

The Wokingham Paper Ltd annual report 2022

1. The Wokingham Paper

1.1 List of titles and products

The Wokingham Paper Ltd produces four publications: two weekly tabloid newspapers Wokingham Today, Reading Today and associated websites, Wokingham.today and rdg.today. These are updated on a daily basis.

1.2 The Wokingham Paper's responsible person is publisher David Riley

Phone: 07860 462882, email driley@wokingham.today

In absence/editorial matters: editor Phil Creighton

Phone: 0747 40 10 985, email pcreighton@wokingham.today

1.3 The Wokingham Paper Ltd is a social enterprise aimed at producing news, information and features for people who live, work and play in Wokingham and Reading boroughs. It is a small team, with the newsroom comprising an editor, three reporters, and a sports reporter. Some additional volunteers help out or write columns for the paper and two freelance photographers are engaged at weekends. Due to the pandemic and working from home arrangements, we have not been able to run any short-term traineeships as we would normally do.

There is an advertising team of three people, a part-time graphic designer and a part-time administrator.

In the autumn, we appointed a general manager to run the commercial side of the business.

Under the government's covid recovery schemes, we recruited a social media apprentice who has been undergoing training across this year.

Wokingham Today's weekly newspaper is published on a Thursday, and on sale via newsagents, supermarkets and petrol stations. Some copies are also distributed for free via garden centres, leisure centres and council hubs across Wokingham borough. This has continued across the pandemic, as outlets have reopened, these free copies have resumed.

Reading Today is published on a Wednesday, on sale via newsagents, supermarkets and petrol stations with some additional copies distributed for free via garden centres, leisure centres and council hubs across Reading borough.

2. Internal manuals used by journalists

Journalists adhere to the NUJ Code of Conduct, a copy of which is on display within the office. We also adhere to the Samaritans guide to reporting suicide. There is no individual company code, although journalists are expected to adhere to the highest possible ethical standards and consult standard materials, such as Macnee's or debate issues before covering contentious issues.

3. Compliance process

3.1 The editor aims to comply with the IPSO Editor's Code at all times.

Any complaints that come in are initially dealt with on an informal basis. Virtually all complaints can be handled on this basis with either a small correction to the online

version of the story or a clarification in the following week's paper. No formal recording of these is made.

3.11 No formal complaints were made in 2022, however, had there been, they would have been logged in a spreadsheet, with detailed records of conversations, emails and dates. This would have been provided to IPSO had the need arisen.

3.12 The print edition of both Wokingham.Today and Reading Today has IPSO contact details available to readers. This is also published on our websites.

3.13 Factchecking of stories is at the heart of our editorial process. There have been a number of instances where stories have been pulled ahead of publication as we were not confident that the details stood up to scrutiny. We endeavour to include both sides of the story.

A key part of this process is our daily morning news conference where issues relating to each story being worked on can be raised, reporters also know that they can talk to the editor – or even the publisher – ahead of publication to bring a fresh eye to the details. A second afternoon conference is held for a brief update on stories at the end of the working day.

There has been no need to contact IPSO ahead of publication for any story covered in 2022.

Interviews conducted over the phone use manual note taking, these notepads are kept for seven years, as per regulations. We are increasingly using electronic recordings of interviews and automatic transcriptions to help with transcriptions; these are currently stored within the libraries of the programmes, and also in the story folder in the Google Drive storage system we use. Before starting, interviewees are told when they are being recorded and whether the recordings are for internal use or for online usage. We store electronic source materials for future reference in the relevant story folder on our Google Drive system.

3.14 Staff are made aware of IPSO's information and guidance as and when it needs to be shared, this is added on to news conferences

3.15 Financial transparency and conflict of interest policies. These do not formally exist, however we endeavour to ensure that no journalist is covering something they have a formal interest in. We are also fiercely independent in our journalism, showing fear or favour to no one. Journalists are not covering financial service stories, such as share prices etc. The pandemic has put on hold preparing formal policies.

3.2 During the year 2022, there were no adverse findings that involved IPSO. There have been no breaches of the editor's code. There was one informal enquiry which was dismissed as it was not within IPSO's remit.

3.3 Training: Staff are constantly reminded of issues on a regular basis with refresher sessions held on an informal basis on Thursday conferences, or when issues come up – eg covering a murder case – what are the ethics, what should we be doing, who should we approach, how should we approach them etc.
online training is available to those who need it and reporter are able to undertake NCTJ

qualifications through a mixture of home study during working hours and discussions with editor. A number of journalism books, such as Harold Evans and Keith Waterhouse have been bought for self-study.

4. Adjudications made by the Regulator in 2022

None were made against The Wokingham Paper Ltd in 2022.

5. Size of The Wokingham Paper Ltd

5.1 Staffing levels: Three full-time staff, seven part-time staff

5.2 Number of publications: Four (two print editions and website – copy shared between both)

5.3 Circulation: print edition – around 5,500 weekly (reduced under pandemic)

Website: 1,364,140 (down from 2,191,888 in 2021) unique users and 2,627,358 page views (down from 4,024,809 in 2021) page views

Phil Creighton,

Editor, February 2022