

FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



Registered Charity No 1119599

The 15th Annual General Meeting of the Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine held by Zoom on 07 May 2021 at 15:00 hours.

Minutes

1. Introduction: The President welcomed everyone to the second virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The President advised that the meeting was being recorded for the purposes of the minutes.
2. Apologies were received from Julia Neild and Sheelagh Cooke. The President noted the sad news of the recent passing of Prof Michael Green, Prof Donal O'Donoghue and Dr Raine Roberts.
3. Minutes of the 14th AGM held on 15 May 2020: these were accepted as an accurate record.
4. Award of Diplomas to newly elected Honorary Fellows, Fellows and successful FFLM examination candidates: Diplomas have been awarded to the recipients listed in Paper 1. The President noted that it was disappointing the recipients could not receive their awards in person, however, advised that they would be offered the opportunity to have them presented at the 2022 annual conference.
5. Registrar's Report: published on FFLM website, no questions.
6. Amendments to the Standing Orders: published on the FFLM website. The Registrar answered questions submitted prior to the AGM regarding the proposed amendments.
 - When is it expected that the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Council will approve the changes to allow clinicians working in Secure and Detained Settings (SDS) to join as Foundation Members and Fellows? If it is not before 01 August 2021, then the route to Foundation Membership (SDS) should not be opened then.

The Registrar advised that the proposed amendments would be submitted to the RCP Council ahead of its meeting on 18 May 2021.

- What are the relevant qualifications for SDS doctors?

The relevant qualifications for SDS clinicians are listed in the guidance notes available on the FFLM website.

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- Please explain how SDS doctors will contribute to the dento-legal exam.

The Registrar advised that this was a typo that had been corrected – SDS clinicians would not contribute to the dento-legal exam.

The AGM approved the following amendments to the Standing Orders:

- Change font type to Arial (in line with FFLM house style guidance);
 - Change Student affiliate criteria to include both full time and part time students;
 - Change the terms Medico/Dento-Legal adviser and doctor to Medico/Dento-Legal practitioner;
 - Open FFLM membership to Clinicians working in SDS;
 - Change the requirement for the Board to meet face to face twice a year to once a year unless there are exceptional circumstances;
 - Delete the Editor of the Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine as a member of the Academic Committee;
 - A new post nominal for candidates who pass the Diploma of Legal Medicine (DLM) at distinction level - AFFLM (DLM).
7. Treasurer's Report (including Trustees Report): published on FFLM website, approved unopposed.

The Assistant Registrar answered a question submitted prior to the AGM:

- £45,600 is a huge amount of money for re-jigging a pre-existing website. How many quotes were obtained before the work was allocated to Granite 5, and why were they chosen?

The Assistant Registrar advised that the website had been completely rewritten and that the cost included design, artwork, additional functionality (e.g., automatic forms, increased security), better mobile presence and better Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) performance. The Assistant Registrar added that additional costs had been incurred due to the integration of the previous Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which was out of date and not supported by the new system.

Three quotes were obtained from different organisations which had been comparable. Granite 5 demonstrated the best knowledge and support of the CRM system. The Assistant Registrar highlighted that the CRM itself was free due to a charitable package.

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The Treasurer answered a question submitted prior to the AGM:

- Section 5c of the Treasurer/Trustees' Report (page 23) records a very substantial increase in "Educational Support Costs" from 2019 to 2020 of £23,289 (i.e., £45,755 in 2019 to £69,044 in 2020). There is no explanation given to justify this huge increase in expenditure for Educational Support. Please explain what this increased expenditure covered, was it a justifiable expenditure and what options if any were explored to mitigate this expense?

