

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting of
Association of Christian Counsellors
Centrall Hall, St Mary's Street, Southampton, SO14 1NF
Thursday 11th July 2019**

Attendance

ACC Board and Executive: Sue Monckton-Rickett, Chris Williams, Tony Ruddle, Phil Weare (Director of Operations and Communications), David Sinclair (Director of Pastoral Care), Kathy Spooner (Director of Counselling)

Members: 46 Members Attended

Apologies:

ACC Board: Fiona Sherburn, Helen Vipan and Marlene Forsythe-Gidharry, Peter Barralough

Welcome:

Sue Monckton-Rickett (Chair) welcomed members, opened the meeting with a prayer.

Minutes of last AGM: Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 6th July 2018 at The United Church, Union Street, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 1NG

The minutes were accepted and signed.

Voting: approved unanimously by all present.

Matters Arising: there were no matters arising.

Reports

Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2018

Sue Monckton-Rickett (Director of Finance) presented the Annual Report and Accounts. She highlighted that in 2018 ACC had made a small deficit of £4,927 for both General and Restricted Funds compared to a surplus of £31,829 in 2017.

Total General Funds at the end of 2018 were £91,538 and Restricted Funds £6,601

The main variance between 2017 and 2018 is due the bi-annual conference held in 2017 but not in 2018. In 2017 the net income from Conferences was £22,165 greater than in 2018.

The other main income changes were:

- an increase in membership and accreditation fees income of £6,696
- a decrease in Affiliation Fees of £5,270, following the reduction of annual fees to compensate for the additional costs of all counsellors working within an affiliate needing to be on a PSA Register
- a decrease in Disclosure Report fees of £1,633 as ACC is no longer providing this service

The main expenditure changes being

- an increase in staff salaries and executive fees of £6,318, which was due to additional staff for GDPR and other project work
- a decrease of £3,232 in Travel and Network Forum costs, which was due to increased number of executive and board meetings being held via Skype and a Network Forum not being held in 2018
- an increase in professional fees of £1,132, which is mainly due to rebranding and strategy work being carried out with a professional agency

In 2018 ACC had received a gift of £7,000 from Marriage Resource, a charity which had sadly closed in 2018 and funds had been dispersed. PCUK had worked with Marriage Resource to develop training materials in the past. The gift has been placed in a restricted fund to be used for support and training for those working to care for marriage and relationships.

It was anticipated that there will be a surplus of approximately £25,000 2019, before any investment in strategic development mainly due to the bi-annual conference.

ACC was looking to potentially invest in:

- the development of ACC infrastructure, so that it is equipped for potential growth and new membership categories
- the potential development of a Coaching and Mentoring membership
- improvements to the ACC website to promote membership connection and interaction

Acceptance of the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2019

The proposal was accepted unanimously by those present and had been accepted by the proxy postal votes received prior to the meeting.

To appoint Stewardship Services to act as Independent Examiners until the conclusion of the next general meeting at which the accounts for 2018 are laid before the Company

The proposal was accepted unanimously by those present and had been accepted by the proxy postal votes received prior to the meeting.

The motion for the directors to fix the remuneration of the independent examiners was accepted unanimously by those present and had been accepted by the proxy postal votes received prior to the meeting.

Appointment of Board Members

There were six candidates for appointment to the Board:

3 were existing Board Members, whose 3 year term of office had come to an end, but all of them had been nominated to stand again

- Peter Barraclough
- Marlene Forsythe- Gidharry
- Chris Williams

3 were new candidates, who had undergone the recruitment process and been nominated to stand:

- Wien Fung
- Phil Martin
- Peter Roberts (Finance Director)

All 6 candidates were elected by the members present and through the proxy postal votes.

PRESENTATIONS

Strategy Outline

Sue Monkton-Rickett spoke about ACC strategy consisting of three elements:

- Reaching Wider
- Going Deeper
- Being Fit for Service

During 2018 ACC had made progress on these three elements but there was still a lot of work to do and many opportunities appear to be opening for us. However, we always have to be aware that we are a small organisation and although we “punch way above our weight” we have limited resources and so need to be wise as to how and where we invest them.

• *Reaching Wider*

ACC / PCUK was increasingly being invited to attend forums and to give radio interviews on mental health and pastoral topics, which raise awareness of our work and allow us to speak into important topics.

