



# **Annual Report 2018**

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**12 June 2019**

## 1. Foreword

This is the fourth annual report of The Family Mediation Council (FMC), which was incorporated in 2015. It covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.

## 2. Who we are

The FMC is dedicated to promoting good 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 family who meet our standards.

The members of The Family Mediation Council (FMC) in 2018 were:

IDR Europe Limited (t/a ADR Group) until 12<sup>th</sup> July 2018  
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. In accordance with the Articles of Association, up to three other directors can be co-opted.

The directors of The Family Mediation Council in 2018 were:

John Taylor (Chair)  
Allan Blake  
Ewan Malcolm, appointed by College of Mediators  
Mark Paulson, appointed by The Law Society, until 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
Jane Robey, appointed by NFM  
Daniel Ronson  
Beverley Sayers, appointed by FMA  
Richard Schiffer, appointed by IDR Europe Limited until 14<sup>th</sup> June 2018  
Sally Jane Wilson, appointed by Resolution

The Company Secretary was Mr Paul Neale until 20<sup>th</sup> May 2018. The Company Secretary thereafter was Allan Blake.

The FMC was supported in its work by an Executive Officer 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 International Dispute Resolution Centre, 70 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1EU.

The board met approximately every two months in 2018 to consider matters of common concern and invited observers from the Ministry of Justice, the Family Justice Council, and the Family Mediation Standards Board (FMSB) as appropriate.

### **4. Our achievements in 2018**

An important part of the FMC's work is working with and supporting the work of the FMSB, whose annual report is published at Annex 2.

In 2018 the FMC put in place a two year strategic plan, and identified four strategic issues to address in 2018 and 2019.

#### **Strategic Issue 1 – Standards Review**

In 2018, the FMSB put in place a plan for the Standards Review, to start in 2019. The FMC revised its Code of Practice to ensure it applied to information and assessment meetings as well as mediation.

**Strategic Issue 2 – Timely Awareness of mediation, the Family Mediation Council Accreditation (FMCA) quality mark & public access to FMCAs**

In 2018, the FMC met the Minister responsible for family justice and attended a roundtable organised by the Minister to discuss ideas for increasing the uptake of family mediation.

Together with the FMSB, the FMC held quarterly meetings with the Ministry of Justice, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service, the Children and Family Court Advisory & Support Service, and the FMC had quarterly meetings with the Legal Aid Agency making significant progress in building relationships with these agencies. The FMC contributed to the post-Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act review conducted by the Ministry of Justice, arguing for changes to be made with the aim of increasing the uptake of mediation.

The FMC and FMSB spoke at the All Mediation Conference about the importance of good regulation for the family mediation profession. The FMC also carried out work to improve online sign posting to the FMC register, contacting websites which people are likely to visit when a relationship has broken down to make the website operators aware of mediation and the FMC's Register of professional family mediators.

The FMC provided a service online and by phone to help members of the public find registered family mediators throughout 2018.

**Strategic Issue 3 – turning the outcome of mediation in to a final settlement**

The FMC made initial informal enquiries with judges to explore whether further conversations about this issue would be welcome, but no significant progress was made on this issue in 2018.

**Strategic Issue 4 – good governance**

In 2018, FMC board members met registered mediators in Birmingham, London and Manchester to hear about the issues that mediators wanted the FMC to address, and continued to publish a newsletter aimed at family mediators.

The FMC recruited three new independent members of the FMSB, to ensure that the FMSB remains a robust and effective regulator.

In 2018 the FMC also introduced a schedule of delegation, changed its processes in response to General Data Protection Regulation and introduced a risk register. It ensured that necessary documents were filed with Companies House, it was properly registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and had suitable insurance in place.

In 2018 the FMC replaced its administrative services provider in order to improve efficiency.

## **5. Financial overview**

The FMC's Annual Accounts for 2018 were approved on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and are attached at Annex 1.

The FMC managed its resources well in 2018, spending less than anticipated and achieving a higher income than forecast.

The large majority of its income came from family mediators' registration fees. The vast majority of these fees were used throughout the year for the running costs of the self-regulatory system, including administrative and executive support.

The FMC also continued to receive membership fees from its member organisations, which paid for the majority of 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 attending FMC board meetings.

## **6. Future work**

The FMC will continue to focus on its four key strategic issues in 2019.

### **Strategic Issue 1 – Standards Review**

The FMC will contribute to the work of the Standards Review, and it is expected that it will need to consider recommendations from the FMSB to change the Standards Framework as a result of the review.

### **Strategic Issue 2 – Timely Awareness of mediation, the FMCA quality mark & public access to FMCAs**

The FMC will continue to build relationships with key agencies and introduce a marketing/communications plan to increase awareness of family mediation and the FMC Register. It will also continue to provide a service online and by phone to help members of the public find family mediators and will update its website.

### **Strategic Issue 3 – turning the outcome of mediation in to a final settlement**

The FMC will work with judiciary and mediators to endeavour to find a way for mediation participants to turn agreed proposals in to a binding settlement, without the need for redrafting proposals.

### **Strategic Issue 4 – good governance**

The FMC will continue to ensure it has good governance in place, and recruit an additional mediator member to the FMSB to replace the member who stepped down at the end of 2018 on her appointment as the FMC's Chief Assessor.

### **Annex 1**

[FMC Accounts for the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018](#)

### **Annex 2**

[FMSB Annual Report 2018](#)