

NOTES ON ASBCI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 30th March 2022

Via Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions

Present:	Alistair Knox (Chairman)	ASBCI
	Jonty Wilson (Vice Chairman)	Primark
	Diane Waterhouse (Vice Chairman)	D W Consultancy
	Julie King (Event Director)	University of South Wales
	Mary Wilcock (Finance Director)	Lectra UK
	Garry Knox (Marketing Director)	GreenEarth Cleaning
	Jane Pritchard (Director)	JEP Consultancy
	Chris Thierry (Director)	UK Retail Connect
	Ian Morris (Technical Director)	IMM Associates
	Stephanie Ingham (Company Secretary)	ASBCI
	Kirsty Holdsworth & Carrie Depledge	ASBCI
	Alan Cannon Jones (Student Membership Director)	CapitB
	Simon Platts	ASOS
	Lotte Debell	Lotte Debell (Editorial)
	Sue Waters	Alvanon/Motif
	Lucy Murphy	BTTG/Shirley Technologies
	Lara Mazzoni	Bodi.Me
	Helen Colebourn/Ian Staton	Bureau Veritas
	Nicholas Worsnop (Legal Director)	Chadwick Lawrence
	Jan Schofield	City of Liverpool College
	Carolyn Hardaker	De Montfort University
	Bea Couzens (ASBCI Marketing & Membership Cttee Vice Chair)	The Hut Group
	Javier Trocoli Llorens/Matt Ferris	Eurofins
	Nigel Read	DeSL
	Ashley Metcalf	Footwear Technical Services
	Nigel Towell	Freudenberg Performance Material LP
	Jade Snart	George Clothing
	Tricia Zourmand	Hohenstein Textile Testing
	Claire O'Neill	Hyosung
	Suzanne Ellingham	Hyve Group
	Glyn Garbett/Dave Smith	Intertek
	Sarah Philp	James Heal
	Jane Pritchard (Director)	JEP Consultancy
	Darren Cooper	Kufner Holding (GmbH)
	Paschal Little (Director)	Consultant & ASBCI Honorary Member
	David Mellett (Director)	Matalan
	Angie Lench	London College of Fashion
	Angela Gaskell	N Brown
	Mark Pennington	Nutmeg
	Richard Pinner	Pentland Brands
	David Buxton	Roaches International
	Gaynor Crossland & Kerry Senior	R H Smith & Sons (Smiffys)
	David Hardwick	Sainsbury's Supermarkets
	Steve McDonald	SGS
	Stephanie Dick	The Textile Institute
	Diane Iredale	The Very Group
	Ben Keogh	The Very Group
	Stuart Wharton	The Very Group
	Ellie Wiggins	The Very Group
	Stuart Wharton	The Very Group
	Keiron Wybrow	TRS Worldwide
	Simon Allitt	TUV Rheinland
	Chris Thierry (Director)	UK Retail Connect
	Angela Donati/Roberta Canciello	UL

Helena Southon
Barbara Waters
Roz Adams

UL
University of Manchester
Whistles

22/982 .. APOLOGIES: .. noted separately – please contact the Company Secretary for further details at asbcioffice@asbci.co.uk

22/983 .. WELCOME & APOLOGIES:

The Chairman, Alistair Knox (AK), welcomed everyone to the meeting. AK invited members to submit any questions/queries via the office. AK explained that the various committee reports would follow and apologies were taken as read as per the aforementioned minute, 982.

22/984 .. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (16.3.21):

A combined Board Meeting and AGM took place via Zoom. The Minutes of the last meeting were agreed, proposed by Dr Julie King and seconded by Garry Knox and duly signed.

22/985 .. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT:

Dr Alistair Knox (AK) ASBCI Chairman welcomed everyone to the 2022 Zoom Annual General Meeting and outlined the programme. AK advised that reports from the various ASBCI Directors would provide more detail on the Association's performance in 2021.

Welcome

As last year, AK explained that the AGM would be a simple on-line event, though it was hoped that a return to something more like normal in future will be possible as everyone learns to live with Covid-19 concerns. The Association's official reports will be made available via the AGM section on the ASBCI's website, and the ASBCI will respond to any feedback or queries members raise either on-line during the Zoom event or subsequently. Details such as approval of last year's minutes will be assumed by default if there are no queries.

