

15th October 2024

Good afternoon!

It's been a period of adjustment in many respects in the Cox household, from taking our toddler on his first proper holiday abroad to Ibiza and realising that an "Ibiza pool party" is vastly different to those of my youth to entering my second year as GPDF Chair and realising there are a few more grey hairs (in my beard!) to contend with. I wanted to use this Chair's update to talk about some of the aspects of the Deed of Grant which were part of the conversations at our 2024 AGM.

As many of you know, the Deed of Grant was signed on 4th April 2024. While negotiations were concluded before Christmas 2023, it took until then for lawyers to dot the 'i's and cross the 't's. We have undertaken a significant event analysis to review what lessons can be learned for the next iteration of the Deed of Grant, acknowledging that it may take a very different form and be more complex.

The Deed of Grant runs for 3 years and includes a 12.5% discretionary element, with the second year of the discretionary element being supported by all nations at the September 2024 AGM and the third year being voted on at the September 2025 AGM

A summary of the new Deed of Grant is available [here](#) with the original text of the 2024 Deed of Grant available [here](#).

Evaluation

Having experience working with a number of government bodies and national funders, the secretariat developed a standard evaluation framework.

Consultation with Chairs of GPCs essentially led us to conclude that this was not quite what LMCs were expecting or desired so we listened and took a different approach. This resulted in us developing a feedback framework policy which seemed to be more in line with expectations. We have adopted its style for a number of reasons:

1. It allows us to gather feedback from as many sources as would like to give it: be they GPC members, or from LMCs.
2. It ensures we can provide a standard procedure that ensures the feedback investigation process is consistent, thorough and fair to all parties involved.
3. It ensures that GPDF can collect feedback on areas we have influence over, and re-direct issues falling outside this appropriately.
4. It allows us to ensure issues can be logged, investigated and any actions to improve the issue be noted/actioned.
5. It enables us to keep the headline of each complaint in a register which will be anonymised where appropriate and shared with LMC Nominees in the next year's AGM papers, to support thinking about the discretionary vote.
6. While we are happy to receive informal feedback, there isn't a huge amount we can do with that. This process will be clear and documented, and auditable.
7. To prevent problems becoming complaints by adopting a pro-active, positive approach to dealing with them immediately at source.
8. A feedback framework can help to prevent problems becoming complaints by adopting a pro-active, positive approach to dealing with them immediately at source.

After consultation with the BMA, this policy was sent to GPC leads for comment and as no concerns or areas for development were identified it was approved by the board to process feedback related to the 2024 Deed of Grant.

You can find the [Policy and Procedures relating to Feedback on the Deed of Grant here](#). I know that it looks more cumbersome on paper, and our role will be to make it feel as smooth as possible so please do reach out if you have any questions or need help navigating the process!

Future Challenges

Clarifying what we are monitoring

There are significant and varying impressions on the voice and influence that the Deed of Grant gives GPDF. One analogy presented to us was that GPDF's contribution was the 'vanilla essence that flavours a much larger cake', and in another the 'rudder that steers the whole ship'. We will be communicating more information about what GPDF actually funds and if you have specific questions please do reach out to us.

Audit

Work is in process to design and agree an appropriate financial audit process to review the Deed of Grant, once the first year of the Grant is complete.

Future of the Arrangement

We were directed by our members to negotiate this Deed of Grant. We are mindful of new voices proposing a contract, or a Joint Venture. A variety of people have informed us that they feel a contractual model may serve GPs better than the current Deed of Grant approach, accepting the potential 20% hit of VAT. Given the additional costs inherent in this we would need to fund the additional 20%, reduce representation by 20% or some hybrid of the two to reach a financially balanced position. If we are directed to negotiate a new model, with all the associated investment costs, we are very happy to. In the meantime we will continue to work, as outlined, to collect data to advise LMC Nominees' understanding of the current process.

Thank you for reading!

It won't be long until "conference season" is underway and we will have the opportunity to chat to many of you at our stand again! If you can't wait until then and would like to discuss any part of this newsletter further, please do reach out to [myself](#) or our Deed of Grant Lead Director, [Dr Roger Scott](#).

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind LMCs that, as communicated in expense policies for [Scottish LMC Conference 2023](#), [England LMC Conference 2023](#), [Welsh LMC conference 2024](#), [UK LMC Conference 2024](#), [GPDF will not fund alcohol](#) in any circumstances in accordance with the policy introduced in September 2023 and presented at our 2023 AGM.



Dr Phil Cox
GPDF Chair