

Minutes for ACCU Committee meeting

6th September 2015, London

Meeting started at 14:35.

1. Attending

Nigel Lester (remotely), Matthew Jones (remotely), Ralph McArdell, Malcolm Noyes (remotely), Roger Orr, Robert Pauer (remotely), Alan Lenton (remotely)

Apologies for absence

Emyr Williams

2. Minutes from last meetings

The minutes of the meeting on 16th May 2015 were approved.

3. Actions arising/ongoing

12. Survey to ask members what we can do that would encourage them to attend conference. Roger: ask Russel for a formal summary of the survey results. Done.

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. Matt to send out proposal for comments/discussion. Done.

39. Matt to send out proposals on membership system to committee to comment. Done.

40. Malcolm to send email to Martin asking about handover of social media accounts. Alan will consider how we should deal with this - agenda item for next meeting. Malcolm/Nigel will talk to Emyr to see if he would be interested in monitoring Social Media presence.

41. Matt to look at meetup - we have membership for 3 groups but will look at changing this for more. Done.

42. Alan needs to consider potential wording for statement on diversity (including disabilities).

4. Reports

4.1 Advertising

No report.

4.2 Conference

Brief verbal report from Roger Orr:

Roger noted a concern that the organisation of next year's conference seemed to be slightly behind (probably as a result of Russel having stepped in at the last minute and therefore not getting the benefit of shadowing Jon). Alan to speak to Russel to find out what the status is and how we can help.

4.3 Local Groups

Report from Matt Jones:

No response from any groups to my recent request for news for this report. I assume everything is going smoothly. Nothing from the new group in Sheffield, either, which is a tad disappointing.

4.4 Membership

Report from Matt Jones:

Statistics			
Full Membership	482	Full Membership, Student/Retired/Similar	21
Basic Membership	38	Basic Membership, Student/Retired/Similar	3
Gratis	17	Honorary	23
Complimentary	30	Corporate	24
Link to Joint	1		

Total paying members: 568 (619 last report - 51 less)

There is probably a bit of a dip this month due to the large number of standing order renewals in August - I don't get to process these until I see the bank statement.

Due to (slowly) dwindling numbers we are close to reaching a threshold with the magazines: We are still printing 750, but soon we will only need 700. I can't remember whether this has a cost implication, but I just want to make everyone aware.

I have had a corporate membership request for 12 magazines across a number of sites. I have info from Mick about per-magazine cost (to us) so we can work something out without a) charging one corporate membership per site) or b) ending up at a loss if we discount them too heavily.

For the record, there was a recent discussion amongst the committee about a request I received from a recruitment agency for confirmation of a member's status. This is the second one I have received in 18+ months. In my response I only confirm any personal data already presented to me in the request. i.e. No personal data is divulged. I do reveal start and renewal dates, and the member's membership status. In the most recent case, the member turned out to have expired. Where possible I also contact the member to tell them that I have been approached, and that I have responded.

Update on 7th Sept:

Now that I've just done the standing orders, and lots of others have renewed, we've gained 51 since my report on Sunday, taking us back to exactly the same level as the report-before-last.

Statistics			
Full Membership	531	Full Membership, Student/Retired/Similar	21
Basic Membership	40	Basic Membership, Student/Retired/Similar	3
Gratis	17	Honorary	23
Complimentary	30	Corporate	24
Link to Joint	1		

4.5 Treasurer

Report from Rob Pauer:

As of 5/9/15 the balances remain healthy and there have been no unusual transactions or requests.

The Conference income of £5900 was received at the end of June.

The August bank statement detailing most of the subscription for individual members has just arrived and will be processed shortly.

4.6 Publicity

No report (no publicity officer).

4.7 Standards

No report.

4.8 Website

Martin/Alison are working on ePub formats and this has been received well so far. Currently the process involves converting the XHTML to ePub (Alison can also publish HTML 5).

There was some discussion about what should be publicly available to non-members; Overload is currently made available after publication but CVu articles will only be made available on an ad-hoc basis since some authors may be discouraged from publishing if content was to be public.

