

Minutes for ACCU Committee meeting

20th September 2014, London

Meeting started at 15:10.

1. Attending

Matthew Jones (remotely), Ralph McArdell, Malcolm Noyes, Roger Orr, Robert Pauer (remotely), Chris O'Dell (remotely)

Apologies for absence

Dirk Haun, Alan Lenton, Mark Radford

2. Minutes from last meetings

The minutes of the meeting on 2nd August were approved.

3. Actions arising/ongoing

~~5. Alan Ask for help with an article in CVu, and emails to accu members and accu-general for migrating the membership system.~~

Alan Lenton agreed to write an article for CVu. Done.

~~8. Matt: ~~to polish the wording of the proposal for the local group sponsorship and send it around for review~~ Draft complete, Matt to add details discussed about reimbursement, payments, closed meetings. Done.~~

~~12. Asti: Create survey to ask members what we can do that would encourage them to attend conference. Initial feedback does not suggest anything obvious that could be done to encourage more members to attend. Roger: ask Asti for a formal summary of the survey results.~~

~~16. Matt: Discuss website/membership system integration with Martin and Archer Yates. Matt discussed with Tim Pushman & Martin; responses need to be converted to requirements list. Ongoing~~

~~17. Alan Lenton: co-ordinate comments/responses to website proposals. Alan: ask for comments via CVu. No comments received. Asti has been having problems with the length of time it took to use the system.~~

~~20. Roger: ask Asti for formal feedback report from conference. Done.~~

~~21. Matt and Rob: proposal for next meeting regarding funding for local groups.~~

~~23. Matt: send list of known moderators to committee list. Done. Add Chair and Secretary as mods to all lists.~~

~~26. Rob: provide instructions to Alan/Malcolm on what needs to be done to become signatories for approved spending. Alan having difficulties with bank - ongoing.~~

~~27. Roger: send emails from Seb Rose and Allan Kelly to Alan. Done.~~

~~28. Matt: send approved (signed) copy of the SGM minutes to Rob.~~

~~29. Roger: Discuss (with Fran) adding "peer reviewed" to front cover of Overload. Will be added. Done.~~

~~30. Alan: Write proposal for ACCU conference session when CFP comes out.~~

4. Reports

4.1 Advertising

No report.

4.2 Conference

Report from Jon Jagger:

The keynote speakers are all sorted.

The call for papers will open at the end of the month.

BMW has enquired about being a sponsor.

4.3 Local Groups

Report from Matt Jones:

Nigel contacted me about <http://oxfordcc.co.uk/> sponsoring the Oxford meetings.

Report of discussion between Rob & Matt:

Rob's view is that groups should be self funded so we can help them to get started but hopefully not fund them continuously. This leads to a wider question for the committee and ACCU in general: do we invest in active groups in the hope they will bring in new members? Do we invest in groups anyway, as a visible and active aspect of ACCU? Should groups be required to come up with some form of business case to get funding? Should we allocate a budget (with all the attendant problems that budgets cause!)?

We need to know how many paid members attend each group, on average, and how many guests. What is the conversion rate? I have asked the groups. This will help us understand whether there is any likely return on investment.

We should be prepared to pay speaker's travel expenses: standard rail fares and maybe an evening meal. Would this be acceptable?

Due to our banking arrangements we can only refund via cheque. For foreign transactions (should they arise) or online (or similar) purchases where a credit card is required, we will need a willing ACCU member to make the purchase using their own funds, then reimburse them ASAP.

The committee discussed this and did not feel that a single rule was necessary (local groups have different needs). Requests from local groups should be considered on an 'ad hoc' basis.

The committee also discussed the request from the USA local group for a video camera to record meetings. The committee were concerned that ownership of this would be difficult to control, there was no clear idea of how many members attended USA meetings and wondered whether it might be better to provide a slide deck and audio instead. Matt will send a note.

4.4 Membership

Report from Matt Jones:

There is a big batch of standing order renewals each August (for historic reasons). This highlighted a number of people who are paying the wrong amount. Mick has chased most of them a number of times (some for many years). We could ignore it (total loss to the ACCU coffers of ~ £100) or demote them to a membership level that matches what they're paying, after a final warning.

I was contacted by [a member] who has realised that he has been paying his membership by standing order, but not receiving magazines for "some years". The problem is that he can't remember when his membership lapsed, and it was long enough ago that the account has been deleted from the website database. This leaves us in the embarrassing situation of needing to reimburse him for an unknown amount. He thinks he cancelled before 2010. I suggest we check the bank records if possible, and pay back what we can find, or with no other evidence, offer 5 years at the concession rate (he thinks he was paying this). Comments welcome!

Full Membership:587

Full Membership, Student/Retired/Similar:19

Basic Membership:42

Basic Membership, Student/Retired/Similar:4

Corporate:24

Total paying members: 676 (20 less than last reported).

Gratis:17

Honorary:23

Complimentary:32

Link to Corporate:1

Link to Joint:1

The committee agreed that in general we should cut the subscription after '1 last warning'. In the particular case of the member who had not received magazines, we could offer magazines for this year but postage/availability meant that previous years could only be offered on pdf.

