



## Minutes from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the Black Country

<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	2:30pm – 3:30pm 10th July 2020
<b>Location:</b>	Online (Zoom Meeting)
<b>Speakers:</b>	Professor Nazira Karodia Wolverhampton University
<b>Chair:</b>	Mike Wood MP
<b>Contact:</b>	Matthew Lowe, Policy & Lobbying Manager, Black Country Chamber of Commerce / <a href="mailto:appg@blackcountrychamber.co.uk">appg@blackcountrychamber.co.uk</a>

### In Attendance

#### Parliamentarians/Representatives:

Dan Horrocks (DH)	Office of Mike Wood MP
Mike Wood MP (Chair) (MW)	Member of Parliament for Dudley South
Rt. Hon. Pat McFadden MP (Deputy Chair) (PM)	Member of Parliament Wolverhampton South East
Stuart Anderson MP (SAn)	Member of Parliament for Wolverhampton South West
Suzanne Webb MP (SW)	Member of Parliament for Stourbridge
Jane Stevenson MP (JSt)	Member of Parliament for Wolverhampton North East
Nicola Richards (NR)	Member of Parliament for West Bromwich East
Simon Phipps (SP)	Office of Suzanne Webb MP

#### Invited Guests/Secretariat:

Corin Crane (CC)	Chief Executive, Black Country Chamber of Commerce
Matthew Lowe (ML)	Policy & Lobbying Manager, Black Country Chamber of Commerce
Sarah Thompson (ST)	Press and PR Officer, Black Country Chamber of Commerce
Paul Maubach (PMau)	Chief Executive, NHS Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group
Neil Anderson (NA)	Director of External Affairs, Black Country Chamber
Prof. Nazira Karodia (NK)	Pro-Vice Chancellor for Regional Development at the University of Wolverhampton

#### Apologies: None received

NO.	KEY DISCUSSION POINTS/ ACTION POINTS/ DECISIONS	By whom?	By when?
	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>		
3.01	<b>Mike Wood (MW)</b> opened the meeting by welcoming attendees to the third and second virtual meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Black Country.  The minutes of the previous meeting were approved unanimously.	MW	Closed

	<b>Presentation: University of Wolverhampton Public Health Resource Centre - Professor Nazira Karodia</b>		
3.02	<p><b>Nazira Karodia (NK)</b> delivered a PowerPoint presentation on the University of Wolverhampton's plans to develop a Black Country Health Hub &amp; Research centre.</p> <p>This would be a multi partner and city wide approach with the aim to improve public health and wellbeing of the local population by aligning key services and facilities with an emphasis on preventative measures. This would also alleviate pressures caused by COVID-19 on the city's health infrastructure.</p> <p><b>AP: Full PowerPoint slides are available upon request to APPG Secretariat.</b></p> <p>ML (on behalf of Chair) opened the conversation up to the APPG attendees.</p> <p>PMau: The CCG welcomes this proposal as they believe it will connect into several initiatives across the Black Country not just Wolverhampton. In particular, how the region addresses the inequalities in health that will emerge as a result of the pandemic.</p> <p>SW: Asked if the University had considered how other areas across the UK have established a similar resource</p> <p>NK: Reported that the University has run a range of models and investigated how other areas have run this sort of facility. NK also reported that the City of Wolverhampton Council have also modelled the data and conducted research into the centre's viability.</p> <p>JSt: Raised the point that this was an interesting proposal providing the best service at best cost to people in Wolverhampton as a priority for her as an MP. She also thanked NK for the presentation and will investigate this in more detail.</p> <p>SA: Also thanked NK for the presentation and stated he would investigate this in more detail and requested for additional information to be sent to him.</p> <p>NK: The University will circulate a high-level paper to the Secretariat to send to APPG Members.</p>	NK	On-going
		ML	
		All	Closed
		NK/ML	ASAP
	<b>Discussion: Economic Recovery Plan for the Region</b>		
3.03	<p>MW asked CC to begin the next agenda item discussing the latest political and fiscal support measures</p> <p>CC stated that the general feel from the business community is that the Chancellor's fiscal support package has been well received. The Chamber has been supporting and lobbying for the support of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Recharge the West Midlands Economy proposal. Many businesses and homeowners will welcome the 'green' grants due to its immediacy to provide cash to businesses soon. The job creation scheme will also be welcomed by businesses depending upon the scheme. He also stated that there remains a gap for manufacturing firms needing support through COVID this is a key issue if a recession is coming to the region.</p> <p>MW suggested that the APPG should invite BEIS and Treasury Ministers to attend the next APPG meeting alongside other business support groups. This will provide the APPG an opportunity to feed into the Autumn Statement.</p> <p><b>AP:</b> ML to work with MW office to invite representatives from BEIS/Treasury to the next APPG meeting (TBC).</p>	CC	Closed
		MW/DH/ML	Ongoing

	<p>SW raised the point that as an APPG we should focus on 'Recovery' rather than recession as COVID-19 is not a man-made recession. We also need to look at the gaps in the government support package including areas of cross policy development such as housebuilding and EV charging infrastructure. SW welcomed the governments efforts to boost local job centres to support youth employment.</p> <p>CC suggested that at a future APPG a focus on skills and the scale and scope of the job protection, retention, and development schemes. The role of the Job Centre is going to increase significantly over the next few months.</p> <p>MW stated that there is a key role for Job Centres and the DWP have recently gone out to recruit an additional 350 new work coaches to support the delivery of the new Kick Starter scheme. MW also stated that at the previous APPG discussion it was raised by Sarah Middleton that there is a strong need to bring the Job Centre/DWP and businesses closer together.</p> <p>SW raised the key issue around that there are jobs available however the remains and issue around skills shortages and more needs to be done to retrain and reskill individuals to access these jobs and jobs for the future.</p> <p>MW stated that there are a significant number of jobs filled by EU migrant labour across the region and policy makers need to make sure that those businesses can continue to operate once new immigration rules are brought forward. MW stated that there needs to be flexibility on economic migration.</p>	SW	Closed
		CC	Ongoing
		MW	Closed
		SW	Closed
		MW	Closed
	<b>Next steps: APPG Asks for Government</b>		
3.04	Members of the APPG agreed that the Secretariat should work with the Chair and Deputy Chair to draft letters inviting BEIS/Treasury Ministers to attend the next meeting of the APPG.	All/ML	ASAP
	<b>Any other business</b>		
3.05	PMau provided a verbal update on COVID-19 on behalf of the CCG. Key points raised included the increased potential for local lockdowns and concerns rising over Sandwell and Dudley.	PMau	Closed
	<b>Date of next Meeting</b>		
3.06	September (TBC).	ML	