



**APPG for BAME Business Owners  
AGM  
Minutes of Meeting on 4 March 2021**

**Attendees**

1. Sir Peter Bottomley, MP – Co-Chair	15. Professor Monder Ram, Centre for Research in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (CRÈME)
2. Baroness Burt of Solihull – Co-Chair	16. Diana Chrouch, Chrouch Consulting, Special Adviser to the APPG for BAME Business Owners
3. Abena Opong-Asare, MP	17. Femi Santos, Alchemy Design
4. Sara Olney MP	18. Anish Tailor, Confederation of British Industry
5. Mark Logan MP	19. Sue Bedward, Midlands Business Leadership Academy
6. Kate Osamor MP	20. Shah Athar, The IBD Partnership, UK Curry Connect
7. Craig Tracey MP	21. Efuru Obua, African Diaspora Business Network
8. Office of Navendu Mishra MP	22. Lola Owolabi, ProudtoBeme
9. Yasmin Qureshi, MP	23. David Apparicio, The Chrysalis Foundation
10. Bell Ribeiro-Addy, MP	24. Bayo Igoh, The Alpha Group
11. Chi Onwurah, MP – Officer	25. Naseem Talukdar, Plastic Pollution Awareness & Action
12. Arnab Dutt, Federation of Small Businesses	26. Patrick Angell, Confederation of British Industry
13. Lina Bourdon, Federation of Small Businesses	27. Katharine Thane, Migrants' Rights Network
14. Moslek Uddin, UK Curry Connect	

**1. Welcome and introductions led by Baroness Burt.**

**2. Election of Officers**

**2.1. L. Burt:** Announced that she is stepping down and called for new officers to be elected:

1. Co-chair - Sir P. Bottomley – Conservative MP
2. Co-chair - S. Olney – Liberal Democrat MP
3. Co-chair – A. Opong-Asare – Labour MP
4. Vice-chair - S. Malhotra – Labour MP
5. Vice-chair - K. Osamor – Labour MP
6. Vice-chair - C. Tracey – Conservative MP
7. Vice-chair - M. Logan – Conservative MP
8. Treasurer - N. Mishra – Labour MP
9. Officer - C. Onwurah – Labour MP
10. Officer - Y. Qureshi – Labour MP
11. Officer - B. Ribeiro-Addy – Labour MP

**2.2. Treasury administration** - Business owner S. Athar of The IBD Partnership and UK Curry Connect also agreed to support the treasurer.

**2.3. Secretariat services** - Diana Chrouch of Chrouch Consulting has agreed to continue to provide secretariat services.

**3. Chairs Report**

**3.1. L. Burt:** Thanked the members of the APPG members for their hard work during the last year.

**3.2. Forward plan** – the APPG published a forward plan during February 2020 which included a commitment to conduct research and a public consultation that would enable a report on minority entrepreneurship.

**3.3. Consultation** - in response to the COVID 19 pandemic the APPG conducted a national consultation in June 2020 to ascertain the impact of COVID-19 on BAME led businesses.

**3.4. APPG report** - the APPG published a report in October 2020 - ‘**BAME Business COVID 19 Response - Voice from the Grassroots**’, with recommendations, several of which have been adopted by the government and commended Diana Chrouh for her work in this area.

**Recommendations adopted included:**

- **A collaboration with the banking sector.** This led to a joint roundtable between the APPG and the banking sector with UK Finance, in November 2020 to discuss barriers to finance, as well as potential solutions. This has subsequently led to the creation of a collaborative advisory panel with UK Finance
- **A project led by the Office for National Statistics (ONS)** to devise a national strategy for improved data collection about BAME businesses.
- **Up-skilling BAME business owners** through digital skills training designed to increase digital inclusion. The APPG is currently taking part in the creation of a pilot to devise a tailored scheme in collaboration with Barclays Bank
- **Met with Minister Paul Scully - Under-Secretary of State for Small Business,** agreed to meet to discuss the report’s recommendations. The meeting explored the development of a collaborative forum with representatives from the BAME business community including the APPG for BAME Business Owners. The key aim of this collaboration being a consultative approach to finding solutions to barriers and opening up opportunities to maximising potential.
- **Supported Research report** - in July 2020 the APPG supported the authoritative research report “**Unlocking Opportunity**” which measures the value of minority led firms to UK economic activity. Published by Professor Monder Ram in association with the FSB and supported by the APPG

