

Advisory Board Meeting November 2010



Sir Dominic Cadbury with Board Members after the 2010 Annual Advisory Board Guest Lecture

This year's annual Advisory Board Lecture was given by the University's Chancellor, Sir Dominic Cadbury. The talk focused on the Kraft takeover of Cadbury, offering a unique perspective from Sir Dominic, who was both former CEO and Chairman of Cadbury as well as being a member of the founding family.

The Kraft takeover, which took place this year, sent shockwaves through British industry and called into question the impact of unregulated free market takeovers on tax, jobs and employment in the UK and whether there should be a public interest test in British competition law. Obviously, Cadbury has even stronger resonances in its home town of Birmingham and for many of our students, staff and alumni, it meant a huge amount to be able to hear exclusively from a member of the Cadbury family who remained closely linked in with decision makers in the company. Following an introduction from Lord Digby Jones, Sir Dominic first provided a brief history of the company and referencing changes in recent years such as the de-merger with Schweppes, before moving onto a riveting account of the build-up to the takeover.

“... a little over 12 months after the de-merger, in August 2009, the new Cadbury Chairman, Roger Carr, received a message on his voicemail from Iren Rosenfeld, the Kraft CEO, saying that she would be in London next week and would like to come over for coffee. The two met the following week at Roger's office in Centrica, where he was also Chairman. After a few pleasantries she said, 'You know, I have this great idea, we should buy you'.”

Sir Dominic ended by posing three questions to the audience:

1. Should the Board have recommended the bid after negotiating an increase of 20p on the share price?
2. Was the decision to break up Cadbury Schweppes, two years prior, the right one?
3. Does it matter who owns a company in an increasingly global economy?

The talk was extremely well received and has already fed into case studies on our taught programmes and has proved the source of inspiration for a number of academic research papers.

View our newscast of the event here with comment from Business School academics and prominent Advisory Board members: [Cadbury event newscast](#)

Follow Professor David Bailey's blog on the event: [Calls for a 'Cadbury Law' are not going away](#)

Follow further discussion: [Kraft to slash its UK tax liability](#) [End of Year reflections \(2010\)](#)

The Annual Board meeting took place the following day and focused on the development of the full time MBA programme and took a broader look at its place in the overall School strategy.