

Minutes of the ABPCO AGM

Tuesday June 11th 2024 – via conference call 9.30am – 10.45am. The meeting was recorded and is available on the ABPCO website.

Member Attendees: Gabby Austen Browne, Adam Baggs, Pauline Beattie, Emily Bexley, Mark Blair, Clara Bowyer, Sammy Connell, Jemima Dewhurst, Sarah Dietrich, Therese Dolan, Emma Duffy, Arryann Duncan, Kaylie Hodges, Gemma Lamb, Heather Lishman, Evie Mair, Madalina Marincas, Lindsay McClenaghan, Sally McNamara, Elaine Miller, Rachel Mumford, Laura Nason, David Parker, Jo Powel, Marion Rankin, Kate Sargent, Gemma Savage, Melissa Sobo, Shelley Spencer, Ann Stark, Geanina Stoicanea, Paul Swain, Chloe Turner, Laura Wilson, Caroline Windsor, Emilly Wright, Sarvjit Wunsch

Apologies:

Steve Daun, Samantha Shamkh, Leanne Planche, Sarah Byrne

Item 1 – Opening Remarks by Emma

Welcome and today's agenda introduced. Apologies from Sarah Byrne who is working in the USA this week.

Item 2 – Minutes of the 36th Annual General Meeting (Chair)

David Parker proposed, and Kate Sargent seconded that the minutes of the 36th AGM held virtually on Wednesday 21st June 2023 be APPROVED and signed as a correct record. AGREED unanimously.

Item 3 – Adoption of accounts for financial year ending 30th April 2024. Kate Sargent

Kate presented a report on the audited accounts. She noted that the official audited accounts are available from Heather Lishman if anyone would like to study them. They show an income of £163,968 (highest ever income) giving a surplus of £34,225.

Our financial goals are:

- Strengthen a financially strong, relevant and forward-thinking ABPCO
- Strengthen retention of loyal followers and attract new audiences
- Generate new revenue streams
- Foster change and strengthen agility
- Be responsive to changing member needs

Kate reported an increase in running costs due to a new website launch and professional support, but also noted a healthy surplus of £34,225 for the next financial year.

Emma Duffy proposed, and Sammy Connell seconded that the accounts be adopted.

Item 4 – appointment of auditors for the financial year 01/05/2024 – 31/04/2025

Kate recommended that we remain with the accountants Jon Essam & Co Ltd Gemma Savage proposed, and Mark Blair seconded

Kate introduces a new reserves policy, developed with Heather, to manage the association's finances and retain funds for unforeseen circumstances – objectives, numbers and how it looks currently.

Asks for a proposer and seconder to adopt this policy. Sarvjit Wunsch proposed, Clara Bowyer seconded

Item 5 – Year in Review – Emma

Emma re-iterated the key strategic goals and explained ABPCO's progress with these.

- Membership growth – 200 PCO members by 2027 – this needs more work, we are not where we want to be yet but heading in the right direction.
- Organisational growth - £200k in revenues by 2027 – on a growth track
- Increase segmentation to strengthen value proposition and attract early careers
- Amplify external voice – supported by a redesigned website and relevant research
- Be the voice of the PCO supported by relevant research into EDI and sustainability

Our industry Partners and Members continue to help us maintain the level of fees and activity for all members. Our aim is to keep corporate membership at the same proportions of total membership i.e. a maximum of 1 industry member to every 2 full members.

Emma reflected on the past year's achievements and ongoing initiatives. She highlighted a 30% increase in membership numbers over the tenure of herself and Sarah and the successful collaboration with various partners, including academic institutions and industry events. Emma also discussed the association's focus on excellence, learning, belonging, and external voice, which involved conducting an impact survey, organising events, engaging with university event students, and developing partnerships. She also reported on the success of ABPCO's membership events, the Excellence Awards and the Festival of Learning, both of which were financially sustainable and received positive feedback from attendees. Emma also explained about the introduction of a members' code of conduct for EDI and a charter, that can be seen on the website. Emma concluded by expressing gratitude to the teams involved and looking forward to continuing and expanding these initiatives in the future.

Emma thanked Adam for his contributions to ABPCO during his 11 years tenure, particularly his extensive knowledge and advice. Adam, in his last communication report, reflected on his achievements, which resulted in 315 press cuttings and an extensive reach. He also highlighted the successful switch to a specialist social team 18 months ago. Adam expressed his pride in the 35 videos produced in collaboration with a videographer and acknowledged the support he received from the team. Heather and Emma also thanked Adam for his leadership and support during their tenure as chairs.

Item 6 – The ABPCO Executive Committee

Heather led a thank-you to the retiring chairs of ABPCO Executive committee; Emma Duffy and Sarah Byrne – and thanked them for their contributions.

Delighted to welcome; Sammy Connell from NASUWT The Teachers’ Union and Pauline Beattie from Conference Care as the incoming Chairs.

