

ASDC AGM Meeting Minutes

2.00pm Wednesday 18th September 2024

Held online via Zoom

AGM Panel Presenting		
Shaaron Leverment	CEO	ASDC
Stephen Breslin	ASDC Chair of trustees, CEO of	Glasgow Science Centre
Hermione Cockburn	ASDC Trustee/honorary secretary & Scientific Director	Independent
Present		
Donna Speed	ASDC Trustee Deputy Chair & CEO	We The Curious
Victoria Denoon	ASDC Trustee & Head of Visitor Experience	W5 Science and Discovery Centre
Bryan Snelling	ASDC Trustee & CEO	Aberdeen Science Centre
Tudor Gwynn	ASDC Trustee & Operations and Projects Director	Eureka!
Jenni Chambers	ASDC Trustee & Head of Public Engagement and Skills	STFC
Bridget Holligan	ASDC Trustee & Director of Education and Engagement	Science Oxford
Sheila Kanani	ASDC Trustee & Outreach and Diversity Officer	Royal Astronomical Society
Laurence Butler	Museum Manager	Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum
John Bull	Chief Executive Officer	Cambridge Science Centre
Jo Quinton Tulloch	ASDC Trustee & Director	National Science & Media Museum
Savita Willmott	ASDC Trustee & Chief Executive	The Natural History Consortium
Gareth McTiffin	ASDC Trustee & Head of Commercial Development	Techniquet
Rachael Tapping	Head of Communications	ASDC
Sarah Dellar	Director of Partnerships	ASDC
Cait Campbell	Project Manager	ASDC
Vicky Hull	Business Manager	ASDC
Abi Fafolu	Founder	Lit Laboratory (Lab)
Steve Scott	Public Engagement Lead	UKRI
Bipon Bhakri	Finance and Resources Director	National Space Centre
David Wilkinson	General Manager	National Space Centre
Jenni Chambers	Head of Public Engagement	STFC
Caz Pennington	Director	Explorer Dome



Laura Down	Business & Production Manager	Explorer Dome
Conor Ellis	Science Learning and Engagement Director	Dynamic Earth
Andy Lloyd	Head of Development and Partnerships	International Centre for Life
Helen Macdonald	Chief Operating Officer	Scottish Seabird Centre
Georgia Hatton	Creative Production Designer	Techniquet
Elaine Holland	Head of Operations / Deputy CEO	Aberdeen Science Centre
Paul Booth	Co-CEO	Centre for Alternative Technology
Liz Peniston	Content & Experience Director	Eureka! The Children's Museum

Welcome

Stephen Breslin welcomed attendees and thanked them for joining. With a busy agenda the meeting was started with main items of the CEO update and new trustee voting. It was noted that 14 of the current 16 trustees were present. Stephen commented on how amazed he always is with the amount of work such a small team as ASDC achieves.

Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting held at W5 Belfast on 28th September 2023 were accepted as an accurate reflection of the meeting without any comments or objections.

CEO Report

Shaaron Leverment presented on the CEO report circulated in advance and summarised the vision, mission and values of ASDC. The membership has continued to grow and diversify in the types of organisations joining and how they identify. The ASDC team is the largest it has ever been with 5 members of staff and a sixth full time member on secondment from Wellcome Trust ending in November 2024. Our events are designed to support the strategic goals of ASDC but also serve the diversity of members. She then gave a review of events, the national conference and projects. Future priorities will include national programme delivery, advocacy and lobbying for the sector and a second iteration of the membership benchmarking survey. The Chair thanked Shaaron and the team for a great year.

Annual accounts

Tudor Gwynn presented on this item. He confirmed Chris Godden, long term finance director has now left after more than 15 years of supporting ASDC, and ASDC have moved to new accountants. He summarised that the last year has seen a small surplus which leaves healthy reserves and overall it has been a well managed year. Expenditure has increased and reserves are better than previous two years. Total annual income has increased substantially, with subscriptions also increasing. Progress is being made but there is a consistent theme of not enough core income, which will continue to be a problem. A radical rethink of the ASDC business model should be considered, with an aim to mitigate future uncertainty by exploring commercial options, diversifying income and funders.



Trustee elections

Hermione Cockburn reported. Four trustees were standing for re-election and three were stepping down (CB, JC & HC) leaving three positions available. On behalf of the Board, Hermione thanked Chas Bishop and Jenni Chambers for all their hard work in previous years and the Chair thanked Hermione for her contributions too. Hermione thanked everyone for being such a fun and supporting group to work with.

Election of new trustees: The interview process this year was very competitive but the three chosen candidates were outstanding. Bapon Bhakri, Abi Fafolu and Steve Scott each gave a three minute presentation on their manifesto. Each candidate received a majority vote from members present and were accepted into post.

Re-election: Victoria Denoon, Tudor Gwynn, Bryan Snelling and Stephen Breslin each presented their declaration and they all received a majority vote to remain in post.

Hermione thanked everyone present and read out a thank you note from Chas Bishop saying how much he had enjoyed being a trustee of ASDC, with best luck for the future.

Close of meeting

The Chair invited members to raise any issues for discussion, with none forthcoming. With no further business the meeting was brought to a close.

Nb: Shaaron Leverment commented that there had been a copy and paste error on the slides for 2020 accounts.