

FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians, London



ELECTION OF THE REGISTRAR AND TREASURER

Both the Registrar and the Treasurer will shortly be reaching the end of their three-year period of office. The fact that the two officers are due to stand down at the same time is a consequence of each being the first to be elected to their role with the establishment of the Faculty. However, this raises issues of continuity which were not apparent at that time; for both to stand down at the same time and early in the new presidency might not be in the best interests of the Faculty, and would establish a lack of overlap that would be replicated at the next round of elections.

The Standing Orders (SO3.5) state that; *“The Registrar, who shall be a Fellow, and the Treasurer, who shall be either a Member or Fellow, shall subject to Standing Order 3.5.4 serve for three years, with the potential to serve a further two”* However they do not state how the ability to serve a further two years should be agreed, and so the Board is considering a review of this and the possibility of proposing a change to the Standing Orders to clarify that.

In the meantime, under Standing Order 3.5.1 there is a requirement, at least four months before the Annual General Meeting in each year, for Members and Fellows to be notified of each office that requires to be filled that year and to seek nominations. In the circumstances described above, it is suggested that the Treasurer serves a further two years and the Registrar a further one year.

Until such time as the Standing Orders are clarified, there is a precedent within the Royal College of Physicians. Under an Act of Parliament the College is required to elect a President every year, and nomination forms are sent annually. However, the accepted assumption is that new Presidents are elected on the basis of a four – year term, and as long as the President has the confidence of Fellows and they are willing to continue in office, only the current incumbent is nominated by Fellows until the four years is reached. There are various safeguards built into the system, and a similar safeguard could apply within the Faculty. Standing Order 3.10 states that *“The President, Vice-Presidents, Registrar, Academic Dean and the Treasurer may be removed from office at any time by a resolution passed at an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting.”*

This is one of those practical issues that could not be or was not foreseen at the time of drawing up the Standing Orders, and it is the view of the Board, taking into account the declared interest of two members of the Board who are affected directly (The Registrar and the Treasurer), that it is in the Faculty’s best interests to build in a process of overlap so that key Officers do not stand down at the same time. With that in mind, and noting the Board’s intention to review the wording of this Standing Order, it is recommended that when the nominations for the office of Registrar and Treasurer are sent this year, then only George Fernie and Peter Schutte are nominated.