Jo Powel proposed, and Mark Blair seconded

ABPCO Committee

Name	Category	Role	Appointed	Period	Time left on Exec at June 24
Garth Halliday	Full in-house		June 2021	3 years	1 optional
Emma Duffy	Full in-house		June 2021	3 years	1 optional
Jane Elsom	Full in-house		June 2021	3 years	1 optional
Sarah Byrne	Full agency		June 2021	3 years	1 optional
Samantha Salisbury	Full agency		June 2021	3 years	1 optional
Steven Daun	Industry		June 2021	3 years	1 optional
Dr James Musgrave	Academic		June 2021	3 years	1 optional
Gaynor England	Full Agency		June 2022	3 years	1 years + 1 optional
Samantha Shamkh	Industry		June 2022	3 years	1 years + 1 optional
Kate Sargent	Full agency	Treasurer	June 2023	3 years	2 years + 1 optional
Katie Bolton	Full Agency		June 2023	3 years	2 years + 1 optional
Madalina Marincas	Full Agency		June 2023	3 years	2 years + 1 optional
Sarvjit Wunsch	Full In-house		June 2023	3 years	2 years + 1 optional
Sarah Vaughan	Full In-house		June 2023	3 years	2 years + 1 optional
Sammy Connell	Full In-house	Joint-Chair	June 2023	3 years	2 years + 1 optional
Pauline Beattie	Full agency	Joint-Chair	June 2024	3 years	3 years + 1 optional

Item 7 – Key goals – looking forward

Pauline and Sammy outlined their priorities, which included focusing on membership goals, target groups, and CPD. They also emphasised the need to amplify the organisation's external voice, create more opportunities for PCOs, and evolve internal and external events. The new chairs also announced plans for

a new communication strategy with Deborah Nightingale's team and the development of more ABPCO ambassadors and showcases.

Accreditation task-force – Kate Sargent – Kate discussed the role of the accreditation and task force in reviewing and scrutinising member applications to ensure they meet the association's accreditation criteria. She also welcomed new student members and encouraged members to get in touch with her or other members if they have questions about the accreditation task force.

Growth task-force – Heather Lishman - Heather introduced the new growth task force, which brings together commercial growth and membership growth, and emphasised the importance of having representation from across the membership.

Event Logistics – Sammy Connell - Sammy announced the combination of the Festival of Learning and awards into an event logistics task force to promote excellence and best practices.

Advocacy – Heather Lishman - Heather gave an update on the advocacy task force's work in increasing the profile and recognition of ABPCO, and called for support from experienced marketing, communications, and partnership development professionals.

Legacy and impact – Sarvjit Wunsch - Sarvjit introduced the newly formed legacy and impact task force, focusing on the importance of being impactful and leaving a lasting footprint at events, with the aim to make sense of this concept and its implications.

Learning task-force – Jo Powel – Jo discussed the work of the event learning task force. Jo highlighted the success of the Festival of Learning, the ongoing calendar of round table events, and other initiatives like monthly coffee chats and additional networking opportunities. She also mentioned plans to accredit some of the round tables and a shift towards a more strategic long-term plan of activity, inviting ideas from the team.

Academic liaison – Gemma Savage - Gemma discussed the academic liaison task force's efforts to bridge the gap between the event industry and academia, particularly in the areas of business events and association events. She highlighted the success of the regional events they've held so far, which have increased awareness of the role of PCOs and the event industry among university students and academics. Gemma also shared plans for future events, including a London and South region event, and a focus on getting more students and universities involved in the initiative. She called for more members to get involved in various ways, from hosting and chairing events to giving guest lectures at universities.

Social media task-force, Madalina Marincas - Madalina presented on the newly established Social Media Task Force, aimed at increasing awareness and engagement for ABPCO through various social media channels. She reported successful results, with a significant increase in followers, engagement, and unique views. The team also conducted monthly takeovers to manage content and engagement. Madalina highlighted the need for more members to join the task force to make the workload more manageable, emphasising that membership is flexible



and does not require long-term commitment. The team plans to integrate with the new Comms Agency and align with other task forces.

The Excellence Awards – Sammy Connell - discussed the upcoming awards ceremony taking place in Blackpool on December 13th, highlighting its importance in recognising the industry and encouraging submissions. New categories were introduced, and an altered format for the education session was announced. Moreover, the deadline for the excellence awards was confirmed as unmovable 31st July.

The date for the next Festival of Learning was set for 28-29 April 2024 at the Eastside Rooms in Birmingham.

Item 8 – Round up of the goals and a call for help on task-forces and for succession planning

James Musgrave to recruit more members for the Advocacy Task Force, especially those with experience in marketing, communications, strategy, partnership development, and evaluation services.

Members to submit entries for the Excellence Awards by July 31st, 2023.

Members interested in joining task forces (Growth, Event Logistics, Advocacy, Legacy and Impact, Event Learning, Social Media) to contact Heather.

Members interested in joining the Executive Committee to contact Heather, as 7 positions will be available next year.

Members to submit their challenges or topics they want to discuss at the pre-awards education session.

Members interested in supporting the Social Media Task Force for monthly takeovers to contact Madalina or Heather.

Members to collect data for the second economic impact survey.

Item 9 - Questions from the membership - none

Item 10 - AGM and members meeting closed at 10.45 am

A recording was made of the event – and will be published with the minutes on the website.