Advisory Board Meeting November 2016

This year’s Annual Advisory Board Guest Lecture was given in our brand new £10 million teaching facility, boasting dedicated MBA and MSc teaching wings which our Advisory Board had previously advocated for.

The talk was given by António Horta-Osório CEO of Lloyds, the UK’s largest retail bank, who addressed how Britain can prosper in such a time of uncertainty post-Brexit.

António stated that the UK must maximise its agility in supporting innovation and entrepreneurship. “It’s not acceptable to think in terms of being a knowledge economy; we must be an entrepreneurial and productive economy.” He pointed out the need for infrastructure and investment into community projects, house building and new businesses. His message was a positive one in terms of what the UK can achieve in or out of the European Union, but issued a clear warning that we risk failure unless we address the skills shortages in the UK. He pointed out that we should not underestimate the skills gaps that highly skilled migrants have long played a critical role in filling, and that the UK must focus on bringing back apprenticeships and developing a trained, skilled and experienced workforce. He stated that the imbalance of trade is our biggest threat and that banks and the government have a role to play in galvanising start-ups in the UK and supporting business growth across the country to increase our number of exports.

At the meeting the following day, Professor Glyn Watson, interim Dean of the Business School, laid out the School’s Vision and Strategy going forward to 2020. A good deal of the meeting was then spent looking at the role our Board members will play, both individually and collectively. Marc Stone, CFO of the Government’s Energy Catapult, talked of how the senior management team of the Catapult are helping set the agenda for both the undergraduate Enterprise module, and the MBA Strategy module in 2017. Working hand in hand with module leaders to co-design and co-deliver curricula and set assignments, Marc and his team are leading the way in terms of a far more industry engaged approach to delivering a cutting edge business education and experience to our students.
Lord Karan Bilimoria paid tribute to Lord Digby Jones who has stepped down as Chairman of the Advisory Board after ten years. A framed photograph and plaque produced in Birmingham’s renowned Jewellery Quarter has been placed permanently in the Business School entrance in recognition of all that Lord Jones has done as Chairman stating:

*Lord Digby Jones KT was Chairman of the Birmingham Business School Advisory Board from 2005 – 2016. A better friend, champion and adviser with real clout, the School could not have asked for.*