

Black Country
Chamber of
Commerce

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Last Updated 21 June 2021

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1. THE BLACK COUNTRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BUSINESS IS DONE BETTER TOGETHER

Celebrating its 20th year in 2021, the Black Country Chamber of Commerce is the successor organisation to a legacy spanning across three centuries and remains the leading business support organisation for firms operating across, based within or seeking to do business in Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton; providing a range of services and products which make the process of doing that business easier and help members to overcome barriers and limitations to growth as a powerful voice for the business community.

This is a dynamic and exciting time for us following an intensive period of modernisation and restructure in order to become a contemporary and forward-looking organisation with the ambition to be one of the best Chambers of Commerce in the UK and at a time when our members are doing business in a vastly different trading environment following the UK's exit from the EU, the worst economic downturn on record and the lingering shadow cast by COVID-19.

The Black Country Chamber of Commerce is looking to recruit a new, independent Chair of its board following the end of the previous Chair's term. We are seeking a strong leader who will help to develop the skills of the board, ensure we have robust governance processes and who is passionate about the business and work proactively with the Chamber's Executive Team to deliver its vision and commitments.

As a not-for-profit organisation, we have big ambitions which include increasing our membership and growing our revenue through a strong range of innovative commercial products and as first-class lobbyists and champions which amplify the voice of local businesses whilst playing a central role in growing the prosperity of all our communities. We believe that we are powerful when we can fully represent the breadth and depth of the Black Country and welcome applicants who reflect the diversity and entrepreneurial spirit of our great region and can support the team in its vision to be a dynamic, modern, and commercially successful business support organisation.

2. ABOUT THE ROLE

The Chair will hold the Board and Executive Team to account for the Chamber's mission, vision, and strategy to deliver superior membership value, act as the champion for businesses regionally and create a financially sustainable organisation whilst ensuring that each director fulfils their duties and responsibilities for effective governance. The Chair will also provide support and, where appropriate, challenge the Chief Executive to ensure that the Board functions as a unit and works with the Executive Team to achieve its objectives. The Chair will also act as an advocate for the work of the Chamber in partnership with the Chief Executive.

The Chamber additionally appoints a President who acts as its lead external ambassador. The Chair's role will focus on the governance of the organisation and be expected to represent the Chamber from time to time at various meetings and act as an advocate for its work within their remit and network.

Applications are not limited to those individuals who work for members of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce and can be from the broader business community.

The role will be for a three-year period, limited to two consecutive terms in post.

3. RELATIONSHIPS

The Chair plays a vital role in ensuring the effective working of the Chamber's governance and, where appropriate, is a visible champion of our work.

We have outlined a summary of some of these key relationships and audiences:

Black Country Chamber of Commerce & Industry Board of Directors

Lead the Board and ensure effective governance

Black Country Chamber of Commerce Teams

Chief Executive, Executive Team, other Chamber colleagues as necessary, Company Secretary

Black Country Chamber of Commerce Membership

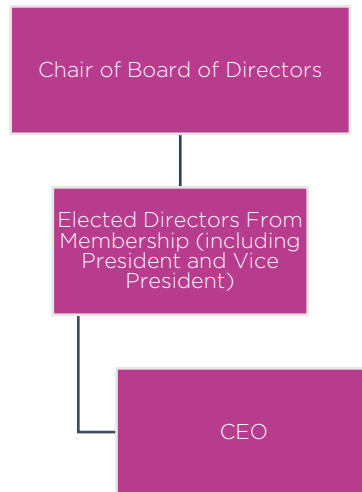
Through the AGM process, provide an update to members on progress

Chamber Network

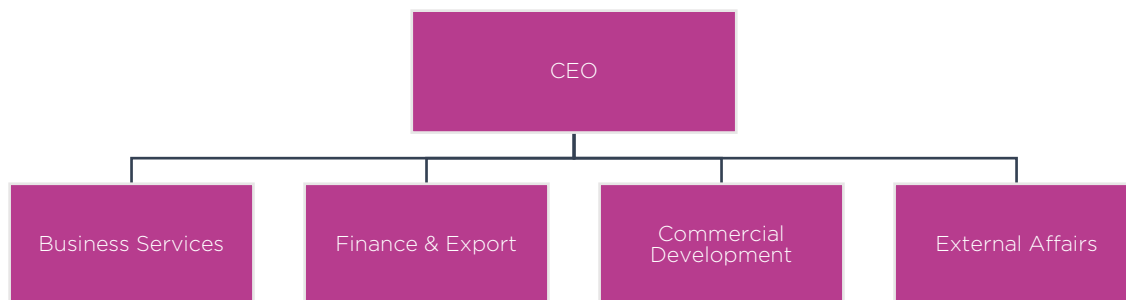
Attend conference calls and virtual meetings of the nationwide group of Chamber Chairs

4. ORGANISATIONAL CHART

The board of governance is comprised of Directors who are elected from its membership.



