

BLACK COUNTRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

Minutes of the AGM

Held at The Hub, Wisemore Campus, Walsall College, Littleton Street West, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 8ES on Monday 19th November 2018 at 10.00am

Members Present:

15 people attended representing 12 member companies. (Quorum requires 15 or more members in attendance or via proxy)

In attendance:

6 Black Country Chamber employees and the Black Country Chamber Chair.

3 member apologies were received.

32 member proxy voting forms were received.

The meeting was opened at 10.00am by Bankie Williams, Chair of the Board of the Chamber who explained the agenda, so all present understood the format of the meeting.

The President, Julie Cunningham, then gave her report as attached and took the following question:

Q – How is policy development going?

A – It was difficult being in the shadow of Birmingham, but excellent work has been produced during the Carillion and Transport campaigns. The West Midlands do not get enough attention or investment but there is a good relationship with Andy Street and things are improving.

The C.E.O. Corin Crane thanked everyone for coming and then gave his presentation as attached.

Q – Could Young Chamber be introduced to civic businesses; Chamber encourage Thrive employer status and look at disability confident employment.

A – Items will be discussed at the Consultative Forum and look at as part of the Chamber strategy. Chamber Senior Management Team have been trained in Mental Health and Wellbeing.

The Chamber was then commended on its work with the Young Chamber and members were asked to get involved in mentoring to help with skills.

Voting on the following resolutions then took place:

1. To Receive the President's Review

The resolution was passed.

2. To receive the Chief Executive's Report

The resolution was passed.

3. To receive the report of the directors and the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018

The accounts were laid before the meeting as approved by the board of directors and will be delivered to Companies House. There were no questions from the members.

The resolution was passed.

4. To re-appoint CK Chartered Accountants 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

There were no questions from the members.

The resolution was proposed and seconded.

The resolution was passed by unanimous vote.

5. To elect two directors from the shortlisted candidates being; Simon Bond; Shaun Carvill, Sarah Moorhouse and Joanna Smith.

The chairman announced a poll would be taken and asked for the members to vote on each director and after including the proxy votes, the result was that Simon Bond was re-appointed to the board and Sarah Moorhouse was appointed to the board.

Sincere thanks were given to Shaun for the passion he showed while a board member and to Joanna for applying.

The Chair then introduced Jude Thompson as the new Vice-President.

Jude told the meeting his business background and that his focus would be on membership.

The meeting concluded at 11.00am with thanks to all for attending.

President Update – AGM

I am delighted to have taken on the position as President of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, especially given that I am the first female to have been appointed to the role.

During my tenure, I intend to work closely with members to raise the profile of our local Chamber on both a regional and national level. The Black Country Chamber of Commerce has ambitions moving forward for first-class business support, so this is a very exciting time to be part of the organisation.

Furthermore, I have taken on this role to champion local, civic businesses in the Black Country and lobby on their behalf on key policy areas. We have a couple of campaigns running at the moment which focus on manufacturing, transport infrastructure and Brexit - key areas that affect many local businesses. We will also be looking at further policy work over this year.

In addition, I have a couple of priority areas that I am focusing on during my Presidency that are very important to me, which relate to the Young Chamber programme and ethical finance.

Our Young Chamber programme is something I have been focusing upon, as I wholeheartedly believe that we need to act now to support the next generation and ensure that the future workforce of the region is fully equipped to maintain our competitiveness on a global scale. The Chamber is already doing some great work in regards to this, which included a

- Careers Speed Networking event
- Editorial control over Chamber Prosper magazine
- Interviewed the British Chambers Director General Adam Marshall and Ian Austin MP
- Attended Prime Ministers question time
- Series of development workshops
 - Entrepreneur and Behaviour Skills
 - Creative Thinking Skills
- Produced a news report at Sky Studios Academy in London

- Houses of Parliament Visit

We are also working with Walsall College to build a Young Chamber College Committee and operate it for college students age 16-19 year olds.

Secondly, Ethical finance is also important to me, and given my financial background, I have an understanding of the importance of ethical lending in the local community. Therefore, I have been looking to support Credit Unions in the Black Country and champion the opportunity for local employers to support local low-cost loans.

Ethical finance has continually gained traction and garnered interest since the financial crisis in 2008. Investors, businesses and the public can all benefit from more transparent and sustainable financial decision making. In an age of 24 hour news coverage and social media, what businesses do with their customers money is prone to more scrutiny than ever.

Corporate Social Responsibility, correct governance structures and green investments are all critical, which I have a personal and professional interest in. By rewarding and ultimately sharing best practice, we can raise awareness of why ethical financial decisions are crucial to the success of the Black Country.

Many ethical finance charities are national organisations, so we are excited about working with Just Finance moving forward. They are a local charity, whose model is exactly what we mean when we talk about transparency, support and sustainability.

