

Minutes for ACCU Committee meeting

21st November 2021, via Google Meet

Meeting started at 14.30.

1. Attending

Robin Williams, Felix Petriconi, Ralph McArdell, Bob Schmidt, Roger Orr, Phil Nash, Jim Hague, Geoff Daniels, Matt Jones, Adeel Nadeem

Apologies for absence

Patrick Martin, Guy Davidson

2. Minutes from last meetings

The committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting

3. Actions in progress

Note: the Google Sheet for actions is here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RMTorasYR_A94VBjv-Dn6ghhTVWLbW0w1ekhN994qFI

Actions from previous meetings:

122	Patrick: update the very old advertising card - get ad server stats and web visits from Bob and Jim
140	Phil: write up and pass round his suggestions for local group affiliations
143	Patrick: suggestions to define some central storage solution for ACCU documents. etc. consider GDPR - talk to Rob Pauer
146	Phil: Local groups: propose to add "affiliated groups" section underneath - Phil to send details to Bob
153	Patrick: to investigate setting up the safety account for the Paypal payments
177	Patrick: clarify some Constitutional points: e.g. "Honorary Auditor"? and is the AGM announcement timeline still relevant? - Review / canvas for others
179	Robin: e-mail Patrick/Adeel to confirm we're all happy with advertising rates.
180	Patrick: confirm when advertising contract comes up for renewal.
182	Patrick: Discuss YouTube channel promotion & monetization with Jim Roper.
183	Adeel: Contact Fran to confirm whether study group suggestion is still of interest.
184	Bob: To email the list about books for the ACCU essential books wiki

#122: Patrick: the latest draft media pack is [here](#): it's not greatly different from what we've seen

previously - we have the ability to offer full colour pages and I've added that.

Suggestion: I propose we don't agonise too much on this: the current draft is already way better; Ralph and Adeel and others have helped to smooth the advert rates and the look, and I would remind us all that it's really only Alison's company that is buying ads right now. If we make more decisions I or anyone with the Doc can issue updates with very little effort, and we can put the abridged pack on the website as soon as we want.

Suggestion: extend the full colour offers to the smaller advert sizes, which we could do at prices that stand up well next to B&W. Robin / Roger I think we were considering this a while back - any thoughts?

Roger: the editorial team don't see a great need for colour for content, but can adapt to take advantage of this if advertising copy comes in.

Committee members will request access to draft and review.

#140 Phil:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Wr9fKq09lw6zjfzZTqqLdH0uBszshPdPD00LcZDxZOE/edit#>

(you'll need to request access, but at that point you'll have edit rights, and can also comment, of course).

It's mostly in line with what we already have, especially here

https://accu.org/index.php/accu_branches/starter_kit. The intention is not to replace the existing starter kit, but, once we agree on all the details, will update it to reflect that.

The main differences to the previous pack to note, I believe are:

Wording:

- More clarity on common requirements/ benefits - as well as what's different.
- Slightly clearer on CoC requirements for affiliate groups (we can discuss this further).
- Explicit mention of shepherding and support available for all groups

Material differences:

- Added requirement that affiliate groups must have at least one ACCU member on the org team.
- Removed mention of affiliate groups having access to ACCU funding.
- Affiliate group to be listed on the ACCU site on the Local Groups page (but in a separate section)
- upcoming and past events in Overload or C-Vu (which tbd)
- provision of a sponsorship prospectus (I still need to work on this)

Closed, new action opened for all to review the material.

#143 Patrick: For this I've been following the thread of getting ACCU access to Google Docs (hence Drive) and the very similar Microsoft 365 offering. Pros are: everything "just works" - versioning, physical safety of our files is Someone Else's Problem; less moving parts.

Long story short: Google and MS both have free non-profit offerings, which would suit us perfectly for cloud base document generation and sharing.

As a sidebar, it's not up to me to rule out a home-brew solution running on whatever hardware ACCU can put together, which could largely match these. To put the storage needs in context, the documents I have (old invoices, statement scans etc.) zip up to 1.7GB from my Google Drive. Growth might mean we add a zero or two, but this is not a large amount of storage in 2021.

However, in the UK it seems the "non-profit" criterion boils down to "are you a charity"; hence the suggestion: "Can and should ACCU register as a charity?" discussed below.

Discussion: we're working OK within the free level of Google Drive, minimizing sharing of personal information (e.g. payees) to specifically relevant parties.

#146 Phil: In progress, blocker for completion of #185.

#153 Patrick: I have found my way to the NatWest community banking contact. First thing to report is that creating a new account requires somebody to be a NatWest customer; this might be an issue. The other thing is that he was not clear whether an account could still be configured to sweep funds into another account. Although caveat he was not in a position to advise directly I got the impression he was so so about the genuine need to have such an agreement anyway.

Will need to be reviewed in context of the discussion of Charitable Status.

#177 Patrick: Both of these seem to be proposals to update the Constitution which is another AGM time action.

Suggestion: Any preferences? A simplified AGM timeline would make Secretaries happier
Move action to Robin to propose & circulate wording for motion at next AGM.

#179 Robin: I contacted Adeel and Patrick about this directly after the July meeting. The last I heard was that they were making arrangements to talk about moving this forward.

Adeel: have reviewed magazine rates, which seem in line. Close and roll into #122.

#180 Patrick: Effie from QBS has reached out to me recently concerning adverts - previously it was

someone else, and I've replied to her query, but got nothing back yet. I will send a follow-up. Of course, the QBS ad purchase has been in limbo due to the infrequent communications - I am hoping to restore this to a regular arrangement. In the interim you may want to consider if we should be running ads for them. It may simply be more straightforward to wait for Effie to come to a conclusion: I'm chasing her for a reply next week.