Summary report

The ASBCI has adapted well to what has become the new normal, combining home working and Zoom meetings with a gradual resumption of returning to the office and face-to-face meetings. It has not yet been appropriate to host traditional income-generating events such as conferences and seminars, though it is hoped that these will resume later this year. There is a realisation that in-person networking and live experiences have a value that on-screen experiences cannot fully replace. In the meantime, co-hosted webinars and an e-conference have taken place in order to provide value to members, plus of course the excellent In Association e-zine, newsletters, and other web-based information.

Membership numbers have held up as well as could have been expected during lockdown restrictions to global business activities, though academic and student involvement continues to be problematic. Given the loss of income from events, the ASBCI needed to make savings in operating costs. Grateful thanks were given to the ASBCI staff, the landlord at Croft Myl, and the local authority for contributing to the ASBCI's survival during 2021. The financial loss of nearly £9,000 for the year is far better than was feared initially. This has been covered by cash reserves and limited by increased contributions from advertising revenues. It is hoped that the gradual resumption of more normal events for members will generate the income to get the ASBCI back to its usual break-even position of stability.

The fashion and clothing industry sector continues to face multiple technical and management issues in a tough commercial environment. The ASBCI's events and magazine articles reflect these concerns, with a current emphasis on matters relating to sustainability. This has also driven the efforts of the Technical Committee to update technical publications, so that best practice information can be shared for the benefit of all.

AK expressed his gratitude to fellow members and colleagues for their continued contributions with help and support on the various committees and working parties.

Special thanks were given to the Halifax team including Steph, Kirsty and Carrie, plus the supporting PR and marketing expertise of Lotte Debell and Garry Knox. More detail will follow on the activities from the various committee chairs, but appreciation was given for the support they receive from the superb head office staff.

22/986 .. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Mary Wilcock (MW) Finance Director, reported that the decision taken in 2020 to support the members by giving 4 months membership fee had had a knock on effect for the 2021 results.

Membership fees for the year totalled £52,619. This is £3,300 below membership income in 2020 (£55,900) but significantly below the full years membership income in 2019 of £68,400.

Drop in membership income from 2019 to 2021 £15,781 of which approx. £10.400 is down to the one-off reduction. As at the end of February the majority of fees had been paid with only £2,453 outstanding

Event income has traditionally been a strong contributor to the society's income but due to the Covid situation the income was limited in 2021 with a limited contribution of £4,100 in 2021 mainly due to sponsorship income of £3,500.

It has been difficult to charge for online events in the climate.

There has been a continued increase in advertising revenue from the online publications for the quarterly magazines and the Yearbook. The ASBCI received income of £7,200 in 2020 and £13,340 in 2021. This is a new source of revenue and the efforts of the team to bring in this is to be applauded.

Net income was £70,220. This was £75,120 in 2020 but here the ASBCI received a grant of £10,000 from Calderdale Council to help local companies facing the effects of the pandemic.

The impact on income of being unable to host events emphasises the importance of these events in order to ensure the solvency of the ASBCI. Thanks to the contribution of advertising revenue for the quarterly magazines and the Yearbook the ASBCI has managed to offset the short fall from the one off membership fee reduction.

Summary			
	2021	2020	Variance
	£,000	£,000	£,000
Members fees	£52.62	£55.91	-£3.29
Event income	£4.12	£0.00	£4.12
Publication income	£0.15	£0.47	-£0.32
Advertising Income	£13.34	£7.24	£6.10
Year Book	£0.00	£1.50	-£1.50
Grant	£0.00	£10.00	-£10.00
Interest receivable			
	£70.22	£75.12	-£4.89

The costs of the society were kept as low as possible but many are fixed costs and cannot be reduced.

2021 costs were £2,691 higher than 2020.

Staff costs were returned to the correct rate after the staff took a pay cut for several months in 2020, this includes marketing and advertising support but is still only a minor increase £3.4k.

The ASBCI were able to save money on the rent as the Landlord agreed to a reduction for most of the year, this has not reverted in 2022 to full rent (a saving of £1.4k).

