

BLACK COUNTRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

MINUTES OF THE AGM

Held at University of Wolverhampton Business School, Molineux Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SG on Thursday 3rd November 2022 at 3.45pm

The meeting was opened by Phil Purssey, Chair of the Board of the Chamber who welcomed everyone and explained that all resolutions had been voted on before the meeting began.

The Chair then gave his review of the year.

Chambers are special entities. They have been around a long-time, seen many events and economic shake-ups yet have always been there for members. Without members, Chambers would not exist, and we thank you for your support and input and hope that we have made a positive contribution to the work of your business.

I have been a longstanding Chamber member and assumed the Chair position in January this year and, so far in 2022, have been excited by the direction the organisation is taking. While the Chamber has remained a constant force in the Black Country across two centuries, the people delivering that work change.

These remain uncertain times for those of us in business today but, with over seven hundred members employing over 60,000 people there remains no better business partner than the Black Country Chamber of Commerce. Our membership retention levels are one of the highest in the entire network of fifty-three organisations affiliated to the British Chambers of Commerce and, no matter what the challenge our members face, we are here for you.

This year, we said goodbye to Corin Crane who had been CEO for the last six years and, stepping down from the board are Ali Allibhai and Simon Bond. We also said goodbye to Sarah Williams who moved onto new pastures and steps down as a director. We thanked Corin for his years of service and I also want to put on record a huge thank you to Simon, Sarah and Ali who have been superb non-executive directors during their time.

I will now hand over to your new Chief Executive, Sarah Moorhouse to say a few words.



Sarah Moorhouse, C.E.O. presented her report for the year:

While this may be only my second month, I am a familiar face to many of you. As a Chamber member, my previous organisation, benefitted from the work of this, the largest and longest-running business support entity in the region.

As a non-executive director and then President, I further fell in love with the Chamber and was constantly amazed at the resilience and determination of the people working each day to put Black Country businesses on the map. Whether it is engagement, campaigning, helping members to connect with one another or save money on the costs of doing business, raising the profile of our members or helping them trade across borders, the team behind the Chamber have shown time and time again that they are capable and able to adapt to whatever the world throws at them. Seeing this first-hand as a board member and President, I knew I wanted to get involved more and jumped at the chance to apply for the role of CEO.

Coming out of the COVID period, we have brought many well missed events back to full, in person experiences and added new initiatives which are set to become highly anticipated events in the region's business calendar for years to come. Last month we held our awards, receiving the highest number of entries ever, testament to the power of the Chamber's brand and its ability to showcase the best businesses.

Our "This is the Black Country" campaign is an ambitious communications and public affairs campaign which is set to run into 2023 and puts the needs of our members at the very heart of championing the needs of the local business community and tackling the barriers which limit growth and productivity. For those of you who have joined us following today's conference, you will have seen this in action today.

During the year, we have also brought Prosper Magazine back to print and continued to grow member services, ensuring that those who rely on us gain value from their membership.

As the new CEO I am working with the Chamber's Executive Team and our wider team to ensure that this organisation which has been there for so many for so long continues to be the bedrock of business support across Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, and Wolverhampton and, over the next 12 months, am looking forward to announcing these plans.

I will now hand back to the Chair to continue the business of the AGM.



The Chair conducted the following resolutions:

1. To receive the report of the directors and the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2022

The accounts were laid before the meeting as approved by the board of directors and will be delivered to Companies House.

The resolution was passed.

2. To re-appoint CKCA Limited as auditors from the conclusion of this meeting until the conclusion of the next general meeting before which accounts are laid and to authorise the directors to fix the auditors' remuneration.

The resolution was passed.

3. To elect four directors from the shortlisted candidates being Alison Bradley, Amy Brokenshire, Brian Cape, and Johnathan Dudley.

All candidates received the required votes and were elected to the board.

The meeting concluded at 4.15pm with thanks to Chamber staff, Members and the Board and best wishes for 2023.