Currently QBS ads are served as 20% of banners on website. Wait on Patrick's contact with QBS, otherwise review magazine and website advertising if fees and updated copy are no longer being received in January. Roger will e-mail Patrick to confirm.

#182: Patrick: Jim tells me we just need to sort out the account for the funds to be sent to.

Suggestion: can we revisit and restate the reasons for seeking a sweep account and exactly what features we're looking for? 1. One so I can try to find this unicorn ;) 2. So if I come across an equivalently useful feature we might consider switching to adopting that.

Suggestion: I'm assuming the same reasoning for wanting a sweep account for PayPal would apply for remuneration from Google. Can we confirm or not that we're looking for the same solution for both these use cases?

#183: Adeel: Contacted Fran. Book is nearly done, will confirm whether a study group is still of interest. Action closed.

#184: Bob: Sent out e-mail on list, with some feedback. The discussion is ongoing. Wiki entries have links to publicly-accessible reviews. Action closed.

Actions added by this meeting:

#185: All: Review Phil's draft towards approval at next meeting.

#186: Ralph, Phil: Report on re-launch process for local groups & advertising in CVu.

4. Reports

4.1 Advertising

Geoff: QBS has already been discussed in the context of #180. Work also ongoing on advertising card, see #122, #186.

4.2 Conference

Felix:

The four keynote speakers have been announced: Guy Davidson, Hannah Dee, Patricia Aas and Titus

Winters.

The plan is still for a hybrid conference. Julie and Charlotte have a meeting with the Marriott in December regarding the COVID conditions of the event and contract details.

Call for Papers did run for four weeks. We have 119 proposals by 74 speakers and the reviewing has begun. There are somewhat fewer submissions than the previous years, but the average quality is higher at first glance.

I decided, supported by Jim Roper, that we will no longer use Firebird's submission system, but go with a system that Phil Nash has developed over the years. It has been used e.g. for C++OnSea and the Timur's ADC-Audio Developer Conference. (The Firebird system became more expensive than it was originally communicated and the number of bugs had caused severe trouble for me during the recent conference.)

We have a schedule assembly meeting on December 11th.

The conference schedule information will be directly linked to the website, to ensure it is always up-to-date. For comparison: the recent CppCon had around 250 in person attendees, 1000 online; ADC was also hybrid, but more weighted to in-person attendance. Process has been agreed with AY for switching between online and in-person attendance. The 2022 ACCU AGM will be run as a hybrid event within the conference schedule.

4.3 Local Groups

The re-launch process for Local Groups early next year was discussed, e.g. advertising via social media and advertising in CVu/Overload. See Action 186.

4.4 Membership

Matt: no significant changes to previous reports.

4.5 Treasurer

Running smoothly, various aspects discussed under actions.

4.6 Publicity & Social Media

Adeel: some members raised issues with regard to content distributed via social media. It is difficult to independently review quality of blog postings on a timely basis. The committee made some suggestions of potential sources of information. ACCU members are encouraged to contact publicity@accu.org if they have material to promote across social media.

4.7 Standards

No report.

4.8 Website

Jim: I have little to report hosting-wise. Our server is getting very short on disc space, and taking advantage of Guy's kind offer of space on his server is a priority when I have time.

Bob: Some maintenance of the old site has been required to limit space usage, by deleting old magazine covers. Epubs are continuing to be posted by Daniel James, but download rates are not high (particularly

for CVu). ACCU 2022 material has been added to the ad carousel, and will be updated as available.

4.9 Publications

Roger: Nothing new to report. Patrick is organizing the annual vote on best articles.

5. Potential Charitable status

Patrick: Excerpt from <https://www.gov.uk/setting-up-charity>

1. [Find trustees](#) for your charity - you usually need at least 3.
2. Make sure the charity has '[charitable purposes for the public benefit](#)'.
3. Choose a [name for your charity](#).
4. Choose a [structure for your charity](#).
5. Create a '[governing document](#)'.
6. [Register as a charity](#) if your annual income is over £5,000 or if you set up a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO).

These steps seem achievable for ACCU, but must surely trigger a set of proposals to be presented to the members at the new AGM?

Suggestion: please have a chat and think about this - there is no rush yet, based upon the storage size of files, hence we can wait until after the AGM and in the interim perhaps allow for the hand-crafted solution to emerge as another option?

Public benefit: technical content of magazines, local group meetings, required to make organizational problems with banks simpler to deal with. Need to confirm status with regard to beneficial status of receiving magazines wrt potential for Gift Aid claims.

6. Content for Social Media postings

Adeel: On the ACCU mailing lists, there was discussion about the quality of content being posted across social media as I had been aggregating content from across the internet. I wanted to discuss ideas and suggestions around types of content to be posted and if there should be some approved sources to target.

7. New membership system

Bob: I have made some, albeit slow, progress. I have a page for changing passwords, and I'm working on the page that displays member details. I have an incomplete implementation of the initial sign-up process that I need to get back to. Have analysed existing database content with regard to simplification, and shared for review.

OTOH, if the committee decides I'm moving too slow, I'm also happy to have someone else do the work, or to go with a COTS solution.

Matt: Existing system has custom features which have been difficult to replicate from COTS. Has listed existing requirements, difficult to know are absolutely needed. COTS would also require data migration, which might be difficult to guarantee.

Bob: One other thing I would like to talk about, if I'm going to keep working on this, is some form of liability waiver from ACCU. I no longer have professional E&O insurance (since I retired and shut down

*my company), and don't want to expose myself to litigation if the membership software is exploited.
Roger: Robert Pauer has set up public liability insurance, which should cover this.*

8. Any other business

9. Date of next meeting

The date of the next committee meeting will (provisionally) be 16 January 2021 @ 2.30 UK time, via Google Meet.