Overall there was nothing of significance

All of the above factors lead to an operating loss of £8,835 compared to 2020 loss of £351
This will be offset by a tax refund of £1,596.

The reserves for the society stand at £94,576 as at the end of 2021.

In closing, MW stated that the ASBCI does need a bounce back in 2022. Rebuilding the membership to pre-pandemic levels and re-starting fee-paying member events. MW invited all members to support the Society as fully as possible in 2022.

22/987 .. MARKETING & MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Garry Knox gave his Annual Report as Marketing & Membership Director.

GK reported that membership stands at 91, as a result of a net increase of one member, which, considering the impact of the pandemic is quite remarkable, and at a non-discounted rate. There have been 2 new memberships including:

- THG (The Hut Group)
- Hi-tech Apparel

2021 was a year of so many changes, and how the ASBCI communicated with and supported its membership was vital.

The communications mix has continued to evolve and has supported the way that the ASBCI has HAD to evolve, particularly around events. The Association delivered several webinars and our online presence and engagement gathered momentum. In addition, the events and publications generated income to go towards supporting the Association's overall income.

GK reported that marketing activity has continued to support the Association; in particular, PR for events, and social media for all events and other areas such as promoting the Association, student memberships and technical handbooks.

Social media continues to grow in terms of followers and has seen increased levels of engagement as well as driving traffic to the website. The ASBCI now has 2043 followers on LinkedIn (up 13.1%), 733 on Twitter (up 1.8%), 655 on Facebook (N/C) and 260 on Instagram (up 12.5%).

The ASBCI's online presence in 2021 continued to be of great importance, particularly as very much of the ASBCI's offering has been digital over the last two years. The webinar programmes, of which there has been an increase have been promoted digitally but have also been the source of engagement for the ASBCI's activity and regular publications (In Association, Newsletter & Yearbook) through these channels.

The creation of regular digital content and titles (In Association/digital Yearbook) have been well received and have provided new benefits for members to knowledge share by being able to access and submit free editorial and make use of the advertising opportunities which are competitively priced. The digital publications have improved the perceived value of having ASBCI membership.

Number of visits to the ASBCI website increased by 4%.

- Website traffic driven by social media increased by 10%. Biggest drivers were organic search and direct visits.
- The number of unique users increased by 4.5% with peaks around the webinars.
- Pages most visited were Home, Events and Membership.
- Pages viewed per session = 3.71

2022 Challenges

The last couple of years have seen times when everyone has had to adjust, and 2022 is looking like another year of uncertainty. The Marketing and Membership committee will continue to review how members can benefit by shaping the future proposition and the way the ASBCI communicates with its members.

22/988 .. STUDENT MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Alan Cannon Jones (ACJ) gave his Annual Report as Student Membership Director.

ACJ reported that throughout the past year the ASBCI had been available to provide support members and he was very aware that many members had also been offering support to not only members but the whole of our industry.

As enquiries have come in from the academic members, the ASBCI has given advice which has hopefully been useful and assisted in them finding answers from within our wide range of resources.

The ASBCI continues to provide opportunity for the academic members and their students and this has continued throughout the past year. The academic institutions that ACJ had been working with for assessment, external examining and internal verification have again had a very challenging year. ACJ had seen some amazing student progression and achievement which has shown the determination that these young people have to learn and develop skills. To be able to teach students like this is a privilege.

During the past two years it has not been possible to offer any student competitions or awards and this is an area which is currently under review as we move forward. The changes in the Fashion Courses in terms of breadth and subject have meant that some of the competitions which have run in the past are no longer as relevant, such as the Dissertation Award which was sponsored for many years by Marks & Spencer. At the next planned Student Committee meeting, the agenda will include feedback and comments on the subjects and themes that students would welcome in future ASBCI competitions along with the outcomes such as awards and work experience.

In conclusion, ACJ reminded everyone of the ASBCI publications/technical handbooks that many fashion libraries have on their shelves and that there are new editorial updates in progress which will become available in the near future in both hard copy and Amazon Kindle versions.

22/989 .. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT:

Ian Morris, (IM) gave his report as Technical Director via video recording as he was unable to join the meeting on the day.

