



# All Party Parliamentary Group for Ethnic Minority Business Owners

## MEETING WITH BUSINESS OWNERS REGARDING ENERGY COSTS

22/09/2022 – Virtual Meeting

### Summary of Meeting Minutes:

#### 1. Introductions and Opening Remarks:

- Diana Chrouch introduced the meeting and Sarah Olney MP, Co-Chair of the APPG.
- Business owners gave overviews of their businesses and concerns about rising energy costs.
- Sarah Olney welcomed government support measures but expressed concern over the temporary nature of the energy cost cap.

#### Discussion opened to contributions from attendees.

#### 2. Discussion on Energy Costs:

- Concerns raised about rising energy costs having a disproportionate impact on small businesses led by ethnic minority business owners that are highly represented in sectors that are reliant on the use of energy such as retail, hospitality and services.
- Key issues include reduced profits, poor cash flow, and inability to raise prices due to fear of losing customers.
- Impact of inflation, supply chain disruptions, and effects of the pandemic were also highlighted.
- Suggestions for government support include longer-term planning, addressing debt, spreading risk in supply chains, cutting VAT, promoting energy efficiency, and supporting international trade and ethnic minority businesses.

#### Potential Recommendations Discussed:

- Longer-term Government Planning: Assess causes of fuel cost increases and plan accordingly.
- Addressing Debt: Provide measures to alleviate post COVID debt burden on businesses.
- Spreading Risk in Supply Chains: Protect smaller businesses from cost burdens as a result of not having the same bargaining power as larger companies.
- Cutting VAT: Immediate reduction to aid sectors such as hospitality.
- Energy Efficiency and Sustainability: Prioritize programs to improve energy efficiency and reduce dependency on gas.

- Support for International Trade: Assist ethnic minority business resilience by supporting growth through measures such as enabling them to scale up international supply chains and exporting opportunities.
- Levelling Up: Address disproportionate impact on disadvantaged communities by targeting specific support at businesses and charities in these communities.

### **Conclusion**

The meeting concluded with plans for the APPG to communicate concerns to the government by writing to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy outlining concerns and requesting a meeting for further clarification on government strategy.

### **Attendees**

- Sarah Olney MP – Co-Chair of the APPG for Ethnic Minority Business Owners
- Diana Chrouch – Special Advisor to the APPG for Ethnic Minority Business Owners
- Kieran Smith- Sarah Olney MP's office
- Eddie Isebor – Accountancy business and African restaurant owner
- Moslek Uddin – Hospitality business owner and chair of UK Curry Connect
- Peter Adegbe – Owner of social enterprise and church leader
- Shisha Dublin-Green – Ayda On the Go Ltd - business support consultant
- Orvil Plummer – Borasana - Chartered Certified Accountants
- Shakeel Ali – Legal business
- David Apparicio – Chrysalis Programme - social enterprise
- Abdul Kahir - Shanaz of Lewes – Indian restaurant
- Tofozzul Miah - Secretary General - BBCA – British Bangladeshi Catering Association
- Bashair Ahmed – Shabaka consultancy services specialising in diaspora and migration