



**Bio & Policy Statement from  
A Nominee for Associate Member Governor  
Board of Governors 2016-2017**



**Nigel SHARMAN**  
**Affiliation: Clifford Chance**

**My experience** – As a former BBC television journalist and news producer, I believe passionately in press freedom and in the role of the FCC as one of the world's pre-eminent meeting places and discussion forums for journalists and correspondents. Now as a lawyer, and an Associate member, I understand the interests of all FCC members and hope to bring a fresh perspective to many of the Board's decisions.

**Why I am right for the role** – I was a news producer at both the BBC, where I worked on programmes such as *Newsnight*, *Breakfast News* and the *Six O'Clock News* and at ITN where I was Chief Writer on *News at Ten*. I later became BBC Head of New Services with responsibility for coordinating the launch of new services in the digital age. I also completed my MBA during my time with the Corporation.

When I left the BBC, I retrained as a lawyer, first in England and then in Hong Kong. During my study, I also worked as European Public Relations Director for match.com, helping to establish the dating site in the UK and throughout the continent. One memorable part of this was the building of the world's largest chocolate heart in front of the Hard Rock Café in Madrid on Valentine's Day!

I also served as a Director of the Royal Television Society and of the Media Society in the UK, where I helped organise events concerning the role of the press and the privacy of the individual. These debates continue to this day as can be seen with the current furore over the "superinjunction" granted to a celebrity in the UK, despite the facts being reported freely in the US. I thoroughly support ideas such as the FCC Journalism Conference and believe the Club should host more of these events. A debate over the freedom of the press to report as against the right to individual privacy would make for an interesting Club event and with the right speaker, could attract substantial interest and media coverage.

I believe passionately in the role of a free press and am determined the FCC should continue with its proud tradition of supporting journalistic freedom in all its guises. I also believe that journalists, many of whom work on a freelance basis, have the right to be paid properly and on time and that the FCC should lend its support to this effort.

I maintain a close interest in all things digital, being an early adopter of various streaming technologies. I would like to arrange demonstrations of new technology for Club members, for

a consideration of how, for example, the opportunities for virtual reality in the news broadcast space.

As "appointment to view" television fades away and "cord cutting" becomes more attractive to consumers in Hong Kong and elsewhere, what does the news industry need to do to ensure it remains immediate and relevant in the age of Netflix and live streaming by ordinary users on social media?

I now work as a disputes lawyer in Hong Kong, where writing legal and general communications is a large part of my role. I am also the Secretary of the Hong Kong Welsh Male Voice Choir, having previously served as Chairman for two successful years.

During this time, I instigated two *Choir Aid* concerts at St. John's Cathedral, uniting many of the choirs in Hong Kong and which raised substantial sums in aid of Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 in the Philippines and the Nepal earthquake in 2015.

As well as our ongoing sponsorship of students at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, the choir also regularly raises money for good causes abroad, such as our work for the Gift of Life programme in the Philippines which raises money for children to have life-saving heart operations.

I would like to bring my experience of raising money for charity to the Club as it considers the most suitable replacement for the Charity Balls.

**My platform** – If elected as Associate Governor, I would bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the board of one of Hong Kong's most exciting and people-friendly Clubs. I would make use of my legal and business skills and experience whenever necessary to help protect and further the Club's interests.

I would love to use my background in music to invigorate Bert's and bring more variety and excitement to the music programme. I would work closely with Allen Youngblood in devising programmes that bring in more people and generate interest and income. This might include regular "talent nights" for example and a wider range of musical acts.

I would also want to use social media to bring much more attention to what is still undoubtedly the best music bar in Hong Kong. While I receive Facebook notifications about who is performing at other Clubs in Hong Kong, I receive nothing like that for Bert's or indeed for any of the Club's activities. With the Hong Kong Welsh Male Voice Choir, for example, we have both "open" and "closed" pages on Facebook. The "open" page is for general publicity about the choir and we encourage all our audiences to "like" and "share" it as they wish. Our "closed" page is for our members only and provides a forum for discussion amongst our own group.

The FCC could replicate this model, using its "open" page in a much more active way than it does presently to garner interest amongst friends and prospective members, while the "closed" page (open only to members) would be an excellent way for our members to communicate amongst each other. Social media notifications have the advantage of linking directly into a

person's calendar and providing reminders on the day. Our members should be told about events they might find of interest in the best and most immediate ways possible. Our journalists and correspondents take to Twitter in their daily lives – why shouldn't they do so on behalf of the Club?

I support a modest rise in subscriptions to address the Club's financial problems and believe that the case should be made for this, the subscriptions having been static for the past nineteen years.

I would also like the Club to explore the introduction of a minimum spend on food & beverage, to be rolled over if not used up in any one month. If this has the effect of discouraging those whose only connection to the Club is to pay their membership dues, then all well and good. A thriving FCC depends on the active participation of its members and not merely death by direct debit.

We should consider bringing the Main Bar menu into the Main Dining Room, so that when the Main Bar is full, the Main Dining Room can be used as an additional space with menus that FCC members have shown they prefer.

Simplifying the menu across the Club will help with overcapacity. This means that if some dormant members do stop paying subscriptions because of the introduction of a minimum spend requirement, the Club can allow in new members with a real enthusiasm for the Club and who will want to come and spend money in the Club's facilities. A single menu should also help with staff efficiencies. We should look at all of the Club's present activities to see if they really provide value for money.

I commit to serving the needs of all members through active engagement and participation in all areas where I know I could make a difference. To do that, I need your support in this election.

Thank you!