

**Bio & Policy Statement from
A Nominee for Associate Member Governor
Board of Governors 2019-2020**

William GILES

Affiliation: Partner of Hart Giles, Solicitors & Notaries



Dear Fellow FCC Members,

It is my honour to put myself forward as a candidate in the election of Governors to represent the Associate Members. I am a solicitor and have lived and worked in Hong Kong for over 28 years. I have also been a director and shareholder of “Delaney’s” pubs and restaurants since we founded the group in 1994. I have 3 “Policies” which I would like to bring to the Board of Governors for discussion and hopefully approval:

1. Relations with “the Landlord”

In my business life I have found it is never a good idea to fall out with the landlord. Unfortunately, there is little doubt that the FCC has fallen out with its landlord, the HK Government. Speakers who regularly appeared at Club events representing Government views no longer use the FCC as a sounding board. We suspect we know the reasons why but that is not my focus. Active consideration of the relationship with HK Government is required and bridges need to be re-built if necessary. We have seen that HK Government is not averse to attacking the leases of other established clubs and there is no doubt in my mind that our own lease is very much at risk. If so, a plan needs to be made to reduce that risk and preserve the status quo of our wonderful and historic Club house for the future of the Club.

2. Suspension of the Anti-Harassment Policy

In early December last year the Anti-Harassment Policy (“the Policy”) was circulated to Members. It had not been publicised beforehand and certainly came as a surprise to me and several friends. It is a very important document as it purports to set parameters around how Members should behave in the Club. We objected to the Board that the Policy had not been incorporated in the By-Laws in accordance with the Club’s constitution but most importantly that it interferes with the freedom of speech that we take for granted as a fundamental value of the Club. We were not successful in our campaign to have the Policy suspended pending consideration by the Members. We requested access to the Members to express our views by email and also a page in “The Correspondent” to publish our position but we were ignored. As a result we have taken the somewhat unusual step of establishing our own website “*save-the-fcc.com*” where you can see the

Policy, our arguments and a Petition to the Board to suspend the Policy pending a General Meeting of Members to consider whether it is necessary. Please respect that the website is designed for FCC Members only and its contents relate to this internal issue within the Club. If you agree with us please sign up; if not we respect your view and welcome a proper chance to debate the issues with you in the true traditions of the Club.

3. Kevin Egan

I was privileged to know and work with Kevin and call him a friend, as indeed he was to many of you. “See you at the pub” he used to say as we left court to meet up later at his corner of the bar. This is the first election in over 20 years where his name will not be on the ballot sheet. His humanity, impartial advice which was freely given and pragmatism made him an indispensable adviser to the Board and hundreds of members. He is sorely missed. I don’t profess to have Kevin’s qualities but I believe I can offer the Board some pragmatic advice when it comes to legal and business issues. Kevin had an open relationship with the press – he understood the difficult job journalists have in extracting a story from a complex set of facts, on time. He was happy to give them guidance and “scoops” and as we know it got him into trouble. But he did not change and maintained his appreciation of good journalism to the end. I would like the Club to establish a prize for the best local investigative reporter, to be awarded every year in Kevin’s name. It would be a small gesture to commemorate Kevin, a key and colourful figure in the Club’s rich history.

Thank you for considering me as your representative on the Club’s Board of Governors.