accepted the proposals that were put forward on one condition, which related to the legal requirement to merge the support schemes. Dates had been set in the legislation and the Minister did not want to ask for changes in the legislation.
- 2.7. A suggestion was made to the Minister to accept the merger but delegate duties back to the devolved administrations, with the additional costs paid for by the Cabinet Office. It was acknowledged that this would need Board approval to move forward.

### **3. Board Discussion**

- 3.1. The Board were asked to give their views on how much commitment IBCA should give before confirmation of IBSS transfer and then commitment once confirmation was received.
- 3.2. The Board acknowledged that the proposals would have a big impact on the sequencing decisions made in January and that those who were disadvantaged by the changes would not be happy. However, there was also the acknowledgement that changing the approach would prioritise all of those living with infection.
- 3.3. The User Consultants were asked to give their views on the proposals. There was strong agreement that the living infected cohort should be prioritised for payment, although concerns were expressed about the challenges that would arise over decisions about which payment offer to take when the supplementary route was still unknown.
- 3.4. It was pointed out that the regulations stated that a choice needed to be made within three months, and there was no flexibility for people to move between support payments and core payments.

- 3.5. The IBCA Executive suggested that there may be some flexibility on the timings for decision making, or there was always the option to defer a decision until the supplementary offer could be made.
- 3.6. The User Consultants stated that prioritising the living infected cohort would be a popular decision, and it was morally right for them to be paid first.
- 3.7. Board members had a robust discussion on the options presented and agreed that prioritising the living infected cohort would enable greater numbers of claims to be processed and payments made.
- 3.8. Questions were asked about implications for fraud and whether the technology could cope if large numbers of people were making claims at once.
- 3.9. There was an acknowledgement that an IDV solution would need to be put in place, and a front-end registration system had been discussed. There would be implications for legal support as eligibility for compensation was one of the criteria for legal support.
- 3.10. Board members cautioned about the need to keep a tight grip on the negotiation around IBSS schemes to keep everything under control. Board members offered their experience in working with the DAs to support any process moving forward. It was agreed that IBCA would need a supervisory role to keep sight on what was happening at all times.
- 3.11. The Board was advised that the expectation was that the current business plan would need to be delivered from the existing budget, and any move to increase delivery would need additional funding. Written assurance, provided by PUS, was required to confirm additional budgetary cover, which would allow for IBCA to assume a 'go-faster' approach.
- 3.12. Discussion with HMT indicated that there was no money for additional spending and that Cabinet Office would need to find any extra funds. Any additional budget would need to be clarified clearly and unambiguously in writing from the Cabinet Office before additional spending could be undertaken.
- 3.13. The Chair clarified that the proposals to the Minister clearly stipulated that more funding was required to speed up delivery. Any letters from the Minister or the Cabinet Office would be scrutinised for clarity on additional funding and support. This would be reiterated to the PUC by the Chair in a meeting later in the day.
- 3.14. The Finance Director made clear that without this confirmation, the Executive Team would need to look closely at the levels of expenditure, including the development spend and recruitment costs for Claims Managers, as the budget could not sustain the current rate of spend.
- 3.15. Board members confirmed that without guarantees, recruitment could not increase.
- 3.16. The Board asked if assurances were given on how confident the IBCA Executive was in delivering the proposals.

- 3.17. The CEO confirmed that if the resources were available and restrictions lifted, then he was confident that the proposals could be delivered.
- 3.18. A note of caution was issued that if the guarantees of support did not materialise, combined with the financial advice received, then IBCA should be cautious about doing anything that was not affordable until the guarantees were in place.
- 3.19. The Board noted that written Ministerial direction from MCO to cover more risk than allowed under the usual MPM processes would not come until discussions on the IBSS concluded. However, a letter from PUS confirming budgetary support and resources could feasibly be done faster in the meantime and, if confirmed, acceleration of scale-up and delivery of resources would be feasible.
- 3.20. The Finance Director warned that MCO may not yet have started discussion with Treasury Ministers as the Treasury Spending Team had not yet been sighted on any additional spending.
- 3.21. The Board were informed that if no progress was made with the IBSS, further development work on other cohorts would be jeopardised, which would detract from overall efficiency. This would result in delays in delivery progress and prevent IBCA from committing to dealing with claims from the unregistered living infected cohorts, and risk completing a private beta for the affected cohort.
- 3.22. The Chair noted the importance of having the User Consultants' input at the meeting and thanked them for their contributions.

**AGREEMENT: The Board was supportive of the package of proposals but only if the resources were guaranteed and the conditions set out in the proposals were met.**