**4. Covid-19 Recovery Road Map**

**4.1. D. Chrouh:** The APPG’s report sets out a COVID-19 recovery road map for BAME led businesses which makes critical recommendations to improve access to finance and markets as well as tailored business support. The objective of this road map is to enable minority businesses to recover, scale up and maximise their potential to rebuild the British economy at a regional and national and international level

**4.2. A. Dutt:** Cited the APPG’s report recommendation on the critical need for access to more data to support effective policy making and accurate measurement of the impact of policies. This is vitally important for the government’s industrial strategy for SMEs and its social value public procurement strategy since it will enable the diversification of supply chains and facilitate the government’s levelling up agenda.

**4.3. L. Burt:** Thanked D. Chrouh and A. Dutt and echoed the importance of policy rooted in social value. Welcomed Craig Tracey to speak.

**4.4. C. Tracey:** Stated that there are opportunities for the APPG for BAME Business Owners to collaborate with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women And Enterprise, due to shared goals.

Supported the importance of data collection as critical to enabling the government to plan its economic strategy effectively. Mentioned that the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women And Enterprise had collaborated with a data company to provide a gender index which captures data about the business, its owner and its readiness to scale up. Suggested that a similar strategy could be fruitful for the APPG for BAME Business Owners

**5. Regional and Sector Advisory Panels**

**5.1. M. Ram:** Prefaced remarks by praising the work of L. Burt and D. Chrouh

Advocated for a coordinated national and regional approach and briefly outlines the APPG's plans to create a national network of local regional advisory panels across the country. The first of these will be in the West Midlands with a soft launch in Birmingham in collaboration with key stakeholders in March. The aim will be to road test the concept and develop a strategy to be replicated it in other parts of the country.

## 6. **Event – Impact of Vaccine Hesitancy in BAME Business Communities**

**6.1. L. Burt:** Notified the group about a prospective roundtable for business leaders and experts in BAME entrepreneurship. The roundtable panel discussion will focus on the potential disproportionate impact of vaccine impact of BAME led businesses and their communities. Award winning Ayo Ogunsanglu - pharmaceutical microbiologist will lead the discussions with a multi-disciplinary panel including frontline NHS doctor and business leaders from BAME business communities.

## 7. **AOB**

**7.1. N. Talukdar:** Highlighted the strength of the Asian business community, but also noted that it is a significant contributor to plastic pollution. Mentioned that BAME led businesses may not be aware of sustainable packaging and other responsibilities in light of the climate crisis. Asked whether the APPG had a plan to raise awareness and engage BAME business communities on the issue of sustainability, to make sure that they are not left out.

**7.2. D. Chrouch:** Mentioned that she spoken with Moslek Uddin, to arrange a meeting with Naseem to discuss the government's green industrial strategy and examine a pathway for BAME business owners.

**7.3. E. Obua:** Thanked the APPG for their work over the past year, and expressed a desire to comment on the Chancellor's budget. Asked about the prospect of targeted government support being included in budgetary measures, such as an accelerator program for BAME businesses. Especially given the fact that many BAME businesses have struggled to gain access to finance.

**7.4. L. Burt:** Highlighted the fact that information about new initiatives from the government are not reaching many BAME business owners, which is diluting the effectiveness of these schemes. Called for responses from the group.

**7.5. C. Tracey:** Noted the importance of collecting more data to discover the reasons why BAME communities have lower rates of engagement and application for government schemes in greater numbers to build more data about the specific barriers they face.

**7.6. D. Chrouch:** pointed out that the report had highlighted significant mistrust at the grassroots level, due to a legacy issues as a result of historic issues such the Windrush scandal and added that it is now paramount to rebuild trust with these communities

**7.7. C. Tracey:** Emphasised that it is crucial to have better BAME representation among those organising grant schemes, particularly at the local level. There is a greater chance of building trust if the people giving out the grants are truly representative of their communities.

**7.8. L. Burt:** Closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance. Additionally, she thanked everyone that had worked with her during her time with the APPG.