



**Minutes of Meeting**  
**1 February 2020**  
**5-7 pm GMT**  
**Skype Meeting**

**Present:**

<b>Name (Initials)</b>	<b>Position</b>
Dan Nana Osei Mensah Bonsu (DMB)	Vice President
Aaron Amankwaa (AA)	Secretary
Major Emmanuel Adusei (EA)	Council Member
Emmanuel Nsiah Amoako (ENA)	Council Member

**Apologies:**

<b>Name (Initials)</b>	<b>Position</b>
ACP David Agyemang Adjem (DAA)	Honorary President
Pet-Paul Wepeba (PW)	Council Member

**Welcome and introduction**

1. DMB welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the agenda for the meeting:
  - a. Membership update
  - b. Annual conference and AGM
  - c. Election of new officers
  - d. Registration of society as either a professional body or NGO
  - e. AOB

**Membership update**

2. AA provided an update on membership. He mentioned that we currently have 51 members on record, with a majority in good standing since 2016. He further stated that there are limited local forensic science practitioners in the Society and all members should invite their colleagues and practitioners in the Ghana Police Service, Academics/Researchers to join the Society.
3. EA stated that he will follow up on this and invite colleagues in the Military Police. He also mentioned that the list of members in good standing should be published on the Society's website. All members present agreed to this.
4. DMB stated that, rather than a certificate, we should issue a unique lifetime membership number to all members in good standing. Further, local representatives should be established in key regions and institutions to promote the vision and mission of the Society. DMB and AA agreed to pursue this by contacting key individuals at UCC and KNUST, respectively.



5. AA mentioned that, based on the requirements of the Constitution, all current members on record should reactivate their membership but there are issues with a consistent route to pay membership fees. Presently, this is done through MOMO, which is managed by the Treasurer. He stated that an online form has been created for members to renew/update their membership and prospective members to apply for membership. This platform is not currently being utilised and he would like to remind all to use the e-form.

## Conference

6. ENA briefed the meeting about progress on the development of the conference document and strategy for its implementation. He stated that we needed a clear theme for the conference, potential keynote speakers and funding.
7. AA proposed the theme "Forensic science capacity building in Ghana". He stated that he had established contacts with key people, such as a former custodian of a national DNA database in Europe, and senior forensic scientists in the UK and Canada who are keen on speaking at our conference.
8. DMB raised a concern about our availability in Ghana to run the conference this year, given that we are all in different parts of the world conducting research or on peacekeeping missions. He stated it will be prudent to organise a local team to support or partner the society in running the 2020 conference. He recommended Dr Richmond Afoakwa, HOD of the UCC Department of Forensic Science, who has experience in organising such events.
9. ENA suggested that we draft the conference proposal based on the proposed theme as soon as possible and forward to relevant government agencies, and the police. He further mentioned that we would need 4 main local teams to organise the conference: Planning team, Administration team, Marketing team, and Volunteers. Also, we would have to agree on the host institution or venue for the conference.
10. AA suggested that UCC, cape coast, may be the best option as a host institution. It may be easy to organise a local team.
11. ENA thought ACCRA may be the ideal city for the conference since it will be easy for all the key stakeholders to attend.
12. DMB concurred and mentioned that they organised a similar conference in Accra, which was highly patronised. It was easy to organise because they had adequate resources, sponsorship and accessibility of the key stakeholders in forensic science and security. However, he noted that if we organise the conference at UCC, Cape Coast, we may get some support from the University.
13. ENA noted that we would have to come up with a strategy to involve the Police in the conference since they are the main users of forensic science in the country. He



- suggested that once we have a comprehensive conference plan, we should send the Police and other members of the criminal justice system a formal invitation.
14. ENA also mentioned that we should target members of the Criminal Justice System, including the police as our main audience.
  15. EA stated that he was involved in the organisation of the National Symposium on Forensic Science by UCC and suggest that we partner with them or get Dr Afoakwa involved in our conference since he is also a member of the Society. He further mentioned that he will get in touch with some of the key stakeholders in the military who attended the UCC Symposium.
  16. DMB suggested that we may apply for the African Academy of Sciences grant to sponsor the conference.
  17. AA suggested societies such as the UK Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences and the Biochemical Society have some small grants we could explore. Further, we can approach some manufacturing companies who may be interested in sponsoring such events.
  18. DMB mentioned that some media houses may be interested in supporting the marketing of the event. However, from previous experience, some local media houses may rather charge us a fee for advertisement.
  19. EA mentioned that there may be some funding opportunities in the Military, and he will update us after speaking with his contacts.
  20. AA said that the proposed date for the conference was Summer 2020, but this may not be possible.
  21. ENA mentioned that the key areas we will need funding are catering, venue hire, marketing, activities and accommodation/travel expenses for keynote speakers.
  22. EA said that they spend about GHØ12000 on catering when they organised the National Symposium which was attended by about 300 people.
  23. Regarding the keynote speakers, AA suggested the Director of the Ghana Police Forensic Science Laboratory could be invited to speak about the status of forensic science practice in Ghana, highlighting any successes, challenges and solutions.
  24. ENA said that we may invite a Judge or member of the Bar to provide a perspective on the impact of forensic science on the preparation and outcome of legal cases. Further, a senior member of the FSSGH could also speak about possible solutions to improve forensic science in Ghana, drawing on best practice from other jurisdictions that have advanced in the application of forensic science.
  25. AA suggested we may invite one of the Judges on the Supreme Court case of *Asante v the Republic* to speak about the courts' view of forensic science in the criminal justice system.



26. ENA asked whether the conference should be a paid conference or free for all.
27. DMB responded that it may be difficult to get a wide audience if it is a paid conference. This may not be the right approach since this is our first conference. He suggested that the conference should be free for all attendees.
28. AA proposed that since the conference will be free, we may create a fundraising platform on our website or using an appropriate platform.

## **Elections**

29. AA stated that, per the Constitution, the last term of office of current officers ends this year. Hence, we need to invite nominations for the various positions in the Society. The elections will then be organised at the AGM during the time of the conference or electronically before the conference.
30. DMB and EA suggested that we should allow the nomination of some of the current officers since they are the vision bearers of the Society.

## **Registration of Society**

31. DMB stated that we should aim to register as a professional body so we can influence policy and change. This route will allow us to provide certification of practitioners in the country.
32. AA asked ENA to brief the house about the status of the registration that was initiated previously.
33. ENA said the process was bureaucratic because of the route of registration which was being led by an Auditing company recommended by a member.
34. AA suggested that we initiate a new registration directly through the Registrar General's Department and asked if DMB could lead this.
35. ENA mentioned that we may also register as a policy think tank (NGO), which could also be influential. However, we all reached a consensus that registering as a Professional Body will be the most appropriate route.
36. AA suggested that we consider establishing a separate Executive Team from the Council Officers who will be based in Ghana to run the day to day activities of the Society. This is essential because the current Council Officers are based in other countries and this makes it difficult to run the Society.
37. DMB stated that we can consider this as the Society evolves. Further, we should also aim to internationalise the Society by inviting practitioners and colleagues from other African Countries and globally to join the Society.



## Action plans

38. AA to contact Treasurer for information about the financial record of the Society and record of all members who have paid their membership fee since 2016.
39. ENA to draft conference document in consultation with Council members and develop an implementation strategy
40. AA to publish an invitation for nominations for statutory and non-statutory positions in the FSSGH: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Deputy Secretary, Council Members, Working groups, Regional groups.
41. DMB to lead the registration of the Society

## Closing

42. DMB moved for the closure of the meeting since there was no AOB. This was seconded by AA.