

# Minutes for ACCU Committee meeting

## 25th June 2023, via Google Meet

Meeting started at 14:30.

### 1. Attending

Guy Davidson, Bob Schmidt, Felix Petriconi, Geoff Daniels, Roger Orr, Stefan Hagen (invited), Matt Jones, Adeel Nadeem, Patrick Martin, Robin Williams

### Apologies for absence

Jim Hague.

### 2. Minutes from last meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting had already been approved to enable changes to bank accounts.

### 3. Actions in progress

**Note:** the Google Sheet for actions is here:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RMTorasYR\\_A94VBjv-Dn6ghhTVWLbW0w1ekhN994qFI](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RMTorasYR_A94VBjv-Dn6ghhTVWLbW0w1ekhN994qFI)

### Actions from previous meetings:

195	Phil: Document role of Local Groups Officer, share by e-mail to accu-committee
206	Patrick: Contact HMRC about tax status
207	All: think of other processes (beyond those included in minutes of 18/9/2022) which might be useful to document.
209	Adeel: consider targeting advertising contacts, pending agreed media pack (#208).
213	Bob: document publication web processes
215	Roger: liaise with Felix about conference processes and interaction with committee.
217	Patrick: Investigate setting up membership Discord channel. Contact Jim & Felix about extending conference Discord channel.
219	Robin: Document process for preparing for AGM
220	All: Review Jim's proposals for move of hosting.

*195: No report*

*206: Patrick: I have been told I contacted the wrong team by HMRC - time to restart the process.*

*Bob: We're going to need to be VAT registered and have corporate status if we're taking conference business in-house – may need to look into getting professional help for this.*

*207: Closed, bear in mind for the future. Need to arrange regular automated reminders?*

*209: Adeel: Having discussions with potential advertisers when appropriate, but none has wanted to commit as yet. Add to the quarterly review list?*

213: Bob: Finished document on publication process, realized additional document is required to document reviews process which will be next task: Ongoing

215: Roger: Roll into general discussion of conference. Closed.

217: Patrick: There is a channel - I could do with feedback from anyone about the conference Discord server, and the (separate) ACCU channel. Geoff: focus on the conference channel, close down the second server? Felix: does this deliver much of distinctive value, compared to other existing channels? Bob: link to server is on website. Bob will update the link on the website to point to the conference channel.

219: Robin: Draft version has been prepared, will share.

220: Jim: plan has been updated: <https://wiki.accu.org/doku.php?id=hosting:hostingchangeplan> Closed.

### **Actions added by this meeting:**

221: Roger: consider refresh of Overload review community

## **4. Reports**

### **4.1 Advertising**

Geoff: Has contacted some companies, no positive interest

### **4.2 Conference**

Felix: Conference was successful, total of 249 attendees (full session + day delegate). Sarah said the net deficit was £3840, but the overall deficit was larger (£10,080) because of VAT expenses. None of the support agreed at previous committee meetings was taken up, apart from support for £1,500 for audiovisual expenses. The large number of overseas speakers led to very high travel expenses. Two code of conduct incidents, one minor & one serious where an attendee had to be asked to leave the conference. The minimal necessary background to explain the underlying issues was provided to the community via the CoC pages on the conference website. The individual understood & accepted the decision, so will not be excluded for future meetings.

Julie could not continue to support the conference with the potential for significant losses, so we will need to arrange a different process for next year. We would probably need to shoulder the financial risk for the next conference. 2019 was the last conference which made a net profit, we discovered after the fact that excess costs had been borne by the conference organizer reducing their fees (even after economies in, e.g., the AV package).

Plan now to use next month to update the website with links to online slides and presentations.

Adeel: What was 2022 attendance? Felix: 150 onsite, 120 online – online proved to be too expensive to offer for 2023 given total numbers of registrations. In 2019 we had 425 attendees. Financial issues in the industry during the registration period probably didn't help, including significant layoffs, and some speakers not being allowed to travel by their employers. Bob, Guy: other meetings outside the US have suffered similar attendance issues post-pandemic.

### **4.3 Local Groups**

*No report.*

#### **4.4 Membership**

*Matt: The numbers:*

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1\\_DBWE4ya54atjshmEMzA4qdWEa-bagJvc4A36u\\_YOpQ](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_DBWE4ya54atjshmEMzA4qdWEa-bagJvc4A36u_YOpQ)

*As expected we have a step up in numbers due to the 45 free trial memberships registered at the conference.*

*We have changed our contact with <https://040coders.nl/> - I was contacted by Kris van Rens who wanted to pass the handling on to Klaas van Gend (also an ACCU member) and reduce the number of magazines from 5 to 3. I have also started sending free magazines to Jim Pascoe for the Bristol & Bath local groups.*

*We have endured a very tedious exchange of emails with Worldpay over the last few months, when they asked us to prove who we were so as to keep our account with them. After sending personal details, scans of passports and lots of meeting minutes, it thankfully seems to have come to an end so we can only assume they are happy again.*

#### **4.5 Treasurer**

*Patrick: I've put together a brief explainer on the top 5 ACCU costs with some options as well here (world readable - no real secrets there).*

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KNXw1u-9EKuj3TG9fdhiPiCIbyw8\\_VNYi7NOfsgo\\_QY/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KNXw1u-9EKuj3TG9fdhiPiCIbyw8_VNYi7NOfsgo_QY/edit)

