

Attendees	Observers	Apologies
Cilla Snowball CBE (Chair)		Dr Fiona Withey
Caroline Dinenage MP; Parliamentary Under Secretary for Equalities and Early Years		Dr Clive Hickman
Baroness McGregor-Smith		Nikki Yates
Lynne Atkin		Helen Lamprell
Jill Shedden		Roger Whiteside
Denis Woulfe		Richard Lee
Sue Langley OBE		John Whelan
Wendy Hallett MBE		
Deirdre Michie		
Chris Stylianou		
Emer Timmons		
Dame Fiona Woolf CBE		
Sue O'Brien		
Fiona Dawson		
Anna Taylor		
Hilary Spencer		
Helene Reardon-Bond OBE		

## 1. Introductions

- 1.1 Cilla Snowball welcomed members and tendered apologies. Attention was brought to the Women's Business Council (WBC) aims and objectives booklet produced by Anna Taylor.

## 2. Action Points/Progress

- 2.1 WBC minutes from the meeting of 19 September 2016 were reviewed and agreed, specifically Annex A containing the Action Points.
- 2.2 Cilla Snowball asked [REDACTED] if WBC members had given feedback to the WBC Secretariat regarding the factsheets that were produced by the Government Equalities Office (GEO) for them. [REDACTED] affirmed that they had.
- 2.3 [REDACTED] pointed out that all Action Points from 19 September had been met and completed.

## 3. Ministerial Update: Caroline Dinenage MP

- 3.1 Caroline Dinenage MP highlighted recent key events have taken place within the overall equalities agenda.

- 3.2 Caroline Dinenage MP informed the WBC that the Gender Pay Gap (GPG) Regulations had been laid in Parliament last week. This was a key milestone and will be a real game changer; putting a spotlight on the challenges and causes of the GPG. This should necessitate employers to drive change and take action.
- 3.3 Caroline Dinenage MP spoke of her regular meetings with local councils that have become early implementers of 30 hours of childcare scheme. It was pointed out that early indications suggest that the scheme has led to: more women either returning to the workplace; being able to work more hours and to achieve a better worklife balance.
- 3.4 The minister had also held an academic and experts' seminar to discuss what action is the most effective in terms of engaging men and boys in promoting and achieving gender equality.
- 3.5 Caroline Dinenage MP also pointed out that she has been seeking to promote the WBC's work within the media. She has spoken to publications such as the *Evening Standard* about the impact of having more women on interview panels upon the numbers of women within the executive pipeline.
- 3.6 Caroline Dinenage MP fed back to the WBC that the Secretary of State for Women and Equalities, Justine Greening MP was keen to ensure that more girls were reached by the WBC. Caroline Dinenage MP spoke of the importance of role models in engaging more girls – *"If you can see it, you can be it."*
- 3.7 Cilla Snowball paid tribute to Caroline Dinenage MP for her tireless work in promoting the work and agenda of the WBC.
- 3.8 Cilla Snowball informed the Council that she recently met with the Secretary of State for Women and Equalities, Justine Greening MP. Cilla Snowball pointed out that the Secretary of State is keen for the Council to become more strategic and continue to build upon the credible WBC brand.
- 3.9 Cilla Snowball echoed Caroline Dinenage MP on the importance of ensuring that girls have more visibility and voice within the WBC agenda. Cilla Snowball suggested that girls could be the focus of the next WBC Progress Report.
- 3.10 The WBC and Cilla Snowball agreed that it was important for the WBC to be more 'forceful and resilient' in promoting their work and delivering on their commitments.
- 3.11 Baroness McGregor-Smith suggested that given the Secretary of State's education portfolio, there may be an opportunity to link up the early years elements of the Department for Education (DfE) to further the focus on girls.

#### **4. Forward Plan and Communications: Helene Reardon-Bond and [REDACTED]**

- 4.1 Helene Reardon-Bond said that the WBC agenda has attracted a lot of passion and enthusiasm from all quarters, and this is indicative of the number of people who are willing to help further the equality agenda.
- 4.2 Attention was drawn to the Forward Plan for 2017. Helene Reardon-Bond pointed out that the Forward Plan contained opportunities for outreach, awareness and greater exposure.

The Forward Plan highlights numerous international and domestic dates of significance e.g. National Apprenticeships Week, and how these can tie in with WBC work.

