

BLACK COUNTRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

MINUTES OF THE AGM

Held Virtually on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 10.00am

22-member proxy voting forms were received in advance.

The meeting was opened at 10.00am by Bankie Williams, Chair of the Board of the Chamber who explained that all resolutions had been voted on in advance to avoid any technical issues that may have prevented members voting on the day.

Questions were invited via the chat button.

The President, Jude Thompson, gave his review of the year, as attached.

A short video was then shown highlighting events that had taken place during the past year.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=StbzavJTRGA>

The C.E.O. Corin Crane thanked the Board, Staff and Jude for all their hard work during such a strange year and then gave his presentation as attached.  
He finished by wishing the members well and hoping that the suspension of membership payments for April, May & June had helped members during the initial Covid crisis.

Voting on the following resolutions then took place:

1. To Receive the President's Review

There were no questions from the members.  
The resolution was passed.

2. To receive the Chief Executive's Report

There were no questions from the members.  
The resolution was passed.

3. To receive the report of the directors and the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

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 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.

There were no questions from the members.  
The resolution was passed.



5. To elect three directors from the shortlisted candidates being Simon Bond, Sarah Moorhouse, Jatinder Sharma and Stuart Smith.

The directors who received the majority votes were:

Simon Bond and Sarah Moorhouse, who are re-elected to the board and Jatinder Sharma who is elected to the board.

The Chair congratulated them on behalf of all members of the Chamber and thanked Stuart Smith, who was a very strong candidate.

The Chair then gave a brief report as attached and the meeting concluded at 10.45am with thanks to all for attending, albeit virtually.

This year marked the first full twelve months of my Presidency at the Black Country Chamber and, like many of you, those plans which we had made at the end of 2019 were quickly overtaken by events.

Our new trading relationship with the EU was set to be the biggest thing many businesses would need to contend with and get our heads around and whilst this still remains the case; our personal, professional, and social lives were dramatically impacted by the pandemic.

As the prime ambassador for the Chamber and the owner of a local business I not only get to see, albeit mostly virtually lately, and hear from many of you who make up our business community and what is commanding your attention and top of your in tray. The challenges we have all faced have been unlike anything any of us have dealt with in generations. Everybody, across all sectors, from household names and big brands through to sole traders and small local firms have been affected and many of us have friends, family or colleagues who have felt the devastating consequences of this disease. Resilience is a term which is banded around quite a lot lately, but I have been touched by many of the stories and examples of businesses and individuals helping one another and finding ways to ensure that we are able to stay open or able to open our doors again, hopefully in the near future.

The Chamber has played a pivotal role in this.

This organisation - which we are only ever custodians of - has a long and rich history.

Its legacy stretches over two centuries, founded at the end of the Industrial Revolution by the region's makers and innovators; it has survived two world wars, a global flu pandemic, a great depression, great recession, numerous economic downturns and has always evolved and adapted to the needs of its members. Whilst COVID-19 will continue to cast a shadow into 2021 with its ripples still be felt, this Chamber has once again been a beacon of stability where, through this fellowship of local businesses, we have demonstrated that there is power in working together and has ensured that the business community has the tools, knowledge, and opportunities to keep trading.

The Chamber will continue to play its part as the leading regional champion for local business and do its bit to ensure that no member is left behind and helping future innovators, makers, creators, and business leaders to be safe in the knowledge that the Black Country is still here, and that we are still open for and to business!

As a local business owner and a member of this diverse business community, I want to say a huge thank you to everybody in the Chamber team – the work you have done has been noted by many from number No 10 to Her Majesty the Queen and helped to positively influence decision and policy making. Furthermore, your own passion, dedication and drive has helped us all through 2020 and we look forward to seeing all the great work you have planned for



2021 unfold as you help us continue to navigate the challenges and embrace the opportunities which lie ahead.

As we now look to the future, I am thrilled to announce that Professor Geoff Layer, Vice Chancellor at the University of Wolverhampton, will become the Chamber's next Vice President and will assume the Presidency at next year's AGM.

In the meantime, I am delighted to enter my second year as President filled with optimism and a genuine belief that the Chamber will continue to deliver for your business, and I look forward to seeing you all again soon.



Black Country  
Chamber of  
Commerce

BCCC Annual General Meeting  
11<sup>th</sup> December 2020  
CEO Report

# 2019 – 2022 Business Plan

To grow Chamber numbers year on year in both paid and digital memberships and ensure a high level of member retention.

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To make the chamber financially sustainable and develop a range of services and commercial opportunities based on local business needs.

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To put businesses at the heart of our Chamber and to represent these businesses at a local, regional, national and international level.

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Raise the profile of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce and its members to business, media and stakeholder communities

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Bridge the gap between the world of education and the world of work.

# 2019 – 2022 Strategic Goals

The most digital Chamber in the country

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The best business support organisation

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A commercially viable property purchased that is a beacon for regional businesses

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‘Closer Collaboration’ with neighbouring Chambers

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Exemplars in Inclusive Leadership

# What COVID did to the business.



BUSINESS IS DONE BETTER TOGETHER



## The opportunities we found.



BUSINESS IS DONE BETTER TOGETHER



Black Country  
Chamber of  
Commerce



# Focus for next 18 months

Building on our brand as Trusted, Fighting for local businesses, Business Led, Quality Products

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Deliver activity that generates revenue – drop things that don't

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Seize opportunities in Post Brexit documentation, International Trade Support, Governance and Executive Training, Start Up Support, Online Events

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Secure wider range of business support public sector contracts

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Convert positive external profile and extensive social media coverage into membership leads & sales.

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Marketing focused on recruitment and sales - push non members towards membership.

# Reality Check for 21/ 22

Membership numbers dropping across the country

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COVID 19, BREXIT and Recession will mean generating commercial revenue will be tough

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We need to look at the skills of all of the team and make sure we have the tools in place to capitalise on the new world

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By the end of this financial year we will look at all outgoings and produce a commercial strategy and budget that reflects the new world.

The Black Country Chamber of Commerce is a business, like others, that has had to deal with the issues that 2020 has brought forth and I would like to thank Corin and the team for steering the Chamber through this year while also being there to support the members and wider business community. I know the Chamber is held in high regard and I believe it is what business needs.

Businesses in the Black Country are survivors and have shown resilience and a will to work together as a community with a goal to make the Black Country influential. The more members the Chamber has, the more it can influence government. I encourage businesses to join the Chamber.

I would like to thank the President and C.E.O. for the passion they have for the region and look forward to working with Geoff Layer, the new Vice President, in the coming year.

I close by wishing you all a safe, healthy, and enjoyable Christmas.