

Midlands Engine APPG

Tuesday 15 September 2020, 14:00-15:00

Attendees:

Darren Henry MP (Co-Chair)
Lord Ravensdale (Co-Chair)
Jack Dromey MP
Bill Wiggin MP
Baroness Burt of Solihull
Harriett Baldwin MP
Heather Wheeler MP
Kate Griffiths MP
Andrew Bridgen MP
Ruth Edwards MP
Mark Pawsey MP
Tom Randall MP
Lord Taylor of Holbeach
Lilian Greenwood MP
Khalid Mahmood MP
Toby Perkins MP
Office of Jo Gideon MP
Office of Saqib Bhatti MP
Office of Maggie Throup MP
Office of Jane Hunt MP
Office of Amanda Solloway MP
Office of Theo Clarke MP

Guests:

Sir John Peace, Midlands Engine Chairman
Rachael Greenwood, Midlands Engine Director
Maria Machancoses, Midlands Connect Director

Administration

Kamya Gopal, Office of Darren Henry MP
Tom Day, Midlands Engine

Minutes:

- 1) Welcome and Introduction: Darren Henry MP
 - a. Darren Henry MP welcomed Parliamentarians, introduced the Midlands Engine guests, and invited co-chair Lord Ravensdale to set out the purpose of the APPG, agreed as follows:
 - i. "To champion the Midlands Engine in the UK Parliament, ensure that investment in the Midlands is prioritised by the UK Government and work to level up the Midlands economy in order to improve quality of life for communities in every part of the region".

- 2) Introduction to Midlands Engine: Sir John Peace
 - a. Sir John Peace (Midlands Engine Chairman) introduced the purpose and background of the Midlands Engine and expressed his positivity and sense of anticipation around the formation of the APPG.
- 3) Midlands Engine projects and priorities: Rachael Greenwood
 - a. Rachael Greenwood (Midlands Engine Director) set out some of the Midlands Engine's current projects and priorities across the region, inviting Parliamentarians to get in touch if they would like to be further involved.
- 4) Midlands Connect projects and priorities: Maria Machancoses
 - a. Maria Machancoses (Midlands Connect Director) set out the work of the transport arm of the Midlands Engine Partnership, Midlands Connect, including upcoming projects which Parliamentarians can involve themselves in.
- 5) Discussion of objectives of APPG: Darren Henry MP
 - a. Darren Henry MP led a discussion surrounding the objectives of the APPG.
 - b. It was agreed that the APPG should be both informative and active. It should be a forum for receiving information, but also for actively supporting investment in the region through Parliamentary activity.
- 6) Discussion of scope of work and areas of interest: Darren Henry MP
 - a. The Chair led a discussion on the potential areas of focus of the APPG, with a suggestion of various sub-groups meeting on different themes.
 - b. Khalid Mahmood MP suggested a discussion on the Defence industry and supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
 - c. Bill Wiggin MP spoke about skills (university) and transport corridors in the West Midlands.
 - d. Harriett Baldwin MP suggested med-tech and supporting NHS Track and Trace.
 - e. Ruth Edwards MP proposed discussions on major economic projects, such as the Midlands Engine Development Corporation.
 - f. Lord Taylor of Holbeach spoke about rural areas, in particular Lincolnshire.
 - g. Baroness Burt of Solihull suggested further discussion on green and low-carbon manufacturing.
 - h. Lilian Greenwood MP spoke about the need for strategic collaboration on transport infrastructure in the region.
 - i. The Chair agreed to take these suggestions away and consider appropriate topics for sub-group discussions over the coming weeks and months.
- 7) Next meeting and intermediate actions
 - a. The Chair suggested that full meetings of the APPG take place once per term, and that the next meeting should take place in the week of 18th January 2021.
 - b. The Chair also confirmed that the APPG would be setting up a website to update on meetings and events and to share information and links to Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect reports, briefings and content.
- 8) Meeting closed at 15:00