

## FINAL NOTICE & AGENDA OF THE ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Members' Meeting of the

Berkshire Branch of the Institute of Directors

will be held **Online**

on

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2020**

**starting at 17.30pm following the Committee Meeting**

for the following purposes:

1. To receive and accept the Minutes of the Branch AMM held on Friday May 10<sup>th</sup> 2019
2. To receive and consider the Committee Report for the year 2019
3. To elect Members of the Committee.

Committee Member	Role	First Appointed	Re-appointed	Eligible for election
Raj Singh	Chair	Aug 2018		N/A
Sue Rizzello	Ambassador	May 2019		N/A
Amanda MacAuley	Ambassador	May 2019		N/A
Daryl Stickland	Ambassador	May 2019		N/A
Yahya Alamari	Ambassador	May 2019		N/A
John Morton	Ambassador	May 2015	May 2018	N/A

4. To consider any other proper branch matter (any items to be considered must have been notified to The Chairman in writing, by noon on Monday, 15 June 2020)

By order of the Chairman

Raj Singh  
Branch Chairman  
June 2020

**N.B.** A Member is entitled to vote but, if unable to attend, may appoint a proxy to vote in his or her place. The form below is for this purpose and must be emailed to:

**Julie Jones: [admin.berks@iod.net](mailto:admin.berks@iod.net)**

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**Form of Proxy**

I \_\_\_\_\_ being a Member of the Institute of Directors,  
Berkshire Branch, hereby appoint \_\_\_\_\_ or the Chairman  
of the Meeting to act as my proxy at the AMM to be held on  
Monday 22 June, 2020

**INSTITUTE OF DIRECTORS – BERKSHIRE BRANCH  
MINUTES OF AMM – FRIDAY 10<sup>th</sup> MAY 2019, Cliveden, Taplow**

<b>Committee In Attendance:</b>	Raj Singh	Branch Chair
	Annelie Sernevall	Ambassador
	John Morton	Ambassador
	Juliet Rushent	Head of Regions South
	Julie Jones	Events and Branch Officer
	Warren Palmer	Ambassador
	Christine Elgood	Ambassador
	Amanda MacAuley	Ambassador
	Daryl Stickland	Ambassador
	Sue Rizzello	Ambassador

**Members In Attendance**

Ross Wilson	Branch Ambassador
Ian Davies	
Richard Shearing	
Henry McNeil	
Susann Elliott	

**Welcome:** Raj Singh welcomed everyone to the meeting

**Apologies:** None

**1. Minutes of 2018 AMM** Copies of the previous AMM minutes were circulated prior to the meeting. There were no comments, and acceptance was proposed by John Morton and seconded by Ross Wilson.

**2. Branch Report** This was circulated prior to the meeting with the final notice. Report was proposed by John Morton and seconded by Sue Rizzello. John suggested that work done by the committee members on development of strategy should be added to the Branch Report. A decision was made to add this additional item to the Branch Report.

**3. Election of Committee** There were six committee members standing for election. Their nomination was put to the meeting for acceptance. The proceedings summary for their election is outlined below:

- Yahya Alamari, proposed by Susan Elliot and seconded by Amanda MacAuley
- Gus MacIver, proposed by Daryl Stickland and seconded by John Morton
- Sue Rizzello, proposed by Warren Palmer and seconded by John Morton
- Amanda MacAuley, proposed by John Morton and seconded by Sue Rizzello
- Daryl Stickland, proposed by Sue Rizzello and seconded by John Morton
- Christine Elgood, proposed by Susan Elliot and seconded by John Morton

**4 AOB** Following questions were raised in AOB:

**Uses of Coworth Park:** In view of the controversy surrounding the owners of this hotel, Ross and John expressed the opinion that we should not be using this venue. Juliet informed members that she had asked clarification from the HO and the decision was not to use the venue unless there is a pre-existing booking, in which case we need to look at commercial implications and then take it up with the hotel.

**Dissatisfaction with IoD:** Ross stated that he was very disappointed with IoD. He has invested heavily into IoD as a committee member, ambassador as well as previous chair. However, he was of the opinion that despite promises of change by multiple leaderships in the past, nothing has changed positively in a significant way in the last three to four-year period. Branches have lost teeth, they do not have any financial authority including managing revenues generated by them, they have very limited communication channels to engage with members and basic things like sharing the name of participants attending an event have been stopped by the central management.

