

**Minutes of the OBFA Board Meeting held at the residence of Maqbool Sultan on October 30<sup>th</sup> 2017 at 5:30 pm.**

Present:

Maqbool A Sultan (MAS) – Chairman  
Shawqi A Sultan (SAS) – Secretary General  
Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles (SCC) – OBBC Chairman  
Ahmed Al Araiimi (AA) – Board Member  
Chris Breeze (CB) – Board Member  
Pankaj Khimji (PK) – Board Member  
Khalil Al Khonji (KK) – Board Member  
Andrew Long (AL) – Board Member  
Nick Pattison (NP) – Board Member  
Sarika Breeze (SB)  
Apologies – Saleh Taleb Al Zakwani

AGENDA

- 1) OBBC
- 2) Next UK talks
- 3) Next OBFA talks

The Chairman welcomed the attendees and then requested SCC to brief the Board on the progress made in establishing Oman British Business Council (OBBC) in the UK.

1. SCC thanked the Chairman and said that **OBBC** was in the process of being registered as a company in the UK. It was anticipated to have about 30 corporate members paying an annual subscription that has not yet been fixed but would range between £250 and £500. Matt Foster has been appointed Vice Chairman and Rob O'Halloran as his administrator with Ben Wright from The Anglo-Omani Society (AOS) supporting the team as well. They will be located in AOS's HQ in Sackville Street, London. The new OBBC Website should also be operational soon. Of course OBBC's main objective will be identical to that of OBFA's in Oman, the difference being that they will aim for large UK Corporates and Parents of JVs established in Oman, like BAE Systems, BP, Shell etc. They plan to hold 3 events per annum; one in the Spring, the OBFA/OBBC joint one in the Summer and then one in the Winter. Both Chairmen agreed that OBFA should collaborate with other groups like the New Generation Group of the AOS, the American Omani Business Centre and the British Group formed within the Oman Chamber of Commerce. OBFA should also have a meeting with HMA's Business Group.
2. **London event 2018.** SCC said feedback from the 2017 July talks were very positive, but unfortunately few concrete actions materialised, which could be improved by greater follow-up next year. All agreed the event should take place, if possible, between 9-11 July. During the 2018's event, we should meet with Alistair Burt to establish what we want to achieve. AL said OBFA needs a clear sales pitch for the talks, selling opportunities in Oman, by inviting possible investors. PK suggested OBFA identify projects that could be

discussed with the Offset Committee, headed by Mr. Dhafir Al Shanfari, which was set for just this purpose.

MAS suggested that over the next few months, OBFA meet with Tanfeed, Ithraa and Ultimate Energy to better understand areas in which OBFA can assist. AL and CB outlined that, although we know many steps that need to be taken by British investors when setting up in Oman (e.g. licenses), we need a clear understanding of how long the process takes so we can offer concrete help and advice. On that issue MAS said that HE Mohammed Al Zubair is looking at the legal side of investment and deregulation of some of the bureaucracy.

3. The **next OBFA Talks in Muscat** will be held Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 17:00, with approximately 75 attendees. The suggested venue was Muscat University. The subject will be Outward Bound and Oman Sail with emphasis on the educational and discipline side. SAS said he would contact David Graham/Albert Whitley (Oman Sail) and Mark Evans (Outward Bound) as potential speakers.

Suggested guests should be representatives from The Ministry of Manpower, Education and Higher Education, Youth Authority, British Council and large Corporations. As discussed in the last Board Meeting, we must market the event well to ensure good attendance. SB will personally call key people before the event.

For future topics MAS suggested National Training Fund (NTF) and CB suggested Employment.

With there being no other business the Chairman thanked those present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 6:30 pm.