

FMC Board Meeting
Tuesday 4 February 2025
Approved Minutes

Present: Stephen Burke (Chair), Rachael Blakey, Alison Bull (Resolution), Jan Coulton (The College of Mediators), Beverley Sayers (FMA), Caroline Bowden (The Law Society)

Apologies: Allan Blake, Sarah Hawkins (NFM)

Also in attendance: Robert Creighton (FMSB Chair), Ruth Hay (FJC Representative),
Helen Anthony (Executive Officer)

Open Session – FMC Board Members and observers		
	Item	Actions
1.	STANDING ITEMS	
1.1	Welcome, introductions, apologies	
	<p>The Chair welcomed everybody.</p> <p>The board welcomed Dr Rachael Blakey to her first board meeting as an independent director.</p>	
1.2	Approval of draft minutes, matters arising	
	<p>The board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 30.9.24.</p> <p>The board reviewed the action log and added a follow up action for SB & HA to further review the way in which the FMC reports on its work on an annual basis.</p>	SB & HA to review annual reporting of FMC's work
2.	Items for Decision	
2.1	FMC Strategic Plan 2025-2027	
	<p>HA recused herself for the part of this item relating to a potential consultation relating to employing staff directly, rather than through a contractor.</p> <p>The board discussed and agreed the draft Strategic Plan 2025-2027, including to go ahead with a consultation regarding taking staff in house and to run a 10-year anniversary conference in 2025.</p> <p>JC & RB volunteered to join the Conference Working Group along with FMSB members Robert Creighton and Mike Mack.</p>	
2.2	FMC Budget (for approval)	
	The board noted the management accounts to 31.12.24, the draft budget projections to 2027. The board discussed and agreed the budget for 2025.	
3.	Items for Information	
3.1	MoJ Update – Funding	
	The board welcomed the recent Ministry of Justice announcement that the family mediation voucher scheme would	

	<p>be extended by a year, and that it was also looking to secure multi-year funding for the scheme. The board noted that the FMC had asked the MoJ to review legal aid rates and processes alongside the voucher scheme.</p> <p>The board welcomed the recent fee increase for housing and immigration matters, as a sign that the government may be listening to concerns about rates for civil legal aid matters. The board noted that the FMC would respond to the Legal Aid Agency consultation on remote working and requirements for offices, in the legal aid contract.</p> <p>The board agreed to merge the FMC's Voucher and Legal Aid working groups.</p>	
3.2	FMSB Update	
	<p>The board noted the draft minutes of the FMSB meeting held on 15.1.25 and welcomed the PPC report.</p> <p>The board noted the PPC report had been produced after extensive consultation with the profession and careful consideration by the FMSB's PPC panel and that the FMSB had accepted its recommendations. The board thanked the PPC panel and noted it was now considering how to implement the recommendations in the report, with minimal negative impact for mediators.</p> <p>The board noted that an opportunity to bid for a grant to fund the development of a domestic abuse screening and assessment resource to help determine suitability for mediation, and agreed to submit a bid for funding.</p> <p>The board thanked the Chair of the FMSB for replying to a letter in the Law Society Gazette about the accreditation process.</p>	
4.	AOB	
4.1	<p>The board noted that Family Mediation Week 2025 had been well received by mediators and appeared to have a higher profile than in previous years. The board thanked the FMW working group for its hard work in putting together and managing the week. The board noted the working group would be carrying out a review to take learnings from the event, and encouraged working group to repeat the exercise of asking for speakers and sponsors early, and in to include in the speakers' briefing packs a glossary of current terminology.</p>	HA to feed thanks and comments back to FMW WG
5.	Next meeting dates	
5.1	2025 dates	
	<p>Spring, summer & autumn board dates TBC</p> <p>10 December – Online</p>	HA to circulate polls for remaining dates

	<p>Other 2025 dates:</p> <p>26 September 2025 – FMC Conference</p> <p>TBC – MO meetings, October</p> <p>TBC – FMC FMSB Joint Meeting, November</p>	
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