A new CEO of the PSA had been appointed and Sue and Kathy Spooner would be meeting with him shortly.

ACC was looking to develop other membership streams starting with Coaching and Mentoring, where some initial work had been carried out. The new membership streams would provide additional income, but also an opportunity for mutual training, development and benefits for new and existing members.

• *Going Deeper*

The aim was for ACC / PCUK to increase it's ability to develop, train and equip members and the wider church and public. In 2018 it had provided Mindfulness Training days and Accord had been redesigned, which had and will be built on 2019 with the very successful bi-annual conference, the launch of Accord Extra, themed editions of Accord and in November two one day conferences for those working with Children and Young People.

The Board and Exec have been looking at various options to improve the website, but these will require significant investment.

- ***Being Fit for Service***

Having 3 new board members would be a great benefit, but the Board were also looking at the structure of the organisation and what would be required to grow and develop.

The future shape of ACC would be to leverage of our experience and infrastructure as a membership organisation to provide new membership streams in related fields, which would improve the financial stability and also provide an organisation where members from different fields learn from and work with each other.

Counselling

Kathy Sooner spoke about the importance raising the profile of ACC as having something relevant and distinctive to offer to the professional world and for ACC to improve the service that it provides to members in things like guidance and support. The challenge of time and resources to achieve all that ACC would like to is always an issue.

Our priority is to maintain our PSA registration, which we have successfully done in 2019 again and to be a voice in the world of registration, but we do face external challenges for example the SCopED project, ACC members not being eligible for IAPT, etc. but ACC continues to push doors for our members.

ACC counselling membership is growing, but slowly and our presence is increasing. A success of 2019, but much of the work was carried out in 2018 was the bi-annual Conference, which was the largest counselling conference in UK, and our best ever attended. In 2019 we will also be holding CYP conferences and other key areas of work will be a review of the complaints process and ethics and practice, continuing to promote ACC within professional counselling world and the church and growing as a community of members.

Kathy asked members for continuing support, expertise and prayer and outlined ways in which they could do this.

Pastoral Care

David Sinclair highlighted the PCUK challenges in 2018 had been

- Increasing the number of RPCC courses
- Widening the range of courses offered

David reported the 2018 achievements as:

- Regional Training Team Doubled
- WAC Spiritual Formation Courses Validated
- Global Connections collaboration

David shared PCUK's plans and challenges for 2019 as

- Increasing the number of RPCC courses
- Widening the range of courses offered
- Raising profile of PCUK
- Increasing membership

Communications and Operations

Phil Weare highlighted the operational and communications challenges for 2018 as including

- problems at the start of the year when the offices were flooded
- changes in staff with Eileen Askew leaving after many years service

The following had been both challenges and achievements:

- Completion of the transfer of all counsellors to become Registered Members
- GDPR Compliance

Other 2018 achievements:

- New format for Accord

- Development of Accord extra
- Raised awareness of ACC

For 2019 the challenges and plans would be

- the development of the website
- finding new premises
- improving social media presence

Chair's closing remarks

Sue Monckton-Rickett said that as the new Chair she wanted to see ACC / PCUK growing in both size and stature. A lot of work had been done, but there was still a lot to do. ACC used to have a strap-line "the voice of Christian counselling", but she would like us to think of it more widely:

"the voice of Christians into Counselling and the world of mental health professions"

"the voice of Counselling and Good Practice into the Christian world"

Sue thanked everyone who contributed so much to ACC, the Board, the Executive, staff, the many others who worked on committees, as trainers and many other ways.

She especially wanted to thank Tony and Maureen Ruddle for all that they have done for ACC over so many years.

Tony had been a Network Representative, a Board member and then led the organisation as Executive Chair through times of great change and challenge. In addition to supporting Tony, Maureen had been a valued member of the North East Committee and served as Treasurer. Sue said that they had given so much to ACC and ACC would not be where it was today without their commitment. As she took over as Chair from Tony, she knew what a fantastic legacy she was inheriting.

Sue also highlighted how much ACC achieves with just 4.5 paid staff and how much we rely on volunteers and she asked anyone who felt that they could contribute to the work to get in touch.

Finally, she said that ACC / PCUK is all about relationships. She wanted it to be a place to:

Value and Be Valued

Support and Be Supported

Grow and Help Grow