

## ACC Board Meeting Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024

<b>Title</b>
<b>Opening:</b> WF led based on Ephesians 6 "Full Armour of God" and then led in prayer <b>In attendance:</b> Sue Monckton-Rickett, Chair (SMR); Chris Williams, Deputy Chair (CW); Peter Roberts (PR); Leroy Harley (LH); Wein Fung (WF); Kate Pozzo (KP) Kathy Spooner, CEO (KS); <b>Apologies:</b> Tony Ruddle (TR); Sean Charlesworth (SC); Christine Pinder (CP); Gathoni Hamilton-Foster (GHF)
<b>Minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024</b> The minutes were approved with two minor corrections - initials corrected from LR to LH and one spelling mistake. <b>Matters Arising &amp; Reviewed actions:</b> KP confirmed that she would like to have blogs for the website - for example the reflection from WF today. They need to be counselling / pastoral care / mental health related, but do not have to be long pieces. Any blogs to be sent to KS. Agreed to move Marketing Strategy discussion to 2025 After the Flood - no progress in getting someone from commissioning organisation to attend a Board meeting and lead a discussion. The Eventbrite showing now fully booked. It was decided to proceed with making it accessible to all Board members to view before January Board meeting and hold a discussion in that meeting. SMR will work on getting access for all Board members RAP recruitment - Catherine Clarke (CC - Chair of RAP) had provided some places for advertising for new members. 3 members are due to step down including Chair and 3 able to remain on RAP for further terms. SMR will discuss advertising with CC SMR reported Charlotte Johnson has now joined RAP, who is a very positive addition to the group. Agreed to move Raising Income Streams discussions to 2025 Agreed that the actions related to "Payments over the Phone / Direct Debits" should be closed for now as not a priority and there would need to be a significant amount of work to do as a feasibility study Articles for Accord. SMR said that this action will always open. Claire Musters, the Editor, is doing an excellent job, but she is always looking for articles. SMR said that the policy for Removing Board Members would need to be completed once the Memorandum and Articles had been agreed, so that the policy is consistent with the Articles that reference this Risk Register action is closed as it was reviewed at the last Board Meeting and also at the RAP meeting. The meeting with Ethnic Tapestry re Accord editorial is to take place on 18 <sup>th</sup> October. SMR and CW will attend. Finance Passwords - PR reported that he had discussed with Keith Payne (KP) the need to have passwords securely stored within ACC. Cross training for all key processes will also be started. <b>AOB:</b> Consider dates for 2025 meeting
<b>Standing items (continued)</b> <b>Conflict of Interest:</b> - No one declared. <b>RAP/PSA</b> - The Risk Register that had been reviewed at the last Board meeting were also reviewed by RAP. They only made small changes / additions to mitigating factors or descriptions. KS confirmed that there was nothing that needed to be approved by Board. SMR said that the final version was include in the Board Papers for this meeting.

**Diversity & Inclusion** - KS and CW had missed last Ant-Oppressive Practices Forum, but confirmed that there was nothing new to report. There is an issue that all of the organisations involved have many projects to attend to.

MoU Group -Nothing further to report

**Legal and Governance** - no new legislation or requirements to report on.

### **Chair Report**

**Complaints Update:** SMR reported that there were no new complaints.

An enquiry about making a complaint had been received, that KS had responded to, but the person making the complaint has now confirmed that the counsellor was no longer on ACC Register. ACC confirmed that no further action could be taken.

SMR reported that ACC had received from I-News an enquiry about counsellors operating when not on register. ACC had also become aware that both counsellors who were removed from the register in 2023 are now practicing and listed on various directories. KS has contacted the directories to inform them of the individual's removal.

SMR shared the response that KS had written to I-News that SMR and PR reviewed. To date it had not been published. KS had also alerted the complainant relating to one of the members who had been removed from the Register to pre-warn them that it could appear in the newspaper

ACC shared the response to I-News with PSA and other SCoPEd partners

SMR highlighted that the fact that counsellors are able to practice without being on a register is one of the biggest risks to the professions. ACC wanted to respond to article to highlight this and that it causes concern to the profession and to those who have brought complaints.

SMR clarified the Protocol for Sharing Sanctions and Removal from Register between PSA Accredited Register holders and the position of counsellor and psychotherapist not being a

KS said that someone can be removed from a Statutory Register, but that there was no protocol between Statutory and Accredited Registers.

KP and PR - said she felt it was good to respond, the response was really good and thanked KS.

KS and SMR also explained some specific details relating to the complaint being alluded to in the article. SMR explained that as part of the PSA full review they examined the documents relating to this and were satisfied with ACC's handling.