4.9 Mentored Developers

No report (no co-ordinator for this role).

4.10 Social media

4.11 Publications

There are still not enough articles; we are encouraging people to write up meetings but this is not easy to do. Perhaps we could send requests for articles via Twitter? Roger to talk to editors.

There was some discussion about whether we could offer some incentive to write articles; perhaps we could offer an annual prize for best article (maybe something like a free conference day), maybe with a public vote? Roger to talk to Overload/CVu editors.

5. Any other business

5.1 Officer for Disabilities

At the AGM Francis Glassborow raised the issue of an ACCU officer for disabilities. ACCU previously had an officer for disabilities but apparently this officer was never required to carry out any actions so the post lapsed. The committee felt that it was something that ACCU *should* have a policy on and something should be added to the webpage - possibly a statement on diversity on the 'About' page? Alan needs to consider potential wording.

5.2 Were the conditions for a quorum at the SGM met?

There was some discussion about how to interpret the constitution; the view of the committee at the time was that the only things that could be decided at the SGM were items that would be voted on using electronic voting (which clearly did have sufficient numbers), however a strict interpretation of the constitution (7.8) suggests that there the meeting should have had a quorum of 10 voting members. There was also some discussion about what it means for voting members to be 'present' at the meeting (Hangouts, phone-ins, chat are all possibilities). Malcolm's view is that the constitution does not need changing as it is now clear for any future SGMs that 10 members should be present and SGMs are rare (AGMs generally have well above the quorum as they are held at the conference venue). The 10 members limit should not be hard to achieve and is beneficial as a check on the committee.

Alan will consider this for the next meeting.

5.3 Future direction of website and membership database

No-one has a clear idea of what we want the system to do; the current system is acceptable but could be improved:

- there are no links with the conference data held by Archer Yates.
- we cannot automatically check members who go to conference.
- we cannot remind members who previously attended that conference is approaching.

Matt to contact Julie and ask her what is the best way of doing this check.

Schedule another discussion for next meeting.

5.4 Clarify how/when local group organisers can get reimbursed for expenditures such as hiring venues

Background (Ralph McArdell) - *the London group occasionally has to fall back on hiring a hall if other arrangements fall through (or are not forthcoming at all) at current cost of £120 (Frances enquired a month or two ago). I think on previous occasions when this has happened [members] have just covered the cost themselves which is not really fair. I seem to recall talk of local groups being supported for these sorts of expenses but do not recall a specific procedure that should be followed.*

Discussion: There was some discussion about whether it would be beneficial to have a budget for local groups - the consensus was that we should but that we should trial an overall budget of £1000 to be reviewed at the next (and subsequent) meetings. The aim is to cover the costs of speaker's travel and would be authorised ahead of time using the committee reflector. The cost of sending back issue of magazines to local groups and the cost of Meetup should also be covered by this budget.

6. Date of next meeting

The date of the next committee meeting will be Sunday 22nd November @ 2:30, physically at Roger's house (35 Kitto Road SE14 5TW).

Meeting ended at 16:20.

Outstanding Actions

40. *Malcolm to send email to Martin asking about handover of social media accounts. Alan will consider how we should deal with this - agenda item for next meeting. Malcolm/Nigel will talk to Emyr to see if he would be interested in monitoring Social Media presence.*
42. *Alan needs to consider potential wording for statement on diversity (including disabilities).*
43. *Matt to check with Ewan that we are paying the Meetup fee and that he is claiming it back.*
44. *Alan to speak to Russel to find out what the conference status is and how we can help.*
45. *Roger to talk to Overload/CVu editors regarding sending requests for articles via Twitter and offering a prize for best article.*
46. *Alan to consider incentives for writing Overload/CVu articles for the next meeting.*
47. *Matt to contact Julie and ask her what is the best way of doing member checks for conference.*
48. *Ralph to contact webeditor@accu.org to get ACCU London mailing list fixed.*
49. *Nigel will contact Ewan to find out how to generate logos for new local groups.*
50. *Matt to start sending complimentary copy of Overload to contact at Oxford University.*