IM reported that last year, 2021, saw the continuation of the focus on Zoom, rather than in-person events, due to the necessary ongoing Covid restrictions

Many of the test house members were active in creating and delivering well-presented and relevant webinars on topics of interest to members. In many ways, these substituted for what might have been in-person technical seminars in a 'normal' year for the Association.

Last year was focused on developing the updated version of the 'Tried and Tested' technical booklet. This will be a re-publication of the edition which was first issued just over ten years ago. Several subject matter experts were identified – from test houses, testing machine, and testing consumables manufacturers.

In addition, several independent experts were approached, such as one who is a specialist on product risk assessment and safety. The working party group of experts were asked to assess the different chapters and sections, and then either amend, or rewrite, the text to bring it up to date to the latest standards. This was fully reviewed and finalised by the team in late 2021, and with a recent very productive meeting this February.

The final draft has now been passed to the ASBCI's editorial consultant, Lotte Debell, for the all-important final editing and formatting process. It will then be created into a booklet that can be published not only in

print, but also as a digital publication on Amazon Kindle. Like its predecessor, the now successful Costing Booklet, which is also available printed, and on Amazon Kindle, it is hoped that the booklet will not only be of interest to members, but also to those people located further afield, including overseas, who can of course access and purchase the book on Amazon.

The next stage, after publication, is the opportunity to create a series of webinars, partly in collaboration with the Events Committee, where chosen sections of the Tried & Tested booklet are presented by subject matter experts, with opportunities for Q&A to follow.

For 2022, there is also the potential for the updating of other ASBCI legacy technical booklets, led by experts in the specific subject areas, especially where there is either a demand from members, or if the topic has moved on significantly since its original publication.

Finally, the ASBCI is hoping to reinstate technically focused visits to factories and production facilities which may be of interest to ASBCI members.

IM reminded members that all suggestions for technical seminars, booklet updates, or visits, are most welcome.

22/990.. 2021 EVENTS COMMITTEE REVIEW

Dr Julie King (JK) gave her report as ASBCI Events Director.

JK reported that last year her report considered what a challenge the past 12 months had brought, and that she had hoped for a different situation one year on. Sadly, that is not the case, and the Events Committee have been unable to schedule any live, face to face events due to the ongoing Covid restrictions and the disruption caused to live events.

Nevertheless, the ASBCI continues to deliver a programme of webinars, and has even held a virtual conference for the first time in May 2021 - Beyond 2020 – survival of the smartest. Unfortunately, this was not well attended despite the very low delegate fee of £25, and it was clear that the fee had deterred delegates from attending online. For 2022, the ASBCI are planning for a live, face to face conference, albeit at a smaller venue, Barnsdale Lodge, Rutland, for October 2022. Planning for the event has started with the general idea being to focus is on a wide range of factors that have influenced the industry and impacted on members in the last couple of years. As you can imagine, there is a lot to talk about!

The ASBCI continued to deliver webinars with its partners as a part of the sustainability series, Fashion the Change. Such events remain free of charge and continue to attract good audiences of around 100 delegates on average. The Webinars are delivered in partnership with members and feature a range of expert speakers, much like a mini conference. The first two webinars were held on concurrent days and were sponsored by ASBCI Premier Member, Intertek in December. The first one covered the topic of Getting to Net Zero and the complications of Scope 3, with the second focused on Sustainability in the Indian Textile Sector. The level of chat and range of questions is always great to see with members supporting the events enthusiastically. Our third and most recent event was sponsored by GreenEarth Cleaning, caring for Clothes and The Planet and was held in January 2022. Once again, we had an excellent virtual turnout for the webinar, and the intention is to plan for more in the series for the future, so watch this space!

JK concluded by adding that the ASBCI remains confident that 2022 will bring a return to normality and that the conference will enable the Association to generate further revenue for the once again.

22/991 .. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS

AK thanked JK for her report and made reference to the fact that the ASBCI is keen to return to normal practices of live events that have always been held in high regard as a valued benefit to members. Networking and sharing best practice remain top of the agenda for the Association.

A provisional date was agreed for the 2023 Annual General Meeting of **Wednesday 22nd March 2023** which will be subject to confirmation and whether this will take place live or online.

AK thanks all those for attending and the AGM concluded at 5.00 pm.

Signed:

Seconded:

Date: