



## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF OBESITY Thursday 7th December 2023 via Zoom**

The annual general meeting of the Association of the Study of Obesity (ASO) took place virtually via zoom on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 12:00pm.

20 people attended the meeting of which 19 were members; 15 proxy votes were received, and the meeting was declared quorate.

Dr Nicola Heslehurst welcomed all to the meeting. She reported on a successful UKCO event which was held in Belfast in 2023 with registrations closing early due to high demand and the positive delegate feedback received. She expressed her thanks to Dr Laura McGowan and the local organising committee, Dr Nerys Astbury ASO UKCO Lead, Red Hot Irons, and the events team at Riddel Hall for their work in developing the programme and ensuring the smooth running of the event. She acknowledged all the speakers and chairs, especially lived experience colleagues who were integral to the conference organisation and programme.

Dr Nicola Heslehurst advised that ECR and COMs meetings were held alongside UKCO and were well attended with excellent feedback from delegates. She thanked Dr Julia Mueller ASO ECR Lead, and Dr Dimitris Papamargaritis ASO COMs Lead. She outlined the work of Dr Georgios Dimitriadis, ASO sponsorship lead, in increasing and diversifying sponsorship received. This allowed ASO to offer more member opportunities including for ECR accommodation and travel grants for the ECR event, discounted registrations for delegates attending the COMs event to also attend UKCO to provide greater education and networking opportunities and increased lived experience representation at UKCO.

Dr Nicola Heslehurst advised that 2023 saw an increase in ASO Network events offering members education, networking and research sharing opportunities. She thanked Dr Dawn Swancutt ASO Networks Officer and all the regional Network Leads for their efforts in getting these events back up and running following the COVID-19 restrictions and added if any members would like to get more involved with ASO Networks, to please reach out to their regional [Networks Lead](#).

Dr Nicola Heslehurst reported on the member consultation currently being conducted to inform ASO's strategic plan. She stressed the importance of member's input to develop the ASO strategic direction and confirmed she will share the results of this in 2024. She thanked Dr Laura Gray, ASO Strategic Review Lead, and all ASO members who have completed this survey.

Dr Nicola Heslehurst recognised the work of all Trustees during 2023 and announced the restructure of ASO during 2024 which will result in a smaller Board of Trustees focussing solely on the governance of the organisation and led by the Chair of the Board of Trustees, and an Operations Management Committee led by an ASO President to operationalise ASO's strategic plan through sub committees. She explained that this is an exciting change for ASO and should make processes more efficient, enabling the association to deliver more for our membership, and provide more opportunities for members to be involved with ASO. She confirmed that transition to the new structure should be completed by the end of 2024 and during the next year ASO will be recruiting new members of the Board of Trustees and Operations Committees. She thanked Dr David Hughes ASO Deputy Chair and Secretary, and Red Hot Irons for their support with the restructuring process.

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It was noted that the following Trustees would be retiring from their trustee roles:

- Dr Nerys Astbury
- Ken Clare
- Dr Georgios Dimitriadis
- Dr Julia Mueller
- Dr Dimitris Papamargaritis
- Dr Kath Roberts
- Dr Dawn Swancutt

Among the retiring Trustees, five would be transitioning to Committee Member roles for their remaining elected tenure: Dr Nerys Astbury (UKCO Lead), Dr Julia Mueller (ECR Lead), Dr Dimitris Papamargaritis (COMs Lead), Dr Kath Roberts (Communications, Partnerships and Networks Sub-committee Chair), Dr Dawn Swancutt (Networks Lead).

Patrick McGinley, Treasurer, presented an overview of the accounts for the financial period July 2022 – June 2023. David Hughes, Honorary Secretary, and the chairs of each of the subcommittees (Prof Emilie Combet, Prof Alex Miras, Dr Kath Roberts) presented an overview of their activities and these updates can be viewed in full via this [link](#).

Ken Clare was awarded the ASO Honorary Fellowship to recognise his outstanding contribution to the ASO and to the field of obesity. Dr Nicola Heslehurst announced that, in recognition of this work, the Ken Clare Award has been created to be awarded to an ASO member each year in recognition of their PPIE work in the field of obesity.

The following resolutions were presented to the membership and passed:

- a) To extend the Terms of Office for Dr David Hughes (Honorary Secretary) for a further year to December 2024 to allow them to support the re-structuring of the organisation.
- b) To extend the Terms of Office for Professor Alex Miras for a further year to December 2024 to allow them to support the re-structuring of the organisation.
- c) To re-appoint Essex Abel Limited as accountants to the charity until the completion of the next annual general meeting of the association at which accounts are laid and to authorise the Trustees to fix their remuneration.
- d) To re-appoint Essex Abel Limited to identify an appropriate independent examiner to review the financial accounts until the completion of the next annual general meeting at which accounts are laid.

By order of the Board of Trustees  
(Company Number 04796449)



Dr Nicola Heslehurst  
Chair of the Board of Trustees