*Talking to Jim Roper about video quality for the conference. Free memberships popular. Trying to take control of Conference Youtube channel – didn't like documentation, incorporation will help with this, and getting controls of ads & revenue collection.*

*Looking at costings for annual expenditure. Geoff: it was mentioned at AGM that reducing publication frequency has been tried before but wasn't popular. Patrick[?], Guy: is that still the case – would a member poll be useful? Geoff: can we provide some added value which will increase revenue?*

#### **4.6 Publicity & Social Media**

*Adeel: business as usual: journals being posted. It would be good to investigate additional options e.g. Youtube shorts. The best engineers seem to shy away from most obvious mass platforms, and the resulting fragmentation makes it difficult to target social media content. It may also be worth using a member poll for getting information on social media participation?*

#### **4.7 Standards**

*Guy: last week finished the WG21 meeting in Bulgaria: report to be published in the next CVu. First C++26 meeting: SIMD getting a lot of attention. Next meeting November 2023 in Hawaii.*

#### **4.8 Website**

*Jim (by email): There's nothing much to report from the current hosting point of view.*

*I would, though, like to start migrating our existing hosting to a new platform. The details are here: <https://wiki.accu.org/doku.php?id=hosting:hostingchangeplan>. The initial cost would be an annual fee of £246.*

*If committee assent could be given to the above I will start putting changes in train. Initial goals would be:*

- 1. Move certificate generation.*
- 2. Move Git repos.*
- 3. Establish a Jenkins instance and get it building the main website.*
- 4. Move mail and mailing lists and update to MailMan3.*

*Committee voted on this proposal: approved unanimously*

*Bob: working well as usual, Daniel James continued to generate epub, added additional indexes e.g. index by cover which were popular with some users. No cover available for some of the older magazines, have asked for this but no response as yet. Plan to start adding videos for ACCU 2023 when available. Continue to work on membership – just about to test the process to change registered e-mail addresses. Big issue remaining is testing the interface to Worldpay payments without getting in the way of the live process.*

## **4.9 Publications**

*Roger: Steve & Fran doing a good job as usual. Have asked for write-ups from good presentations at the conference.*

*Bob: Slight uptick in the number of typos slipping through. Roger: Pdf of final articles usually sent to authors for approval, will investigate whether this is due to tight turnaround due to recent late arrival of articles. Overload reviewers have also been relatively less responsive. Action for Roger.*

## **5. Any other business**

### **5.1 Review of fees paid to Alison Peck, production editor for ACCU journals**

*Roger: these haven't increased since 2008. While the volume of material published has reduced over time, the scope of task has increased to include preparing covers and supporting electronic publication. CPI inflation has been 46.8% since 2010.*

*Roger: proposed increase in payment to £900 per calendar month. Patrick seconded. Approved unanimously by voting members of the committee.*

*Patrick: Suggest that the level of payment for services be added to regular review items in the meeting template.*

### **5.2 The next conference**

*State of affairs: currently there is no way to deliver the next conference, with onus on us to address this.*

*What would we need:*

- A legal entity (charity or limited company?) to sign contracts, some people on the committee would need to be able to sign for contracts, so probably directors of the "company".*
- VAT registered, limited liability (i.e. not borne by organizers personally), needs yearly accountants*

*The deadline for booking the Marriott in Bristol for the 2024 dates is July 10th 2023. Need to agree on how to capitalize this, do we need multiple companies feeding off the society? Roger: can have minimal company just to cover specific outgoings. But time is tight, so we may need to contact Marriott to say we're working on it. Is it OK to just pay the deposit, or do we need to sign a contract? Felix: have investigated other locations, but thus far costs and facilities don't seem competitive.*

*Short notice means that we need to go with where we are for 2024, and think about options longer term.*

*Saturday sessions seemed empty, and it was difficult to fill all the remaining presentation slots, so potentially keeping the number of tracks and reducing length of conference may be worth considering.*

*Total turnover of the 2023 conference was more than £234k. Have already reduced AV costs by changing the supplier.*

*Geoff: Suggested next step: organize limited company. Guy can do this via his current accountant.*

*Geoff proposes: The ACCU committee instructs Guy Davidson to set up a company with the proposed name "ACCU CONFERENCES LIMITED". Seconded: Matt. Officers: Chair: Guy; Secretary: Roger.*

*Intent: Limited company responsible for organization of ACCU conferences. We will instruct Galloways to act on our behalf on this issue, and pay for their reasonable costs. Accepted unanimously.*

*Felix: Do we need to consider alternative organizers? Need to review this for 2025, too late to change organization for 2024 meeting. Felix will contact Sarah to confirm our proposed next steps to look into requesting extension of Marriott's deadline if necessary. Is it OK to pay first installment as ACCU rather than putative company, given the likely time to arrange banking facilities?*

*What size of conference? Consider 4 days and 5 tracks (without Saturday). Reducing the number of sessions on Saturday may be useful given the limited numbers attending at present, but it's useful to have the AGM on the Saturday, and removing a day may require reworking the relative costing of day and full conference tickets.*

*Patrick: will review the costings & report back.*

*Roger: will also need to review expenses support, independent of the July 10th deadline. Felix will share the summary of options.*

## **6. Date of next meeting**

The date of the next committee meeting will (provisionally) be 9/7/2024 @14.30 UK, via Google Meet.