I look forward to meeting with many of you during my Presidency and thank you for your warm welcome into my new role.



Black Country Chamber of Commerce AGM Review (2017 – 2018)



Business Plan Goals 2017 - 2020

- 1) To grow Chamber numbers year on year in both paid and digital memberships.
- 2) To develop and deliver a range of products, services and commercial opportunities based on clear market intelligence of local business needs.
- 3) To put local businesses at the heart of policy and campaign development and to represent these businesses at a local, regional, national and international level.
- 4) To become a 'modern Chamber'. With a comprehensive review of staff Structure and Governance and digital and ICT needs.
- 5) Raise the profile and value of the Chamber and its members to wider business and stakeholder communities.
- 6) Bridge the gap between the world of education and the world of work, helping businesses find the talent they need, and boosting the career prospects of young people.



Key Achievements 2017/ 2018



Key Achievements for 2017/ 18 (1)

Governance:

- **ISO9001 Accreditation Passed**
- **BCC Accreditation Passed**
- **2017 Audit Passed**
- **Audit Committee now fully established**
- **Presidents and Chairs roles separated**
- **Commitment to full governance review through UoW, covering: Board Code of Conduct, performance, recruitment, Chairs and Presidents Role & accountability to members**
- **Sign off of new Procurement and Contracting Process**



Key Achievements for 2017/ 18

Marketing and PR:

- **Revamped Prosper Magazine** – themed and editorial
- **Produced Quality Campaign Documents** – QES, Campaigns, Annual Review, Patron Brochure
- **Launched Twitter Hour**
- **2 x regional winners & national finalists – BCC Awards**
- **Twitter follower increased by 26%**
- **LinkedIn follower increased by 30%**
- **Facebook likes increased by 60%**
- **Conversions to the Chamber website from Social Media channels increased by 139%**



Key Achievements for 2017/ 18

Press:

- **72% of our press releases were used in at least one media outlet over the last year**
- **ACE value of about £18,000 over the last year for press releases**
- **An example of a successful campaign - Carillion Collapse:**
 - **Through this campaign we had, over the month following the announcement, coverage in both local and national media.**
 - **This included featuring on ITV News, Sky News, Good Morning Britain, Channel 4 News, Heart FM, Free Radio, Made in Birmingham, BBC Midlands Today, ITV Evening News, Radio 4 Today Programme, Financial Times, Express & Star, Business Desk and Business Insider.**



Key Achievements for 2017/ 18

Policy:

- **Launched Manufacturing Campaign**
- **Launched Transport Campaign**
- **Secured LEP Sponsorship and Partnership on QES**
- **Joint Mayoral Campaign with Birmingham and Coventry Chambers**
- **Published Brexit Doc with BCU and Brexit Workshops with LEP**
- **Secured funding for/ Launched European Direct Information Centre**
- **Led on Carillion business support campaign**



Key Achievements for 2017/ 18 (2)

Events:

- **Launched Black Country Business Festival**
- **2017 Awards Ceremony moved into profit**
- **Ran Strategic Leadership and Management Development Courses**
- **Black Country Presence at BCC International Trade, Venturefest 2017, UK SME Show**
- **Ran 2 successful Export Documents Training Courses**
- **67% of members attended at least one event**
- **Engaged with over 250 non-members at events**
- **Successful Manufacturing Campaign Launch**
- **60 events held over the year with 2188 delegates in attendance**



Key Achievements for 2017/ 18 (2)

Membership:

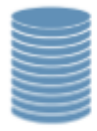
- Patron/ Plat Membership now settled and both successful (+27 NPS Score).
- “One Midland” Established
- Telephone Survey Completed
- Board Led Review of Membership Model
- Chamber 3rd Sector Board Established (27 Members)
- 200 Non Members Signed up to Transport Campaign
- Manufacturing Campaign with over 400 active members
- “Make the most of your membership” programme launched
- Outstanding Feedback on Management Courses



Key Achievements for 2017/ 18 (2)

Export Documents:

- **Three very knowledgeable staff now employed; one with an excellent countrywide reputation**
- **314 Companies using the service**
- **10,000 + documents processed p.a.**
- **£227 million invoice value of exports**
- **Participating in the pilot for the new Customs Declarations Service**
- **British Chamber negotiating with HMRC to lead on documents post Brexit**



£166.38

ECONOMIC BENEFIT YTD
(per £1 invested by DIT
in the regional
delivery contract)