The Chamber has four departments which report into the Chief Executive via a member of the Executive Team.



5. MAIN ACCOUNTABILITIES

Strategic Leadership

- Provide leadership to the Board, ensuring that the Company has maximum impact for its members.
- Ensure that Directors fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the Company.
- Ensure that the Board operates within its objectives and provides a clear strategic direction for the Company.
- Ensure that the Board can regularly review major risks and associated opportunities and satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities and manage and mitigate the risks.
- Ensure that the Board fulfils its duties to ensure sound financial health of the Company, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability.

Governance

- Ensure that the governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for the Company.
- Develop the knowledge and capability of the Directors and Board.
- Encourage positive change where appropriate, addressing and resolving any conflicts within the Board
- Appraise the performance of the Chief Executive and the Board on an annual basis.
- Ensure that the Board operates within the parameters of the company articles, is regularly refreshed, and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the business effectively, and which also reflects the wider population.
- Work within any agreed policies adopted by the company.

External Relations

- Act as an advocate for the Chamber
- Act as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate
- Facilitate change and address any potential conflict with external stakeholders.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

- Chair meetings of the Board effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process.
- Ensure that the Executive Team is fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the Company and that the Board takes collective ownership.
- Work closely with the Chief Executive to give direction to Board policymaking and to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of directors.
- Monitor those decisions taken at meetings and ensure they are implemented.

Relationships (With Chief Executive and Board Directors)

- Establish and build a strong, effective, and constructive working relationship with the Chief Executive, ensuring the Chief Executive is held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives.
- Support the Chief Executive, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles.
- Ensure regular contact with the Chief Executive and develop and maintain an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges.
- Liaise with the Chief Executive to maintain an overview of the Company's affairs, providing support as necessary.
- Conduct an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the Chief Executive in consultation with other Directors.
- Ensure that the Chief Executive has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.

6. PERSON SPECIFICATION

A person's suitability for the role and how they meet the below criteria will be assessed during the application, interview, and any assessment stages:

AREA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
EXPERIENCE		
Experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation	✓	
Successful track record of achievement throughout their career	✓	
Experience of company governance and working with or as part of a Board.	✓	
Experience of external representation, delivering presentations and managing stakeholders	✓	
Significant experience of chairing meetings and events.	✓	
KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS		
Broad knowledge and understanding of the Chambers of Commerce and the current issues affecting it.		✓
Good understanding of company governance issues.	✓	

Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together.	✓	
Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of company finance issues.	✓	
OTHER		
Demonstrate a strong and visible passion and commitment to the Chamber and its strategic objectives.	✓	
Personal gravitas to lead a significant national organisation.	✓	
Exhibit strong inter-personal and relationship building abilities and be comfortable in an advocacy role.	✓	
Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively.	✓	
Strong networking capabilities that can be utilised for the benefit of the Company.	✓	
Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment.	✓	
Ability to commit time to conduct the role well, including travel and attending meetings out of office hours.	✓	

The above list is indicative only and not exhaustive. The Chair will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Chair will serve a three-year term to be eligible for re-appointment for one additional term.

In addition to chairing the main Board meetings, the Chair has the right to attend the sub-committees.

Remuneration:

The role of the Chair is not remunerated, but expenses for travel may be claimed.

Time Commitment:

The Chair will be required to attend and chair six Board meetings per year, have regular meetings with the Chief Executive and represent the Chamber at appropriate meetings with key stakeholders. It is envisaged that this will take up approximately 1/ 2 days per month.

Reporting:

The role of Chair reports to the Board of Directors.

8. APPLICATION AND MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Chamber and the role, please contact corincrane@blackcountrychamber.co.uk.

To apply for the role, please submit a CV and covering letter detailing to HR@blackcountrychamber.co.uk