**Memorandum and Articles of Association** - SMR had circulated a revised version and comparison between the current and proposed new version to all Board members. The comments that had been submitted were reviewed and discussed and decisions made on each - they related to

- Charitable Object
- Raising of funds
- Trustee's responsibilities
- Removal of a trustee
- Casting vote of the Chair
- Removal of ACC membership
- Calling of General Meetings
- Adjournment of meetings
- Membership categories and voting rights
- Communications

SMR said that she would update the draft and then a retired solicitor with Charity Law experience, who is a member of RAP has offered to review before being presented to the Board for approval.

Then the approved MAA has to go to the Charity commissioners for their approval.

The final Charity Commission approved version has to then be put to the members to vote upon by special resolution - requiring 75% of those present to approve.

FINANCE REPORT

PR reported August Management Accounts - no significant changes from previous months.

PR said that he will be working on Budget for 2025 to present to the Bord, but due to the level of cash balance above contingency being only £24k we will need to budget carefully.

## **CEO REPORT**

**PSA Full Renewal:** KS reported that the outcome has been published. A condition relating to information about registrant's qualifications has been removed following a discussion with the PSA.

A few conditions to be met, but they should all be achievable. Possible options for EDI training for Complaint Panels / Investigators and Assessors are being investigated.

**Good Practice for Working Overseas.** KS explained that with the increased use of on-line counselling the need for guidance was becoming more important. There are often enquires to the office about counsellors working abroad for a period or having clients living abroad. There have been discussions to consider this by the SCoPEd group, but she felt need something to be available now in addition to the general guidance that is being provided when requested.

KS is going to draft some guidelines and then suggest that we ask an insurance specialist to review. SMR suggested that our actual insurers may be prepared to review as well. KS also suggested that we could ask other professional bodies.

**Guidance for Good Practice:** KS explained that some guidance for good practice is being developed for counsellors who have trained overseas and who have been admitted to the register following an equivalence route to ensure that they fully understand a professional framework. It sets out very clearly what people have to do and it sets some books which are really good reference books with regard to ethics. They are given a year to complete all those tasks and when they have done so receive a 25-hour CPD certificate

KS explained the guidance for members who are applying for one of the new routes to accreditation following SCoPEd B training. It is to ensure that counsellors have read specific documents concerning ACC's practice standards.

KS explained that there will also be general guidance published in the members area and sent to new registrants so that members can do a self-assessment.

**Business continuity:** KS mentioned that the issue with finance processes is being addressed.

Updating of documentation of business processes is continuing.

**Directory Software:** KS explained from the demonstration there are clearly some limitations, which she and the Board members who attended the demonstration highlighted. KS said that she had already talked to our website provider and they could provide some of the proposed functionality if we wanted to develop the current "Find a Counsellor" facility.

KS proposed that we did not pursue the new software but perhaps consider internal development. The Board agreed.

**Thailand Support:** KS explained that ACC has links with a counsellor based in Thailand, who is trying to establish a counselling professional body, which would not be exclusively Christian, but the counsellor personally is a Christian. There is a huge demand for counselling amongst Thai people as well as expat people. They want to build a professional body and they have looked at SCoPEd and they have had access to all of our accreditation processes and they asked if we would assess two applications. ACC's lead assessors have assessed the applications and have written a review. ACC has done all that it can and have now suggested that they look at other emerging organisations such as in Singapore and codes of ethics for New Zealand Christian counselling.

ACC will charge for the work done and pay the assessors who have done the review.

**Staff Update:** KS provided an update.

**SCoPEd:** KS reported she had written and circulated to SCoPEd members a feasibility study for developing a CYP framework, primarily for the benefit of children, young people and their parents and carers. There was general enthusiasm, but also a feeling that we needed to learn from the initial SCoPEd. She hoped that each organization will provide their views and perspectives, collate these towards the end of the year / January and then meet in March to discuss.

KS gave an update with regard to the development of SCoPEd website.

**Conference 2026:** KS said that we have some dates from the Hayes, but need to do is look at other venues and look at the whole concept of the conference. 2024 Conference was successful and many people said they would return and encourage others, but we need to consider all options.

**Other Training:** KS said that the trainer who ran the spiritual direction training at the Conference has suggested running a residential retreat. KS and SMR will meet with her to discuss. In October 2025 there will be an online conference and more training for counsellors is being set up.

There was a discussion concerning how the SCoPEd Accreditation training would be repeated.

SMR thanked all staff for all of the work that went into the conference. The Board agreed that all staff should be thanked for the Conference and everything else that they're contributing and doing as well.

**AOB:** SMR proposed that she would send out a file for everyone to say what are the best times for 2025 Board meetings.

**Next meeting: 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Approved**



**Chair of ACC**

**14 November 2024**