Henry McNeil mentioned that someone from the membership team tried to sell membership to him in an unpleasant way and he had to follow-up vigorously for getting invoice copy for his records.

John Morton mentioned that they have seen good times about IoD when branches were empowered and controlled their own budget. IoD central team has not been well engaged with the grass root membership and does not take key decisions keeping the grassroots membership in mind. He asked the question - how do we see IoD living and breathing again post transformation?

Raj acknowledged that there are inconsistencies in decisions taken or conveyed e.g., in a HO managed professional development event, the course lead distributed copy of delegates visiting cards after seeking their permission; whereas the branch has been asked not to share list of participants even with the attendees consent. He promised to take up this issue with the right levels in the central team.

Raj also informed members on the initial transformation pilot. His opinion was that due to differences in membership and staff size of pilot branches (regions) and others, necessary adjustments need to be made to the results of pilot before rolling them out to the wider branches (regions).

Juliet informed that the central team is still working on transformation and there could be potential changes in the pipeline.

Susan and Ross mentioned that they had been to London briefing when the earlier DG had taken up his role and promised major changes. Similarly, things were promised in the roadshow and nothing has improved. They were of the opinion that leadership cannot be trusted to keep their promises of positive changes.

Raj informed members that de-centralisation and more empowerment for the branches is in the pipeline under consideration, to which Ross replied that members are tired of hearing the same thing again and again and practically no positive change happens.

The only real change that gets delivered, involves putting more restrictions on branches and restricting them to engage with membership at local level effectively.

Ross asked what the vision of IoD is and what does IoD Berkshire stand for. Juliet informed that strategy is still under development. Ross suggested that it would be better to call the top leadership for a Q&A to seek clarity and future direction of travel. In order to conclude matters, Raj suggested that he would convey these strong points made by members to the senior leadership and seek their response. At this juncture Ross stated that he loves the committee and ambassadors and the efforts put by them and only hopes that the central leadership will give them the freedom and authority to make things happen.

Members were asked about any additional matters they would like to raise before close of the meeting and those present agreed to conclude the meeting at that point.

Raj Singh declared the meeting closed.

**Distribution List**

All of Berkshire Branch Committee & Alan Fitzwater

**BERKSHIRE BRANCH REPORT FOR 2019**

## Overview

This is my second annual report as the Chair of our Berkshire branch. I am proud of my ambassadors who have given their best to support our local membership community and continue to do so. I am also very proud of our members who have continued to support this esteemed organisation and have remained engaged in a constructive way.

## Business Environment and IoD

This year has been an unprecedented year in the history of not only the UK but most probably the entire world. Before I come to the COVID 19 pandemic that will have a long lasting impact on our communities and the country, let me start in a chronological manner.

The year started with the continuation of the political uncertainty of BREXIT. The government was quite consumed by the uncertain political situation, very strong entrenched views on BREXIT both within and outside of the ruling party and the other opposition parties. The government machinery had a very tough task of providing good governance as well as dealing with protracted BREXIT negotiations within a diverse set of outcome scenarios. IoD. was very effective in representing the interest of our members by engaging with them through Policy Voice and then working with the government and the media to represent our membership views in the strongest possible ways. We were part of the government's strategic industry engagement process and our policy team, executive management and Chair were very well covered by the leading national media.

In December 2019, a fresh general election was held in the country and a new government with a very strong mandate was voted to power. It seemed that the business environment would start getting stabilised and IoD started engaging with the new government on policy matters to best represent its members. However, COVID 19 pandemic started to take a very ugly turn right from February 2020 and by late March the entire country went into lockdown.

IoD policy team was right at the forefront of lobbying with the government to support businesses and our members and a number of policy responses provided by the government had a significant IoD input on it. In at least two policy responses, IoD was the leading business organisation to champion the interests of business. IoD put together a COVID Hub which is one of the best information hubs within the membership organisations both for its content as well as relevance and updates. It is important to note that despite our best efforts, the case for directors fell through the cracks. However, repeated attempts of our team through significant media and government engagement will not go unnoticed in this regard.

