



<b>Company</b>	Woolworths Group Limited
<b>Code</b>	WOW
<b>Meeting</b>	AGM
<b>Date</b>	12 November, 2020
<b>Venue</b>	Online only, using Link's agmlive.link site
<b>Monitor</b>	Don Adams, assisted by Julieanne Mills

<b>Number attendees at meeting</b>	150 shareholders (14 not voting), 14 proxyholders, 425 visitors
<b>Number of holdings represented by ASA</b>	1,118
<b>Value of proxies</b>	\$122.7m
<b>Number of shares represented by ASA</b>	3,208,657 – equivalent to 10 <sup>th</sup> largest shareholder
<b>Market capitalisation</b>	\$48.31bn – on day of meeting
<b>Were proxies voted?</b>	Yes, on a poll
<b>Pre-AGM Meeting?</b>	Yes, with Chair Gordon Cairns; Holly Kramer, Independent Non-Executive Director, Chair of People Performance Committee; Marcin Firek, Company Secretary; Paul van Meurs, Head of Investor Relations

### Virtual meeting leads to inadequate answers and fewer fireworks

Gordon Cairns, the Chair opened the meeting by introducing Uncle Timothy Gray to give a welcome to country. He then spent some time explaining the procedures for a virtual meeting.

The presentations by the Chair and the CEO, Brad Banducci followed. These may be found at <https://www.woolworthsgroup.com.au/page/investors/our-performance/investor-news/>, along with the voting results from the meeting.

You will not find the text of a speech there from Gordon Cairns since he simply spoke to the slides. Apart from the usual review he emphasised new ways of working including mental and physical health support for the staff. On the underpayment issue he made a plea that awards be made less complicated for simpler compliance. Sustainability is key for Woolworths and he cited diversity (including indigenous and refugee employment), modern slavery and plastics reduction as key issues.

Brad Banducci reviewed performance and strategy in the usual manner, but he also emphasised sustainability. WOW had published a comprehensive Sustainability Report in late August. The ASA had criticised this report as being short on targets, but the day before the AGM they released their 2025 Sustainability Plan which lists many specific targets. The ASA commented that this was a good thing, and the Chair asked us to mention that in our report.

The Sustainability Report and Plan documents can also be seen at the web address shown above. There has been widespread misleading reporting that WOW would be using 100% renewable energy by 2025. The goals are 100% renewable **electricity** by 2025 and net positive emissions by 2050, but much sooner if possible. There is an objective for zero food waste to landfill by 2025. It is worth looking at the 2025 Sustainability Plan to see the scope of their many other objectives.

The ASA asked five questions under General Business. Three of these (on the staff share scheme, the underpayment issue, and growth after the pandemic) were answered cursorily, even though Gordon Cairns referred to a “healthy and robust” engagement with the ASA. In a virtual meeting there is no real opportunity to clarify or follow up questions, to engage in a discussion.

Our question on the future of Big W was answered with Gordon Cairns saying that he was happier now than he was four years ago about their performance. He also said that there would always be room in Australia for a discount department store, but maybe not for three of them.

He also told us that the remarkable online sales growth (up 100% in Q1, FY2021) would probably moderate but that the pandemic has brought about “inexorable changes”. WOW does not provide separate EBIT for the online business but advised that it was profitable, and that this should increase with productivity improvement in picking and delivery.

There were questions on WOW’s arrangement with News Corp. They responded that this was a normal promotional arrangement.

The proposed Dan Murphy’s store in Darwin was also raised by some questioners. Gordon Cairns indicated that there were plans to move to another site and that the company was in close contact with the aboriginal communities affected. He also showed some anger when he reported that these communities were not happy with others speaking on their behalf.

Stephen Mayne asked questions about poker machines and money laundering, the composition of the Endeavour Group Board and political donations by the Australian Hotels Association. Gordon Cairns said that WOW has a policy of not making political donations but that they preferred to remain in the AHA and deal with it from within.

The ASA supported all resolutions and they all passed comfortably. The lowest “For” vote was for the remuneration report at 96.4%.

The meeting ended at 11:50 am, less than two hours after it started. It was a lot shorter and quieter than last year with fewer theatrics from the questioners, no aggrieved farm workers. There was not even a question about the proposed store in Mosman.

When the meeting closed the Chair advised that the money that would normally be spent on catering at an AGM will be donated to OzHarvest.