Matt offered to graph membership numbers for the next meeting.

4.5 Treasurer

Report from Rob Pauer:

Very little change from the last meeting

Payment from Archer Yates has been received in respect of the annual conference.

The process of adding Alan and Malcolm to the signatory list has started.

4.6 Publicity

No report (no publicity officer).

4.7 Standards

Report from Mark Radford:

I keep writing them and Steve Love keeps publishing them

Here are some things I think will interest the committee:

- My reports have steadily grown in length. The one in the current CVu contained 1219 words according to the word count in Libre Office (when I took over, the word count was in the region of 500 words). Frankly I do not think I can continue writing reports of this length, and containing this level of detail, but I don't want to go back to just 500 words either. I will try to find some sort of balance
 - My next report will have to be submitted by mid-October. I won't know the exact date until Steve emails it to the regular reportees, but it will be before the next BSI C++ Panel meeting (27th October) so I won't have any actual meetings to report on (the ISO meeting isn't until Nov). I will try to catch up with what the C Panel are doing. Also Roger has pointed out some changes in ISO procedure I can report on
 - Most people have no doubt heard that C++14 was recently ratified, but anyone who read my report in the current CVu will notice this event is not reported. This is because I had to ship the report just before the result of the C++14 DIS ballot was known (IIRC the production deadline for the current CVu was about a week earlier, in Aug, than it normally would have been)
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4.8 Website

Martin has connected all previous Overload articles to individual articles (see also report of conversation in 'Publications' from Alison Peck).

4.9 Mentored Developers

Study groups have all been very quiet recently.

Chris O'Dell is standing down from supporting mentored developers.

4.10 Social media

Chris O'Dell is standing down from supporting social media. Martin has login details for @AccuOrg.

4.11 Publications

Report from Roger Orr:

No major changes to report. Ric Parkin helped guest-editing the current Overload to cover while Frances was on holiday.

We continue to be a bit light on material for both publications: requesting it on accu-general is helping.

Martin and I had a discussion about the notification that he sends out about Overload.

He is likely to experiment with adding a link to the individual articles, with the proviso that, given the method of publication, the individual articles will be available somewhat later than the main PDF.

Alison Peck (who does typesetting of the magazines for ACCU) has suggested that in addition to Overload, we could also do this for CVu within the existing budget. The committee agreed that we should aim to do this for future editions but not past ones although we would need to make clear to contributors to the Code Review that their responses would be published in this way.

5. Any other business

5.1 Draft agenda for committee meetings

- Should we publish a draft agenda (possibly after agreement of the committee) to accu-members along with the notice of the next committee meeting?

Discussion: the agenda is always the same, except for AOB. Items suggested for AOB might need approval from a committee member before the agenda is finalised and could be published, so it is difficult to publish the full agenda. Further thought required.

5.2 Election of officers

- Following on from Alan's comments in a recent CVu, we probably need to start thinking about what changes to make to the constitution so that we might be able to allow election of officers at the AGM (the existing rules to co-opt regular committee members are probably sufficient). One idea (that might be over-complicated): if no proposals for a position have been received by the proposal deadline, the committee can make a proposal (that would have to be accepted by a vote of the members) that the position can be filled by a vote at the AGM.

Discussion: This is a difficult problem to solve; on the one hand if no candidates for a position emerge before an election then we want to be able to fill the position easily, whilst on the other we don't want to disenfranchise members. If no further ideas emerge then Malcolm to consider a form of words for the above.

5.3 AGM information pack

- the information pack for the AGM has in the past been printed for members at the AGM. Whilst it is good that the members are given this information this is very wasteful and possibly an unnecessary expense. Perhaps we could prepare next years AGM pack as a pdf and email to members?

Rob advised that the cost of printing the AGM pack was about £200. Although there could be some members who do not take emails from accu-members (and would therefore not receive an emailed AGM pack) the committee could not find any compelling reason to

continue to print the pack for all members who attend the AGM. If we publicise this change early enough so that members are aware of the change (and have a few hand printed copies at the AGM) then that should be sufficient. Perhaps just a printed agenda for the AGM? Comments welcome...

6. Date of next meeting

The next committee meeting is proposed to be a short hangout on 15th Nov @ 4pm.

It was proposed to hold a more open 'discussion' meeting to consider the way forward for the organisation, possibly in a meeting room so that more members can participate. Proposed for January, 10th, 17th or 24th.

Outstanding Actions

12. Asti: ~~Create survey to ask members what we can do that would encourage them to attend conference. Initial feedback does not suggest anything obvious that could be done to encourage more members to attend. Roger: ask Asti for a formal summary of the survey results.~~

16. Matt: Discuss website/membership system integration with Martin and Archer Yates. Matt discussed with Tim Pushman & Martin; responses need to be converted to requirements list. Ongoing

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28. Matt: send approved (signed) copy of the SGM minutes to Rob.

30. Alan: Write proposal for ACCU conference session when CFP comes out.

31. Matt: Send note to USA local group re. recording audio and providing slide deck for US local group.

34. Matt: graphs of membership numbers for next meeting (note - we should probably plan to make these available to members so pdfs would be good!)..