- 4.3 It was requested that WBC members should capitalise upon and use the table and dates to identify strategically significant moments to harness greater media exposure and employer engagement for the Council. E.g. the date that the GPG regulations come into force; retail week (Wendy Hallett noted that she is working with Retail Week already on an event around), older workers day etc.
- 4.4 The WBC members agreed that it was important to have a planned and co-ordinated approach to media exposure and employer engagement. By planning in advance and highlighting significant dates or progress, the WBC stands a greater chance of promoting good practice and driving forward action.
- 4.5 [REDACTED] and Cilla Snowball explained that significant WBC events such as the annual progress report and launch required No10 and ministerial agreement.
- 4.6 Ruby McGregor-Smith suggested that WBC members could collate a biannual list of proposed activities, and then inform No.10 of the schedule. This would place the onus upon Government to fit the WBC into the forward comms plan which Jade was planning to produce.
- 4.7 Cilla Snowball pointed out that there were 5 Action Groups and an annual progress report. Therefore, individual teams within the Council must 'take ownership' of a month within the year. This would ensure that the WBC was therefore focussed on promoting their work for 6 months.
- 4.8 [REDACTED] suggested that this was a good strategy. She suggested that there were also ways to circumnavigate media grid slots by harnessing sectoral and industry specific media.
- 4.9 Sue O'Brien suggested that there were lesser profile days and events that the WBC could lend their name to. E.g. the upcoming day to honour the contributions to technology of Ada Lovelace has not attracted much attention, but could tie in to WBC work on promoting science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) training/work for women/girls.
- 4.10 It was mooted that each Action Group could 'own' a month, with suggestions being:
- Enterprise – November
  - Getting On – April
  - Staying On – October
  - Men as Change Agents – May
  - WBC – messaging around Davos – January
- 4.11 Helene Reardon-Bond thanked the WBC for their useful introductions such as the introduction to Professor Averil MacDonald. GEO had as a result put Professor MacDonald forward to attend the G& and she was currently representing the UK in Toyko promoting women in STEM.
- 4.12 [REDACTED] also pointed out that WBC work in highlighting case studies, which present an excellent 'off grid' opportunity for publicity and exposure.

4.13 Fiona Woolf highlighted the promotion of a specialist college for technology aimed at girls, named for Ada Lovelace. She pointed out that the college has received government funding and therefore has buy-in.

4.14 Sue O'Brien suggested that endorsements by women such as Carol Vorderman or Maggie Phylbinn could both boost the Council, and provide role models for women in mathematics and technology.

## **5. Hampton-Alexander Review Update: Cilla Snowball**

5.1 Cilla Snowball updated the WBC regarding the Hampton-Alexander review's work and targets. She drew particular attention to the new targets of having 33% women on FTSE 350 boards, and 33% women in the executive committees (and the direct reports to the executive committee combined) in the FTSE 100 by 2020.

5.2 It was noted that KPMG are supporting the work of the Hampton-Alexander Review, with a report containing data having been released. Cilla Snowball pointed out that the review has set ambitious targets and retains a heavily data-driven focus.

5.3 Baroness McGregor-Smith fully endorse the focus of the Hampton-Alexander Review on the executive committee and direct reports. She also expressed a concern that in order to accelerate the process, it may be necessary to reach 'above the boardroom' and target owners and shareholders.

5.4 Sue O'Brien noted that the appetite for diversity in the FTSE 250 is there, but that female Chairmanship is still rare, and this needs to be addressed. Cilla Snowball to raise with the HA review.

5.5 Fiona Woolf suggested that since it was necessary to effectively manage talent in order to help women through the executive pipeline, it may be worth the WBC linking up with the work of Jayne-Anne Gadhia regarding women in finance.

5.6 Sue O'Brien picked up that December/January is traditionally the time for companies to be awarding bonuses. It would be worth tackling the Gender Bonus Gap, which is highly prevalent in the finance industry perhaps through an op-Ed. Members asked for the data on the Gender Bonus Gap to be circulated by the WBC secretariat.

## **6. Starting Out: Deirdre Michie**

6.1 Starting Out has split in to 2 streams, with one stream focussing on generating evidence regarding careers advice for girls and what works. The other work stream is seeking to promote women in STEM careers.

6.2 Deirdre Michie paid tribute to the work of Professor Averil MacDonald, who has driven the work of Starting Out towards the creation of a kitemark (similar to the Athena Swann) that honours companies with good gender progression routes within STEM industries.

6.3 Cilla Snowball suggested that linking up with technology colleges may allow greater access to younger students, and bring more voices of girls to the WBC.

- 6.4 Caroline Dinenage MP pointed out that she is working with the Careers and Enterprise Company to relaunch *Your Daughter's Future* as a toolkit for improved careers advice given to girls.

## **7. Getting On: Fiona Dawson**

- 7.1 Fiona Dawson noted that only currently, 34% of middle managers are women, and at current rates it will take until 2050 to reach gender parity. She said that to achieve the HA review targets and close the GPG this needed to be greatly increased. She thanked GEO analysts for their work on the data report.
- 7.2 Fiona Dawson pointed out that 4/5 line managers fall into management. She pointed out that line managers are eager to avoid 'box-ticking' exercises and excessive objective setting. Rather the focus should be on coaching and development conversations with those who are managed in order to help people plan and map their careers more effectively.
- 7.3 Sue O'Brien noted that too many women do not enter jobs that lead to senior management. Fiona Dawson agreed, and said that this is important for women who are childless too. Women without children are also subjected to a lack of career mapping and development which was contrary to thinking. It was agreed that Cilla Snowball should meet with Jayne Anne Gadhia (Virgin Money) to achieve closer working.
- 7.4 Fiona Dawson also mentioned that agile working initiatives, whilst helpful, suffer from a negative perception insofar as women report that they have to work harder to demonstrate that they are working from home effectively.
- 7.5 Fiona Dawson reported on the importance of accessible and relatable role models. Too frequently, senior women are portrayed as 'superwomen', who appear unapproachable and their positions seem unattainable.
- 7.6 Sue Langley reported that it was important for equality schemes to aim to treat people *fairly*, rather than through a bureaucratic, box-ticking equality exercise.
- 7.7 Deirdre Michie pointed out that as a small business owner, flexible working could be hard to offer. This was noted by the WBC, and it was highlighted that the differing size of businesses highlighted the importance of ensuring that career mapping conversations and interventions were had with women to guide and mentor them to promotion.