The Treasurer provided a breakdown:

- £12,000 related to the cancellation of the face-to-face DLM/Part 1 exams in October 2020 and to the provider of the company used to host the exams virtually. The company (TestReach) were recommended by the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the Examinations Manager made a comparison against similar companies. The FFLM absorbed the costs from TestReach for 2020, due to the exceptional circumstances and the short time frame in which a decision had to be made. In future the cost will be passed to the exam candidates.
- £7,000 related to the increased E-Learning costs. This is a direct impact from the increased number of people signing up to the e-learning tool.
- £2,100 related to webinar costs. This is due to honorariums previously being offered to presenters and the cost an external webinar facilitator. Webinars are now run in-house.
- £5,000 related to the extensive revision and improvement of the format of the Part 1 exam. The papers are now of higher quality and not as much revision will be needed in 2021. Going forward, there will be a cap on number of the hours for the Educational Advisor.

8. Academic Dean's Report: published on FFLM website, no questions.

The Academic Dean thanked the Chief Examiner, the Examinations Manager and examiners for all of their hard work in adapting the Part 2 examinations to work online.

The President advised that the current Chief Examiner, Dr Caroline Jones, was demitting office and thanked her for all of her hard work.

9. Journal of Forensic & Legal Medicine (JFLM): Elsevier Report published on FFLM website.

Prof Tim Thompson (TT), the Editor, reported that the JFLM was performing well and was going from strength to strength. In 2020 the JFLM received over 700 manuscript

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submissions. TT advised that the rejection rate was 82% which reflected the increase in the number of submissions.

TT addressed a question from Ambika Patra regarding the diversity of the Editorial Board. TT agreed that the Editorial Board did not reflect the diversity of the countries submitting to the JFLM and advised that he planned to progress a refresh of the Editorial Board later this year.

Denis Cusack queried if alerts could be issued when a new JFLM issue was published highlighting certain topics/titles/authors etc. TT agreed and proposed that the information be forwarded to the FFLM office to include in its weekly bulletin.

Bernadette Butler queried if the automatic system of manuscript submission and review would be reviewed. TT agreed the current system was 'clunky' and did not capture all the required information. TT advised that the editorial team would look into rewriting the email templates.

John Holden queried if the JFLM might be reviewed to represent more widely the work of the FFLM and include a range of type of contributions. The President advised that the Editor was dependent on the papers submitted to the JFLM. TT agreed and added that the JFLM was open to different topic areas and had reintroduced Alcimedus.

Gordon Johnstone queried if there was any guidance or teaching on how to write a paper for publication. The President advised that a workshop had been planned for the 2020 Annual Conference which had unfortunately been cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. TT proposed holding a virtual workshop or webinar instead.

TT advised that he had been appointed as Dean of Health and Life Sciences at Teesside University which meant he would be stepping down from his role as Editor at the end of his three-year contract in December 2021. TT advised that he had enjoyed his time as Editor and thanked the FFLM and colleagues for their support. The President thanked TT for all of his hard work and wished TT all the best with his new role.

10. President's Report: published on the FFLM website, no questions.
11. David Jenkins Chair in Forensic & Legal Medicine: Prof Maria Nittis has been appointed as the Chair for 2021-22.
12. Any Other Business:

The Assistant Registrar answered a question submitted prior to the AGM:

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- When are the Taser training courses starting and what price will they be?

Courses will (in line with the FFLM's not-for-profit and charitable status) aim to be delivered at cost. The cost of the course will be £140 per attendee. In order to minimise costs, both providers and forces will be encouraged to source their own venues for training. This has also been communicated to FFLM members in the bulletin issued on 07 May 2021. It was queried how much the 'train the trainer' course and licence would cost. The President advised that the costs would be determined and advertised in due course.

It was queried if the new post nominal AFFLM (DLM) could be awarded retrospectively. The President advised that it could not be awarded retrospectively.

Denis Cusack (DC), the current ECLM president, advised the AGM that he would be continuing in the role due to the current pandemic. DC advised that the IALM 25th Congress would be taking place (virtually) in Geneva from Tuesday 01 June to Friday 04 June 2021.

13. Date of the next AGM: Friday 06 May 2022 at The Royal College of Pathologists, London.

The meeting concluded at 15:52 hours.

71 attendees