



**BRITISH CHAMBER**  
OF COMMERCE IN BELGIUM

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 31 May 2017

17.00-19.00

Venue: British Chamber Offices, 11 Bd. Bischoffsheim - 1000 Bruxelles

Attendees:

Alison Rose	British Embassy
Peter Bell	Expedite Office Limited
Juozas Beniusis	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Charline Bloch	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Alex Bolton	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Mathilde Breuillé	Renault Nissan EU Representation
Maria Giovanna Caruso	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Elaine Cruikshanks	Acumen Public Affairs sprl
Mark Cunningham	Cunningham Executive Search
Pauline Curran	The Fry Group - Belgium
Mark Lloyd Davies	Johnson & Johnson
Dave Deruytter	ING Belgium
Deborah D'Hauwer	BT Group
Philippe Jadoul	Vialegis NV
Aniko Lakezi	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Joseph Lemaire	Hill+Knowlton Strategies
Uzma Lodhi	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Francesca Loparco	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Edward McGuire	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Andrew Moore	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Sean Murray	EUK Consulting SA
Darcy Nicolle	United Technologies Government Relations Europe
Salvatore Orlando	BNP Paribas Fortis SA/NV
Cristina Pop	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Tim Reynolds	Inta Communication Ltd
Beverley Robinson	RobinsonHenry SPRL
Monika Sitnik	Johnson & Johnson
Thomas Spiller	The Walt Disney Company
John Stuyck	Ackroyd Publications
Nikolaus Tacke	Hering Schuppener Consulting
Alexandra Trandafir	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Marie-France Vandervalk	Renault Nissan EU Representation
Glenn Vaughan	British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium
Joost Visser	REL Sales Consulting
Glynis Whiting	Starfish MRM

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### **1. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes were agreed.

### **2. Election of the President & Council**

Glenn Vaughan (GV), Chief Executive, reminded the members present that, following the Extraordinary General Meeting of 27 March 2017, the governance structure of the chamber had been changed. This included the provision for the direct election of the president by members.

In this case, there was only one candidate – Thomas Spiller of the Walt Disney Company. Mr Spiller nominated Tom Parker as his Vice-President. The meeting confirmed these positions.

GV also reminded those present of the revised role of the new board, with the council becoming an advisory body. There were nine places to be filled on the council and nine nominations plus three office holders from the board (president, vice-president and immediate past president). The following people were confirmed as members of the council

- Peter Bell
- Richard Carty
- Sophia Chrysopoulou
- Elaine Cruikshanks
- Dave Deruytter
- Mark Lloyd Davies
- Philippe Jadoul
- Sean Murray
- Darcy Nicolle
- Thomas Spiller (President)
- Tom Parker (Vice-President)
- Glynis Whiting (Immediate Past President)

### **3. Financial Results 2016**

In the absence of the new treasurer, Neophytos Aristodemou, GV presented the financial statement.

He reported a surplus of just over 25k for 2016. Equity stood at 91,671 euros. This remains a small amount of money considering our full budget but since very many members pay at the beginning of the year our cash flow position is generally strong.

Looking at the balance sheet, total assets at the end of the year reflect a higher level of trade debtors than in 2015. It is worth noting that as we send our invoices just before the end of the financial year, it's not unusual for debtors to be a rather large figure at this point in the year. However, the board has discussed long-term debtors and an action plan is being reviewed every month to tackle this issue. The most significant amounts in outstanding debtors are mainly long standing members and large companies where non-payment is due to internal procedures or the need to corrections to invoicing and are not considered to be a high risk of non-payment.

On income, membership income has increased but surpluses from events was lower in 2016 than is 2015. The referendum impacted our plans for events and sponsorship for events. Sponsorship was lower as many companies changed their plans. In 2017 budgeting we were more conservative in our expectations of net

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income from events and have budgeted for a lower figure. We had secured half of the 2017 planned income from sponsorship by the first quarter this year.

The financial statement was approved.

#### **4. President's Address – Thomas Spiller**

TS thanked members for attending and supporting his re-election as President.

He highlighted the continuing value of the relationship between the UK and the rest of Europe and noted the work of the chamber to prominently serve its member interests with regard to this relationship. He highlighted the press coverage of the chamber's work and the building of collaborations with the business representatives of other member states.

He emphasized that the future of Europe is most important issue for our members along with the success of the single market.

He noted that changes to the chamber were not currently foreseen but that the board would actively monitor developments and ensure that the organization is ready to develop so that it would remain able to meet the needs of current and future members.

#### **5. Reports on Committees**

Glynis Whiting – Business Development Group

Thomas introduced Glynis Whiting for her significant and continuing contribution to the chamber. He highlighted her role in helping guide the chamber's strategy for its Belgian business activities

Glynis highlighted the success of the TFL group, led by Marc Verbeek including its flagship event EFA – Expat Financial Affairs. She said that the Ambassador hosts programme was now in its 4th year and going very well.

Looking forward she said that supporting companies to take advantage of the opportunities and challenges of doing business in Belgium needed more development. Finally, as vice-chair of COBCOE, she mentioned COBCOE Connects, a new online platform for finding partners and customers.

Joseph Lemaire – BNG

Joseph explained that the BNG programme covered professional development, networking and charity fundraising and had delivered more events during the last year. He looked forward to further growth in the coming year.

Nikolaus Tacke – EU committee

Nikolaus explained how the EU Committee worked as a platform for exchange between business and EU decision makers and the structure of its task forces.

At end of last year there was concern over reluctance of public policy makers to speak at the British Chamber but this problem has since been overcome. Our programme is now back to full strength with many high profile EU speakers confirmed.



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Glenn Vaughan – EU-UK relations

Glenn spoke in place of Tom P, chair of the group. He thanked the small group of very active volunteer members putting in considerable time to the group.

The group had helped develop clear messaging for the chamber, reflecting members strong support for as little change as possible in the Brexit process. He summarized this as seeking:

- The least possible disruption possible
- Practicality
- Preventing unnecessary damage

The group had devised guiding principles to explain these and organized a series of events for member companies to help inform them. Finally the group had developed contacts with other national business groups including those from Belgium, Germany and Spain, and would hold an event with French groups soon.

## **6. A.O.B.**

Finally, Glenn informed the meeting about changes to the chamber team and highlighted the Konstantina's new baby. Thomas led congratulations to Konstantina.

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