



Annual Report 2015

Presented at the FMC's AGM on 8th September 2016

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1. Foreword

This is the first annual report of The Family Mediation Council (FMC), which was incorporated in 2015. It covers the period from incorporation on 24th April 2015 to 31st December 2015.

2. Who we are

The FMC is dedicated to promoting best practice in family mediation. Our central aim is to ensure the public can confidently access family mediation services that offer high quality mediation provided by mediators who meet our standards.

The members of The Family Mediation Council (FMC) in 2015 were:

IDR Europe Limited
College of Mediators
The Law Society
Family Mediators Association (FMA)
National Family Mediation (NFM)
Resolution

Each member organisation appointed a director to the FMC Board of Directors and, in accordance with the Articles of Association, two other directors were co-opted.

The directors of The Family Mediation Council in 2015 were:

Hugh England (Chair)
Karen Barham, appointed by Resolution
Cressida Burnet, appointed by IDR Europe Limited
Robin ap Cynan, followed by Mark Paulson, appointed by The Law Society
Andrew Greensmith
Ewan Malcolm, appointed by College of Mediators
Jane Robey, appointed by NFM
Beverley Sayers, appointed by FMA

The Company Secretary was Mr Paul Neale.

The FMC was supported in its work by an Executive Director, a Communications Consultant and a Professional Standards Consultant, as well as an administrative office.

3. Governance

The FMC is a Company limited by guarantee.

Its Articles of Association can be found at:

<http://www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/FMC-Articles-of-Association-1.pdf>

The Company registration number is 9560220 and the registered office address is 2 Old College Court, 29 Priory St, Ware, Hertfordshire, SG12 0DE.

The board met approximately every two months in 2015 to consider matters of common concern and invited observers from the Ministry of Justice, the Family Justice Council, and the FMSB as appropriate.

4. Our achievements in 2015

The FMC was incorporated on 24 April 2015.

During the year, as part of its drive to ensure high standards amongst family mediators and to reflect the pivotal role of mediation in the family justice system, the FMC appointed members to the Family Mediation Standards Board (FMSB) and gave the FMSB delegated authority to advise upon and oversee the implementation of, and adherence to, the FMC's standards framework.

This framework is set out in the FMC Manual of Professional Standards and Self-Regulatory Framework, which had been approved by the FMC in 2014, prior to its incorporation.

The FMSB's achievements are set out in its annual report for 2015.

The FMC communicated with family mediators, through its member organisations, about the changes that the new standards framework were bringing in, consistently referencing the new Family Mediation Council Accredited (FMCA) status, and the role of the FMC and FMSB as relevant.

Responsibility for accreditation passed to the FMSB, with applications for the old Assessment of Professional Competence scheme closing on 31 December 2015.

The FMC supported the Ministry of Justice's campaign entitled "First Stop: Family Mediation". Its aim was to improve public awareness and understanding of the benefits of family mediation, the legal requirements to consider it before going to court, and the availability of legal aid for those who are eligible. "First Stop: Family Mediation" tripled visits to the FMC website in a two-week period. In addition, to help mediators promote their work, the FMC and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) produced a video, leaflets and posters. The MoJ shared these resources with family courts around the country. A marketing and promotion handbook for mediators was also produced.

Throughout 2015 the FMC continued its policy of engaging with relevant stakeholders such as the Legal Aid Agency on issues pertinent to family mediation.

5. Financial overview

The FMC's Annual Accounts for 2015 were approved on 9 June 2016 and are attached at Annex 1.

The FMC benefitted in 2015 from a grant from the MoJ, as set out in a grant agreement dated 23rd December 2014. The total amount of the grant was £150,000. This money has been spent on the cost of:

- the administrative function of the FMC, which in 2015 was outsourced to a company specializing in professional services administration, and the FMC's running costs
- a Consultant Executive Director, two to three days per week (Sarah Lloyd)
- a Communications Consultant, one day per week (Genevieve Fox)

- a Professional Standards Consultant (Stan Lester)
- recruitment to and setting up of the FMSB and ongoing board expenses
- accountancy costs.

In 2015, the FMC received registration fees from mediators, through the FMSB, for the first time. These fees will be used in 2016 to contribute to the running costs of the self-regulatory system, including administrative and executive support, and the work of external consultants as required.

In 2015 the FMC continued to receive membership fees from its six member organisations, which paid for the cost of FMC board meetings including the travel expenses of its co-opted directors. FMC member organisations continued to bear the travel costs of their appointed directors', as had happened prior to incorporation.

6. Future work

In 2016 the FMC will review its Code of Practice, begin work to implement the recommendations of the Final Report of the Voice of the Child Dispute Resolution Advisory Group, and continue to work with stakeholders to further promote family mediation for the benefit of the public. The FMC will also continue to ensure the effective self-regulation of family mediators, work which will be done through the FMSB.

Annex 1

FMC Accounts for the Year Ending 31st December 2015



The Family
Mediation Council A