5

INTERNATIONAL TRADE
ADVISERS



£16.04m

ECONOMIC GROWTH
PER ADVISER YTD



166

ACCOUNT MANAGED
BUSINESSES



39

NEW EXPORTERS
EXPORT WINS



2.65m

BUSINESS WON BY
NEW EXPORTERS



77.55m

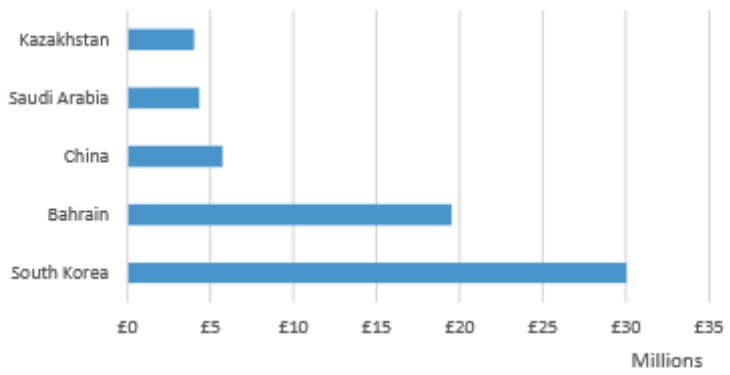
BUSINESS WON BY
EXISTING EXPORTERS



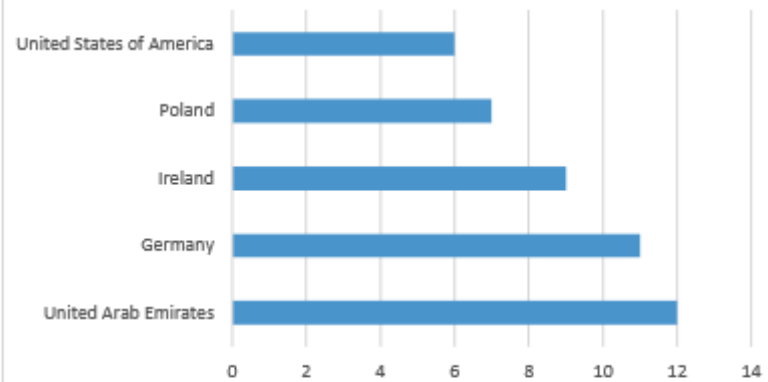
103

EXISTING EXPORTERS
EXPORT WINS

Value of Export Wins By Market



Number of Export Wins By Market





Key Achievements for 2017/ 18:

Young Chamber

- **9 Schools now represented on Young Chamber Committee**
- **Young Person now Chair and Vice Chair of group**
- **Takeover of Prosper Magazine and visit to E&S Editorial Team**
- **2 Leadership Courses run with UoW**
- **Visit to script, record and edit a news broadcast at Sky Studios**
- **Visit to House of Commons**
- **“Design an add” Primary School Competition**
- **Careers Speed Networking events at Q3 Academy and BCBF**



Finance Issues 2017/ 2018



Finance: 2017/ 18:

- The board agreed a three-year business plan from 1st April 2017
- This meant investment of our reserves with agreed financial losses for 2017/18 of £163k before interest received and corporation tax.
- Our losses were £173k which the board approved as an acceptable variance to budget.
- Investment was made in the following posts:
 - A Careers Enterprise Co-Ordinator
 - A digital marketing graduate
 - A full-time policy post
 - A specialist IT consultant to bring all the Chamber systems up to standard.
 - The Chamber also undertook a total staff restructure with the associated costs being incurred in 2017/18.



Finance: 2017/ 18 (2):

- We also began an ERDF project called AIM for the Black Country, which although adding £135k to turnover for the year, causes a serious delay on cash flow; which accounts for the increase in prepayments and accrued income. This project does enable the Chamber to offer free business reviews and related workshops.
- Although related party debtors increased by 172%, the £17,073 variance is mainly due to invoice timings.



Headline Activity for 2018/ 19



Headline Activity for 2018/ 19 (1):

- **April – ISO Accreditation**
- **April – Business Festival Launch**
- **April – New Delivery Model with Dudley and Walsall Councils**
- **April – Recruitment of new Chair Role & President Handover**
- **May – CRM System Goes Live**
- **June – Final Sign off New Membership Model**
- **June – Financial Audit**
- **July – Restructure Complete**
- **August – First Results of Governance Review**
- **August – New Expo Arrangements Agreed**
- **September – New Membership Model Goes Live**



Headline Activity for 2018/ 19 (2):

- **September – New DIT Contract Competition Launched (Delayed)**
- **October – Annual Report Published**
- **October – BCC Branding Campaign Starts**
- **October – Board Away Day**
- **November - AGM**
- **November – Launch Event for first BCCC Trade Visit – Saxony**
- **November – Consultative Forum Agree Focus for BCCC Manifesto**
- **February – Visit Black Country Launched**
- **March/ April – “Black Country International” Launched**
- **March/ April – Chamber Manifesto Launched**