

**FMSB Meeting**  
**Wednesday 26 March 2025**  
**Draft Minutes**

**Present:** Robert Creighton (Chair), Anthony Blackman, John Hobson, Mike Mack, Lorraine Bramwell,  
Sarah-Jane Turnbull, Alexis Walker

**Apologies:** Bola Olayinka, Lesley Allport

**Also present:** Beverley Sayers (FMC Representative), Helen Anthony (Executive Officer)

	Item	Papers
1.	<b>Introductory</b>	
1.1	Welcome and introductions, apologies, declarations of interests	
	The Chair welcomed everybody.	
1.2	Approval of minutes of last meeting & matters arising not covered elsewhere	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 15.1.25 were agreed.</p> <p>The FMSB asked for an action log to be included with the next minutes.</p>	
2.	<b>Governance</b>	
2.1	FMSB Ways of Working	
	<p>The FMSB discussed ways of working, to ensure volunteer and staff time was used most efficiently, especially as much of the work of the FMSB panels overlapped.</p> <p>The FMSB welcomed the idea of a document hub that allowed panel volunteers to access documents and feed in to workstreams undertaken on different panels.</p> <p>The FMSB noted that some people who were not mediating, but had an interest in family mediation (e.g. those who were recently retired, working in mediation firms, taking a break from mediation practice) had expressed an interest in joining the FMC and supporting its work. The FMSB agreed to liaise with the FMC to explore whether it could allow people to sign up as 'Friends of the FMC'. RC &amp; HA to work on this.</p>	<p>HA &amp; RC to discuss Friends of the FMC with board</p>

3.	<b>Priority Items for discussion &amp; decision</b>	
3.1	PPC Report – Implementation	
	<p>The FMSB noted the minutes of the meeting held on 11.2.25 and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 19.3.25.</p> <p>The FMSB noted the proposed updates to the PPC Code of Practice and Standards.</p> <p>The FMSB noted the importance of having good quality PPCs, and welcomed the proposed changes to the PPC Code of Practice as a step towards ensuring this.</p> <p>The FMSB note that the structural re-organisation of the Codes of Practice and Standards planned for the second half of 2025 would change the way the documents would be presented.</p> <p>The FMSB agreed some further changes to the PPC Code of Practice and to the Standards, to clarify the meaning. HA to amend.</p> <p>The FMSB noted that it was important to ensure that the changes enhanced the quality of PPC work without imposing significant additional burdens on mediators or PPCs. The FMSB noted that the PPC Panel was working on accompanying guidance which would help mediators and PPC understand how to implement the changes, which would ideally be published at the same time as the standards. The FMSB noted that the development of the guidance may not be complete by 1 August, when the changes to the Standards might ordinarily come in to force. It was agreed that the guidance could be signed off by the FMSB via e-mail, and that the FMSB could consider recommending to the FMC that it delayed changing the Standards until the guidance is ready.</p> <p>The FMSB noted that its relationship was with individual mediators, but that the changes had an impact on their employers, particularly if they would result in mediators needing to spend more time with their PPCs, which would cost more and mean mediators had less time available to work. The FMSB noted that any such affect would apply to all mediators, whether they worked as sole traders or within firms.</p>	<p>HA to amend PPC Code of Practice and Standards Framework drafts</p> <p>RC &amp; HA to liaise with LB &amp; FMC board re timing of changes</p>

	<p>The FMSB noted however, that it may be harder for PPCs to recommend changes to a mediator’s practice when a mediator was within a firm.</p> <p>The FMSB noted that the proposed changes are likely to most affect the mediators who are least compliant with the Standards at present, and therefore who are least likely to be offering a good service to the public. The FMSB also noted that for many mediators, the proposed changes would not affect the amount of time they spend with their PPC, and any changes to practice recommended should be to better their services to the families and compliance with the Standards.</p>	
3.2	DCA Panel	
	<p>The FMSB noted the draft minutes of the meeting held on 12.2.25.</p> <p>The FMSB welcomed the proposed update to the Code of Practice and agreed to recommend this to the FMC.</p> <p>The FMSB noted the impact that working with conflict and with families where domestic abuse has occurred can be traumatic for mediators, and asked the DCA panel to add consideration of how the FMSB could support the welfare of mediators to its workplan.</p> <p>The FMSB noted the proposed approach to assurance regarding how mediators assessed for and responded to cases where domestic abuse had occurred.</p> <p>Mike Mack recused himself for the rest of this item.</p> <p>The FMSB noted that the FMC had been successful in its application for a grant from The Family Mediation Trust and thanked TFMT for the award.</p> <p>The FMSB noted the proposed consultation that was due to take place in May, and welcomed the plan to give early notice to stakeholders via the FMC newsletters that this would be taking place.</p>	

	The FMSB noted the DCA panel would consider training for mediators at its next meeting, and that the FMSB could therefore expect recommendations to be made for its July meeting.	
3.3	New Accreditation Pilot	
	<p>The FMSB welcomed the further development of the new accreditation pilot.</p> <p>The FMSB noted that the Accreditation Panel was due to meet the following day, and would consider a proposal for live observations to be replaced by recordings of mediation sessions. The FMSB expressed grave concerns about this proposal, as people behave differently when they are recorded, there was a risk the recording could be requested by the participants or the court making the mediation itself a point of dispute, and it would mean that mediators would not benefit from immediate feedback about their work.</p>	
3.4	MIAM Guidance for final approval	
	The FMSB noted the proposed updated MIAM guidance, and recommended further changes. AW & HA to finalise guidance and circulate to the FMSB.	AW & HA to finalise guidance and circulate to the FMSB.
3.5	Trading Standards Partnership	
	The FMSB noted that the application for a Trading Standards partnership had been submitted. The FMSB welcomed progress, noting the partnership had been agreed by the FMC in its strategic plan.	
3.6	CIM	
	The FMSB noted that the requirement for CIM mediators to have an enhanced DBS check was due to apply from 29 April, after the end of the annual registration window. The FMSB welcomed the work being done by the FMC office to check that CIM registered mediators all had enhanced certificates.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Reports</b>	
4.1	Chair's Report	
	The FMSB noted that Lorraine Bramwell and Lesley Allport had agreed to remain on the FMSB for a second term, and that John	

	Hobson had agreed to remain on the FMSB until April 2026. The FMSB welcomed these extensions.	
4.2	FMC Report	
	The FMSB noted the draft minutes from the FMC meeting on 4.2.25 and noted the update on the FMC's areas of focus within its strategy, including the decision to bring staff in house from 1.4.25.	
4.3	Executive Officer's Report	
	The FMSB noted the Executive Officer's report dated 19.3.25.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Updating &amp; Discussion</b>	
5.1	Registration	
	The FMSB noted the minutes of the Registration and Promotion Panel held on 26.11.24 and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 12.2.25.	
5.2	Complaints	
	The FMSB welcomed the annual complaints report and noted it would be sent to the FMC board and then published.	HA to send to FMC board & publish
<b>6.</b>	<b>Future Meeting Dates</b>	
	9 July 2025 (online) 15 October 2025 (online) NB FMC Conference Friday 26 September Jt FMC FMSB Meeting Date TBC	