At a local level, you will be pleased to hear that as your representative, I worked with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to assemble a task force comprising of IoD, CBI, The local chambers of commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Tech Nation, Department of International Trade, The British Business Bank, volunteering organisation representatives, local authorities' leaderships of Berkshire, LEP CEO and a LEP board member amongst others. We took prompt and sincere action to support the local businesses in a number of effective ways some of which are listed below:

- Co-ordination of support for the local businesses across all business organisations through combined weekly representation to the Department of Communities and Local Government

- Working with all local authorities to ensure that the government support is made available to the business communities effectively and analysing the weekly delivery report
- Providing additional funding to Berkshire Growth Hub in order to increase its capacity by over 30%, supporting local businesses through one to one guidance and support
- Production of economic briefing for all local government organisations to focus their efforts in the right direction
- Influenced and shaped creation of a new Redeployment and Redundancy Service and a new Berkshire Opportunities portal to help employees affected by the pandemic in finding new career opportunities

IoD Berkshire also led an initiative to initiate a complete rethink of Berkshire Local Enterprise Industrial Strategy in order to incubate, develop and grow Berkshire businesses in the New Normal post COVID 19. You will be pleased to know that the initiative has been approved by the LEP Board now and very soon a number of Blue Sky thinking workshops will be held to start defining a completely new industrial strategy. We have two of our volunteer members participating in this exercise. I have been leading this exercise with a number of other business organisation representatives and as soon as we finalise the framework, I will revert back to you to seek your inputs in the process. Most probably we will organise a webinar to seek your views and then take forward a consolidated view.

COVID 19 has disrupted the entire business environment and IoD is not an exception. Hospitality and Professional Development elements of our revenue, which almost make two third of our income, have suddenly disappeared and we do not know how much of them will be coming back to us in the New Normal and within which time frame. During these tough times, new membership subscriptions also slow down significantly. Hence, the coming year will be challenging for us. We would love to have a number of volunteer members who will raise to this occasion to support our local branch with their expertise, experiences and ideas so as to help our director community weather this storm and launch in a growth trajectory. We as directors and members of this Institute will demonstrate fellowship in these difficult times and pool and share our experiences to be resilient. Every crisis also creates an opportunity and I am sure we will see and grab one.

### **Appointment of New Director General and IoD Transformation**

Subsequent to the appointment of a new Chair and the Board, Jonathan Geldart was appointed as the new Director General of IoD from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019. Jon comes from the volunteering community of chairs and ambassadors. Since Jon's appointment, the IoD volunteering team working with its executive team proposed the framework of membership and Institute propositions and the same has been now approved by the board and put into action. The new framework is exciting and the initial feedback has been quite encouraging. The IoD executive and the volunteering community are currently working on a transformation project to design a proposed target operating model framework, which will empower the branches. You will be pleased to know that I have been leading on one of the work streams and your previous and recent feedbacks have been well represented. However, it is important to note that the project outputs will be for discussion purposes with the IoD executive and the board. They will be subject to further information development and consultation. They are not binding recommendations/guidance.

We also have a new Chair appointed for the South Region. Faisal Khan has taken over from Alex Pratt as the regional chair from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020. On behalf of all of you I would like to thank Alex for his leadership, passion and commitment to the IoD community in general

and Berkshire in particular. Alex has set very high standards of leadership in our region and under his leadership the region has made significant progress. I would also like to welcome Faisal on your behalf. Faisal has been an IoD member for over 30 years and is a seasoned director, entrepreneur and advisor. We are looking forward to working with Faisal to further build on what Alex has created for the South Region.

As a business leader, I have immensely benefited from IoD, which provides an effective peer support and networking platform to exchange ideas and learn from other leaders, while providing high quality continuous learning opportunities. Its advisory and information services provide us with a quick and efficient high level guidance mechanism, before making a choice to invest more in research or specialist guidance. At the local level, we endeavour to engage with our membership to continually listen to their views and incorporate them in our local strategy and plan while also making their voice heard within the Berkshire business community and development support organisations like LEP.

### **Members and Membership Experience**

At the cost of repetition, I would again re-iterate that IoD Berkshire exists because of our members and we should always keep that on the top of our mind in whatever we do. Anything and everything that we do should be of value to our members.

