

ACC Board Meeting Thursday 29th January 2026

Venue: Zoom

(Meeting commenced 1.30 pm)

	Title
	<p>In attendance: Sue Monckton-Rickett, Chair (SMR); Chris Williams Deputy Chair (CW); Lyn Smailes (LS); Peter Roberts (PR); Kate Pozzo (KP); Gathoni Hamilton-Foster (GHF); Christine Pinder (CP); Leroy Harley (LH)</p> <p>Kathy Spooner, CEO (KS) joined at 3.00pm</p> <p>Apologies: Tony Ruddle (TR); Jenny Fytche (JF); Sean Charlesworth (SC);</p> <p>SMR welcomed LH returning from a period of approved absence from the Board.</p> <p>Opening Reflection: LS led the opening reflection and prayers based on a poem “East of Eden Birmingham” by John Swales and a prayer from a Christian in Somalia published in a recent Open Doors newsletter.</p>
1.	<p>Approval of Minutes of 11th December 2025</p> <p>LS had provided some minor corrections, which had already been made. Corrected for CP attending</p> <p>The minutes were then approved with this correction.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal verification for company's house. SMR thanked all who had completed this. LH confirmed that he had completed and would forward the code later that day. GHF was still to complete and asked SMR to resend the process. • PR said that he would contact Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin. • Anti-Oppressive Practice Coalition Principles: CW said that the final draft had been completed and there had been some discussion about professional bodies being asked to be official signatories, but the decision was that it was important to publish and that may cause delay. Once the final draft has been circulated ACC will need to decide how and to whom it is circulated. It was still uncertain as to who would be secretariat for the group. • SMR had not spoken to the insurers about course accreditation but will do so. <p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KS had asked for her discussion with Biblical Counselling to be included in AOB. • GHF to provide feedback on work in Uganda • PR asked to discuss the social media platform X. <p>SMR provided a brief update on staff.</p>
2.	<p>Standing items</p> <p>Conflicts of Interest:</p> <p>No conflicts of interest declared.</p> <p>SMR said that she will circulate the annual declaration of other interests for all board members to update.</p> <p>RAP / PSA</p> <p>Nothing to report</p> <p>Diversity & Inclusion:</p> <p>SMR and KS had attended a PCPB plus the British Psychological Society meeting earlier in the week in relation to conversion therapy and working with sexuality and gender. The context of the meeting was that it was expected that guidelines about the application of the Supreme Court ruling on agenda should soon be published and professional bodies will need to consider the impact, legislation on conversion therapy is still planned and the PCPB bodies want to have considered what the key elements should be rather than just responding and also to try to provide some guidance for members about working well with gender and sexuality.</p>

	<p>In terms of preparing for conversion therapy legislation the starting point would be to review and collate the many responses that have been made to previous draft legislation.</p> <p>In terms of guidance for members’ it will be principles of what good practice looks like not detailed models.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the issues that counsellors have and the need for guidance.</p> <p>SMR said that she would circulate the BPS guidance.</p> <p>It was agreed that have guidance drawn up by the PCPB bodies would be helpful for counsellors, as this would be an on-going issue.</p> <p>CW said that he would update LH about the plan for Ethnic Tapestry meetings for 2026 following the most recent meeting and suggested dates. He reiterated that the principles from the Anti Oppressive Practice group were very comprehensive and applied to all areas of diversity.</p> <p>Legal and Governance,</p> <p>SMR said that Companies House were increasing the fee for the confirmation statement</p> <p>Joel Slater had been working with Keith Payne on finance processes and had access to all key financial systems.</p> <p>SMR confirmed who had access to ACC bank accounts.</p> <p>PR thanked SMR and Joel for their work on this.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Chair Report</p> <p>Complaints Update was presented in a written report.</p> <p>Articles</p> <p>The new articles have been approved by both the Charity Commission and Company's House and can be viewed on their websites. The new articles had been posted to OSCR and waiting for approval.</p> <p>Board Training</p> <p>SMR gave an update on Board mandatory training including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Training, which was completed in 2024 by all Board members in place then and has been completed by all new members since then. The training needs to be renewed every three years • GDPR Training was completed in 2023/ 2024 by all Board members. All current board members needed to complete the training. Joel Slater was working on developing training for board members. <p>ACC had three recorded EDI training sessions (each 45 -60 minutes) compiled by an expert in the field. It was agreed that it would be good for all Board members to complete this training by the end May.</p> <p>There was a wider discussion on Board training and experience. It was agreed that expertise and experience in HR and Legal was a gap on the Board. ACC have been able to draw on advice from non-board members in these two areas, but it would be helpful to have the expertise on the Board. SMR to circulate details of training courses on topics like employment law, legal issues for trustees, etc. SMR asked all board members to “on-goingly” consider board training and development, what we might need, any resources or training that they are aware of, cross-training between board members, etc.</p> <p>CW suggested that it would be good for the Board to have a wider understanding of neurodivergence, beyond EDI principles – things that the Board need to have a better understanding of and principles that as an organization ACC should be aware of. There could also be an opportunity for staff to have some training on communications, website content, etc. It was suggested that this could be raised with the Disability and Neurodiversity Group to see if one of them could help with this</p> <p>There was also a discussion about whether there was a need for more technology / AI training, for staff. SMR said that she would raise this with KS.</p> <p>GHF suggested that perhaps an area of training would be around stress from ethnic and other diversity issues, like subconscious bias or threats, microaggression, etc.</p> <p>CW mentioned that at a recent Ethnic Tapestry group Sharon McLean had spoken about her new book “The Artistry of Self Care”, which was being launched this week. He asked if members could be made aware of this and also whether there could be an article in Accord.</p>

