

The 27th AGM

Draft agenda of 27th Annual General Meeting of The ACCU will be held at 13:30 on Saturday 25th April 2015 at the Bristol Marriott City Centre Hotel, 2 Lower Castle Street, Old Market, Bristol, BS1 3AD, United Kingdom.

1. - Apologies for absence
2. - Minutes of the 26th Annual General Meeting
3. - Minutes of Special General Meeting of 2nd August 2014
4. - Annual reports of the officers
5. - Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2014
6. - Election of Auditor
7. - Election of Officers and Committee.
8. - Other motions for which notice has been given (for full text see below):
 1. Proposed changes to the ACCU constitution if nobody stands as an officer
 2. Proposed changes to the ACCU constitution to allow the committee to co-opt an Officer

The Candidates for election are:

Candidate Name	Post	Proposer	Seconder
Alan Lenton	Chair	Jonathan Wakely	Emyr Williams
Malcolm Noyes	Secretary	Nigel Lester	Hubert Matthews
Roger Orr	Non exec member/Publications Officer	Marcin Sobieszczanski	Sam Saariste
Matthew Jones	Membership Secretary	Jonathan Wakely	Emyr Williams
Robert Pauer	Treasurer	Jonathan Wakely	Emyr Williams
Jonathan Wakely	Non exec member/Standards Officer	Roger Orr	Steve Love
Emyr Williams	Non exec member	Malcolm Noyes	Nigel Lester
Ralph McArdell	Non exec member	Malcolm Noyes	Jez Higgins
Seb Rose	Non exec member/Advertising Officer	Guy Bolton King	Alan Dobbie

Any other Annual General Meeting Business (To be notified to the Chair prior to the commencement of the Meeting).

Malcolm Noyes
ACCU Secretary

Other motions for which notice has been given:

1. Proposed changes to the ACCU constitution if nobody stands as an officer

Proposed by Malcolm Noyes.
Seconded by Seb Rose.

It is proposed to change the constitution to allow members present at a General Meeting to elect officers from the floor subject to prior approval from members by electronic vote.

This is the proposed change (notes on why it is necessary are below). You can view the constitution at <http://www.accu.org/index.php/constitution>.

The existing clause 5.3.4:

5.3.4
If no candidate for an officer position is nominated according to the procedure in 5.3.3, nominations for a caretaker to fill the vacancy can be taken from the floor. The duty of a committee with at least one caretaker officer will be to organise a new election for that role. In the meantime, that committee will be limited to ordinary administration of the organisation.

Proposed changes:

5.3.4

If no candidate for an Officer position is nominated according to the procedure in 5.3.3, the committee can accept a proposal up to the draft agenda deadline (to be voted on in accordance with the proposal rules above) that members should, for that year only, elect that Officer at the General Meeting by taking votes from the floor.

5.3.5

If no candidate for an Officer position is nominated according to the procedures in 5.3.3 or 5.3.4, nominations for a Caretaker Officer to fill the vacancy can be taken from the floor. The duty of a committee with at least one Caretaker Officer or an unfilled Officer position will be to organise a new election for that role. In the meantime, that committee will be limited to ordinary administration of the organisation.

The existing clauses 5.3.5 and 5.3.6 are renumbered 5.3.6 and 5.3.7 respectively.

Background:

Last year, we ended up with no chair and no secretary after the AGM and had difficulties electing members to these posts because of some unhelpful wording in the constitution.

The problem is that members need to be nominated to stand well in advance of the AGM to allow electronic voting to take place.

Prior to the introduction of electronic voting, the members at the General Meeting would elect members to officer positions from the floor. If no candidates had put themselves forward, this allowed the committee to discuss the situation at the conference prior to the General Meeting and members with suitable skills could be 'encouraged' to stand.

I think that electronic voting is a good thing for the democracy of the organisation, but if there are no candidates put forward then the current constitution prevents the appointment of that officer without another election.

So how do we fix this? The obvious (but in my view, flawed) answer is to allow election of officers from the floor at the General Meeting once again. My concern is that this would lead to the majority of officers being elected in this way and that would devalue the contribution of those members who are unable to attend the General Meeting (which presumably was the purpose of bringing in electronic voting in the first place!).

On the other hand, I'm sure that in most circumstances, members would prefer to have a full committee elected at the General Meeting and not have to wait for another electronic vote (which we pay for) and an SGM (which I can confirm is a pain!), as we did last year; I hope that those attending the AGM can usually be trusted to vote for the right person, especially if there is only one candidate, as there often is!