With these guiding principles we have started some new initiatives:

- **New Member Welcome** – All new members joining IoD are personally approached by me through a personal letter and introducing them to one of our ambassadors for support, guidance and familiarisation. I am thankful to the team of our ambassadors who continue to provide their time and expertise to make new members feel welcome and get them settled. The feedback on this initiative has been quite positive. With the generous support of our ambassadors, we plan to continue this initiative.
- **Personalised Approach to Our Members** – I am thankful to Juliet Rushent (Head of Regional Relationships – South) and Julie Jones (Our Events and Branch Officer) who have been making direct telephone contact to our members over more than six months as a pioneering member outreach programme. We have received excellent feedback on this initiative, and I plan to continue this initiative in the near future subject to financial and budgetary approvals.
- **Peer to Peer Support Programme** – We started offering our members peer to peer support opportunities in a functional/business area of their choice from the beginning of COVID 19 lockdown. There has not been substantial uptake of this amongst our members. I still plan to keep this as an on-going initiative while we try to analyse the reasons behind a low take-up and hopefully make it more attractive to our members.

One of my key priorities continues to be further enhancement of diversity in our membership base. We are encouraging our members to engage with us through IoD Berkshire LinkedIn group as well as other channels. We see higher engagement with our members at the local level and will be always working towards further improving the same. We will be very pleased to come up with different formats of membership engagement at the local level. Local engagement is key to the on-going transformation at IoD. We believe that in this noisy busy world, specific and tailored local propositions to the membership will be helpful. We need to do more to increase two-way communication with our membership in order to design and deliver these propositions.

We introduced membership feedback initiative for all of our events recently. Before COVID19 outbreak, we had conducted post event feedback for three of our events. Membership feedback has been very encouraging. We plan to continue this in the future.

## **Events**

Like previous years, IoD Berkshire continues to provide one of the most extensive and interesting events in the South region. A number of our popular events like the Breakfast Clubs at Cliveden attract a significant number of members from the neighbouring branches at Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey and Hampshire. We had virtual talk from the industry leading technology futurist Brian Solis in one of our breakfast meetings. We will try our best to get leading thought leaders to our events in the near future.

Our “Behind the Scenes “format event which involves visit to a business organisation and a guided tour of their establishment was very popular this year. We also had the pleasure of our new Chair Charlotte Velour for a breakfast event, which was very well attended and appreciated.

COVID19 has resulted in temporary suspension of all our physical events. However, we have been providing our members a wide range of webinars and informal events to ensure that they benefit from them and remain connected to our Director Community. We would decide on the future events based on the government guidance, while looking after the safety and well -being of our members, IoD staff and its employees.

## **Ambassadors**

During the year four of our ambassadors – Warren Palmer, Gus MacIver, Annelie Semevall and Christine Elgood decided to leave our committee due to either personal reasons or higher competing demands from their work. Warren decided to leave the committee due to his new role away from Berkshire. Warren, Gus, Annelie and Christine were very active team members and significant contributors. On behalf of all of you I would like to convey our sincere thanks to them for the hard work and personal sacrifices made by them. I would also like to pay special thanks to Warren who hosted our committee meetings in his office premises with open arms and great hospitality.

Our current ambassador team comprising of Amanda MacAuley, Daryl Stickland, John Morton, Sue Rizzello and Yahya Alamari have been instrumental behind the performance of the branch. The branch would not have been able to deliver this level of membership experience without them. I would like to thank them for their excellent work and commitment to the branch. They continue to provide the leadership to our branch working with Julie Jones and Juliet Rushent.

## **Finance**

We do not control our finances locally anymore but do get management information on the same. We as a team would like to generate surplus cash within the branch to invest in further improving our members experience in the coming years.

I would like to put on record our sincere thanks to Juliet and Julie, who have helped this branch evolve into what it is today and continue to provide the backbone of our operations. Our members continue to sing their praises as and when I meet them. We are proud to have Julie and Juliet with us, who make our jobs possible and above all provide that service with smile to our members.

In the end I would like to thank our valued members who have continued to support the Institute, made us a closely knit community and demonstrated fellowship and commitment through their actions.

Onwards and Upwards!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raj' with a stylized flourish underneath.

**Raj Singh | Chairman, Berkshire Branch**

**Candidates Standing For Election**

N/A