

NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE BIRMINGHAM COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIATION – TRADE AND BUSINESS FOCUS GROUP HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 JULY AT MILLS AND REEVE 78 COLMORE ROW, BIRMINGHAM

Present:

Keith Stokes – Smith – Chairman, BCA

Peter McLintock – Partner, Mills and Reeve and Chairman of the BCA Trade and Business Focus Group

Mike Murray – International Team, BCC

Heather Law – International team, BCC

Ant Thomas – Marketing Birmingham

Beverly Lindsey – Diamond Travel

Bevil Williams – REPC Ltd

Christopher Johnson – Global Enterprise Services Ltd

Garry Peal – BCC

Inderjit Deol – Aidem Digital

James Woodcock – International Synergies

Mark Jones – BDO

Martin Levermore – MDTI Co Ltd

Michael Barrow – Matrix Marketing

Omer Simjee – Irwin Mitchell Solicitors

Orlando McDonald – HESA Networks

Paul Brown – Ernst and Young

Pauline Taylor – Federation of Small Businesses

Victor Shaw – Caribbean 4 Life

Apology – Peter Laybourn – International Synergies

Welcome

Peter McLintock welcomed colleagues on behalf of Mills and Reeve.

Background and purpose of meeting

Keith Stokes – Smith outlined the background to the establishment of the Birmingham Commonwealth Association (BCA) in late 2013. Instigated by Sir Albert Bore, Leader of Birmingham City Council the BCA had counterpart Associations

covering North America, China and Europe. Each of these bodies, whilst independent in nature was prioritising its objectives around the principles outlined in Birmingham City Council's strategy document "Distinctly Birmingham".

Peter McLintock highlighted the importance of the Commonwealth as a trading destination and home to one third of the global population.

In order to understand the current level of interest in and engagement with Commonwealth countries colleagues were invited to participate in a practical "4 corners" exercise. The analysis of the outcomes from that exercise would help determine the future direction of the Trade and Focus Group.

For the information of colleagues a complete list of written responses to the questions posed in the "4 corners" exercise is attached.

ACTION:

1. PM and KSS to analyse views expressed in the Commonwealth "4 corners" exercise and report to the next meeting on Focus Group priorities.
2. Propose a course of action for the Focus Group, at the next meeting, in line with the priorities identified.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 10 September at 8.30am at Mills and Reeve offices, 78 Colmore Row.