My proposed solution is to allow the General Meeting to elect officers from the floor, but *only* if the members have previously agreed (by using the existing electronic voting) that they can do that; the variation to the constitution would stand for that year only, and only for that officer. As several members of the committee noted, this does make the process slightly more cumbersome, but remember that this is *only* required if nobody stands!

So the procedure would be like this; at the proposal deadline, we realise that there are no candidates for an officer. Someone (probably an existing committee member) can submit a proposal (in the next 18 days, i.e. after the proposal deadline but before the agenda deadline) that the General Meeting can elect the officer from the floor. Members vote on this proposal in the usual way; if they agree, then the committee can persuade someone to stand and the General Meeting can elect them. On the other hand if there is some contentious issue and the members don't think the General Meeting should elect from the floor, then the existing rules stand and there will either need to be another election (with or without a caretaker being appointed).

2. Proposed changes to the ACCU constitution to allow the committee to co-opt an Officer

Proposed by Alan Griffiths.

Seconded by Jamal Natour.

Background:

As the constitution currently stands it is possible for the committee to co-opt to vacant posts on the committee without reference to the membership. This applies both to "Officers" and "Non-executive Committee Members" (the two types of committee member described in 5.2).

Following the AGM last year there were a number of posts vacant including two of the Officers. The current committee chose not exercise the option to co-opt Officers feeling that the holder of these posts deserve a mandate from the membership. Instead they chose to operate with no-one formally filling the roles of Secretary and Chair.

This raises the following concerns:

1. If we agree that these posts require a mandate there is no guarantee that a future committee will not co-opt officers without an election.
2. While there was no-one formally fulfilling the Secretary and Chair roles there was a lack of transparency about how the work was actually being done.

As the current committee clearly took its inspiration for how it handled the situation from the latter parts of 5.3.4 we feel it would be better to formalise this handling of the constitution and address these concerns.

Proposed changes:

Current:

5.3.4

If no candidate for an officer position is nominated according to the procedure in 5.3.3, nominations for a caretaker to fill the vacancy can be taken from the floor. The duty of a committee with at least one caretaker officer will be to organise a new election for that role. In the meantime, that committee will be limited to ordinary administration of the organisation.

...

5.4.1

Should any member of the Committee resign or cease to act during the life of the Committee, or a vacancy otherwise arise, the Committee shall have the power to co-opt a member of the Association to fill the vacancy.

Proposed:

5.3.4.1

If no candidate for an Officer position is nominated according to the procedure in 5.3.3, nominations for a Caretaker Officer to fill the vacancy can be taken from the floor.

5.3.4.2

Should any Officer resign or cease to act during the life of the Committee, or a vacancy otherwise arise, the Committee shall have the power to co-opt a member of the Association as a Caretaker Officer to fill the vacancy.

5.3.4.3 The duty of a committee with at least one Caretaker Officer will be to organise a new election for that role. In the meantime, that committee will be limited to ordinary administration of the organisation.

...

5.4.1

Should any Non-executive Committee Member resign or cease to act during the life of the Committee, or a vacancy otherwise arise, the Committee shall have the power to co-opt a member of the Association to fill the vacancy.

Drafting note in respect of the above 2 proposals:

As suggested by Alan Griffiths:

"The intentions and textual changes of these proposals are independent so I feel that combining them should both be approved can be considered "purely editorial"

Should both proposals be accepted, the combined wording would be:

5.3.4.1

If no candidate for an Officer position is nominated according to the procedure in 5.3.3, the committee can accept a proposal up to the draft agenda deadline (to be voted on in accordance with the proposal rules above) that members should, for that year only, elect that Officer at the General Meeting by taking votes from the floor.

5.3.4.2

If no candidate for an Officer position is nominated according to the procedures in 5.3.3 or 5.3.4.1, nominations for a Caretaker Officer to fill the vacancy can be taken from the floor.

5.3.4.3

Should any Officer resign or cease to act during the life of the Committee, or a vacancy otherwise arise, the Committee shall have the power to co-opt a member of the Association as a Caretaker Officer to fill the vacancy.

5.3.4.4 The duty of a committee with at least one Caretaker Officer will be to organise a new election for that role. In the meantime, that committee will be limited to ordinary administration of the organisation.

...

5.4.1

Should any Non-executive Committee Member resign or cease to act during the life of the Committee, or a vacancy otherwise arise, the Committee shall have the power to co-opt a member of the Association to fill the vacancy.