## **8. Staying On**

- 8.1 Lynne Atkin reported that a second version of the older women workers *ComeBack* magazine was to be produced, this time branded more prominently under the aegis of the WBC. The aim of *ComeBack II* would be to highlight best practice case studies, mythbusting and top tips – October may be a suitable month linking it to UN older workers day.
- 8.2 Cilla Snowball pointed out that the advertising industry currently has 6% of its staff over-50. This is the sort of area in which she hoped that Staying On could have the most impact.
- 8.3 Lynne Atkin suggested that Staying On could 'own' October to tie in with the International Day of Older Persons etc.

- 8.4 Lynne Atkin pointed out that flexible working needed to include both male and female voices to be fully impactful, and this was agreed by the Council. It was suggested that it may be useful for managers who have experience of flexible working lend their voices for how it has helped them, and how to ensure that flexible working suits both employees and companies.

**9. Enterprise: Denis Woulfe/Wendy Hallett**

- 9.1 Denis Woulfe pointed out that the Enterprise group overlaps with many of the Action Groups, and was working with Innovate UK.
- 9.2 Denis Woulfe was working closely as an adviser to Innovate UK following the publication of the Enterprise Report. He was involved with an awards scheme to offer grants and mentoring for women-led businesses. Denis Woulfe was eager for WBC members to volunteer to offer mentorship to women entrepreneurs wherever possible.
- 9.3 Denis Woulfe suggested that supporting women entrepreneurs could widen the pool of role models for women's economic participation as well. He asked members to offer up mentoring to the award winners.
- 9.4 Cilla Snowball reported that the Secretary of State for Women and Equalities was supportive of setting up at Enterprise Academy.

**10. Men as Change Agents: Denis Woulfe/Emer Timmons**

- 10.1 Denis Woulfe reported that the Action Group was creating a framework for its work, identifying the relevant output from the group being a best practice toolkit. It is aimed that this work will then link with the FSTE 250, who can adopt relevant best practice.
- 10.2 Chris Stylianou echoed Denis Woulfe that companies cannot necessarily embrace the entire Men as Change Agents framework. Chris Stylianou was eager to ensure that WBC members promote Men as Change Agents throughout the FTSE 250.
- 10.3 Chris Stylianou asked that all members encourage their contacts to participate in the sponsorship programme.
- 10.4 Denis Woulfe reaffirmed the importance of a coherent communications plan for the group.
- 10.5 Cilla Snowball requested that WBC members nominate 2 men each for a Men as Change Agents power list.
- 10.6 Emer Timmons reported that she has been approached to deliver a keynote speech for women in technology, and will link with [REDACTED] to harness the relevant press opportunities.

**11. AOB**

- 11.1 Helene Reardon Bond present the WBC strategy slide, and WBC members requested to populate it with metrics and key indicators.

Wendy Hallett noted that it would be useful to assess how campaigns such as those led by Retail Weekly – Be Inspired – could be replicated for other sectors.

- 11.2 Fiona Woolf pointed out that more businesses are moving to flatter structures, and thus the focus is no longer on climbing career ladders *per se*, with more focus on intelligence, adaptability and transferrable skills.
- 11.3 Cilla Snowball noted that it was important to obtain the voices of 'millenials' regarding how they view their careers.
- 11.4 Helene Reardon-Bond brought the attention of the WBC to the departure of [REDACTED] from the WBC Secretariat in December and all members thanked him for his work.

**Action Points**

- Members to identify key outreach activities every month/quarter by 14<sup>th</sup> Jan.
- ✓ All members to [REDACTED] with the details for their companies press officer.
  - ✓ WBC secretariat to urgently send all members details for how to nominate men for the Management Today Male Power list which will be launched in March 2017.
  - ✓ All members to nominate at least 2 men for the above awards and encourage companies / men to make nominations.
  - ✓ All members to advise Denis Woufle (check spelling) of mentoring opportunities their companies could offer for the Innovative UK award winners.
  - ✓ All members to secure companies to support and participate in the MACA sponsorship work (Chris Stylianou to circulate info again)
  - ✓ WBC Secretariat to provide members with a Gender Bonus Gap figure.
  - ✓ Action Group Leads to claim ownership of a specific month for co-ordinated press opportunities.
  - ✓ Emer Timmons to coordinate with [REDACTED] regarding press exposure for Emer Timmons' upcoming speeches.
  - ✓ WBC Secretariat to research information Technology College named for Ada Lovelace.
  - ✓ Cilla Snowball to meet with Janye Ann Gadhia to discuss coordination
  - ✓ Cilla Snowball to raise the lack of female chairs in the FTSE 250 with the HA review.