	<p>Staff mental wellbeing.</p> <p>SMR had shared the template that had been sent to all staff. She would summarise the feedback and it would be discussed with at the next staff in-person team meeting on 2nd of March, which she will attend and then report back to the board. Last year the Board had discussed appointing some board members to be a supportive person for any staff member who wanted it. SMR said that she would discuss this option with the staff and report back to the Board.</p> <p>Policy Timetable</p> <p>SMR shared a schedule of the policies that needed to be reviewed in 2026 and that the intention was to review them across the year. She asked for Board members to contact her if they would be willing to be involved in the review process.</p>
4.	<p>Finance report</p> <p>PR presented the Management Accounts and Cashflow for the year ended 31st December.</p> <p>PR reported that work will now begin on the statutory accounts, which will be independently reviewed by Stewardship, who have requested a 10-week lead time so all documentation relating to the accounts and reports will be submitted to Stewardship at the end of February. The aim would be to present the annual accounts at the Board meeting on 4 June.</p> <p>SMR thanked PR for all of the work to be done in preparing the annual accounts.</p>
5.	<p>CEO Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership numbers were presented. • Accreditation fees and payments to assessors were discussed and agreed by the Board. • Draft complaints process and policy: KS explained the process of development and consultation. The Board were asked to provide any feedback to KS by Friday 6 February. <p>The Board recorded thanks to all those who had developed the process and policy.</p> <p>The Board approved the Complaint documents in principle, knowing that there would mayb minor changes. Once the consultation had been completed and any changes were made, the Board would need to approve the final documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update of staff: was provided by KS including the recruitment of a Graphic Designer • SCoPEd accreditation processes for A to B have all been published. • Guidance on Returning to Practice had been written. • CPD Course Accreditation: an update was provided <p>2026 Priorities for 2026.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalising the documentation relating to equivalence decisions and publish on the website. • Finalising process for moving from SCoPEd B to C” and “A to C”. • Accreditation assessment guides for the assessors the different pathways. • Launch event for coaching and mentoring membership • National Conference.: hoped that the brochure and the website booking will be ready by the end of March. • Recruiting assessors: to be completed in February. • Course Accreditation for SCoPEd training • Data protection compliance and finance and business continuity: <p>Feedback on Pastoral Training</p> <p>KS shared some very positive and moving feedback that had been received from the “Accompanying People at the End of Life” course.</p>
6.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Biblical Counselling</p> <p>KS reported that she had met Biblical Counselling representatives to discuss how they could apply standards of practice and processes relating to this. They valued ACC sharing their experience.</p>

Waverley Abbey College Course

KS shared information about a BA top-up course designed by an ACC training organisation

PCPB CEO Board Meeting

KS reported that there had been discussion about

- PCPB bodies working more closely in relation to complaints
- Communications and raising the profile counselling and the importance of accredited registers
- The appointment of a new Chair of PCPB

Uganda

GHF reported that Pastor Stephine had made plans for 2026 that included pastoral care training in prisons, for pastors and cultural leaders, women, youth groups, orphans, widows, and schools. GHF has asked him to prepare a calendar of their plans and a budget for each month. GHF would like to present them to the board for consideration.

GHF said that it might be good for Stephine and his team to have a retreat and relaxation time and meet up with Pastor Samuel from Kenya. She had offered them the use of the prayer centre in Kenya for free, but they would need some help with travel costs.

Social Media

There was a discussion about which social media platforms ACC use. It was agreed that a Social Media Policy should be developed.

Meeting ended 16.55

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 24th February 13.30

Approved



Chair of ACC

24 February 2026