

**APPG on Anti-Corruption & Responsible Tax – Minutes, AGM 2021**

**Details:**

Thursday 15 July

10.00

Zoom

**Minutes:** taken by Alex Conneely Hughes, Coordinator, APPG on Anti-Corruption & Responsible Tax

**Present:**

- Rt Hon Dame Margaret Hodge, MP for Barking (Labour)
- Rupa Huq, MP for Ealing Central and Acton (Labour)
- Nigel Mills, MP for Amber Valley (Conservative)
- Andrew Mitchell, MP for Sutton Coldfield (Conservative)
- Catherine McKinnell, MP for Newcastle Upon Tyne (Labour)
- Christine Jardine, MP for Edinburgh West (Liberal Democrat)
- Baroness Stern, House of Lords (Crossbencher)
- Lord Wood of Anfield, House of Lords (Labour)
- Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate, House of Lords (Conservative)

**Apologies:**

- Siobhain McDonagh, MP for Mitcham and Morden (Labour)
- Kevin Hollinrake, MP for Thirsk and Malton (Conservative)
- Alison Thewliss, MP for Glasgow Central (SNP)
- Baroness Kramer, House of Lords (Lib Dem)

The AGM was joined by a number of external stakeholders and partners, including observers from civil society.

**1. Introductions**

Dame Margaret Hodge MP welcomed attendees to the meeting and gave thanks to the APPG's donors: the Joffe Trust; CIPFA; and The Richer Sounds Foundation.

Thanks was also given to the APPG secretariat: The Policy Institute at King's College London.

**2. Election of Officers**

Dame Margaret Hodge MP was nominated by Nigel Mills MP and re-elected as Chair & registered contact.

Andrew Mitchell MP, Nigel Mills MP, and Rupa Huq MP were re-elected as Vice chairs.

The following were elected as Co-chairs:

- Catherine McKinnell MP
- Siobhain McDonagh MP
- Kevin Hollinrake MP
- Alison Thewliss MP
- Baroness Kramer
- Baroness Stern
- Lord Wood of Anfield
- Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate

### 3. Approval of income and expenditure statement

The APPG's financial statement was approved with no changes.

### 4. Summary of last 12 months

Chair - It has been a challenging but successful 12 months since the merger last summer of the APPGs on Anti-Corruption and Responsible Tax:

- We have rebranded, developed a new website, and grown our mailing list.
- Research:
  - Thanks to our researcher, Clair Quentin
  - Paper - Targeting the enablers of tax avoidance
  - Numerous consultations, e.g. freeports and raising standards in tax advice
- Legislation:
  - Amendments to the Finance Bill for –
    - public country-by-country reporting for MNEs
    - stopping companies that avoid tax from being able to access the Government's "super deduction" tax relief
    - Targeting the enablers of tax avoidance
  - Amendment to the Financial Services Bill –
    - That would have reformed corporate liability rules by creating a new 'failure to prevent' offence for economic crime.
  - None of these were put to a vote.
- Events:
  - Series of very successful virtual events
    - Seminar on the enablers of tax avoidance
    - Briefing about the FinCEN Files Leak from the investigative journalists behind the story
    - Roundtables on Companies House reform and the new proposals for global tax reform
- Campaigns:
  - In a major win for the APPG, last year our campaign against the abuse of creative industry tax reliefs, with a particular focus on Netflix, saw the streaming giant reorganise to its tax affairs back onshore.
  - Campaigned somewhat successfully for conditionality in responsible tax conduct be added to the Government's coronavirus financial support packages. Pressure from the APPG and others saw retailers, including many major supermarkets, return the business rates relief that they gained in the pandemic.

### 5. Looking ahead

Chair - The APPG is well placed to seize the opportunities presented in the next 12 months, including the possibilities that will arise once we slowly return to normality and in-person operations in Parliament.

In terms of research:

- We have a paper ready to go about the oversight and scrutiny of HMRC

- Our researcher is working jointly with TaxWatch UK on a research project about the role and duties of HMRC, including its enforcement of tax avoidance

Campaigns:

- We will keep up the pressure on various reforms and Government policies, including:
  - The enablers of tax avoidance
  - Public registers of beneficial ownership – continuing to pressure the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies to keep to the 2023 deadline
  - Registration of Overseas Entities Bill – overseas owners of property register
  - Companies House reform
  - Corporate liability reform

## 6. Global Tax Reform

Chair - Thanks to the Joffe Trust for the opportunity to hire a new campaigner focused on the international corporate tax reforms that are being driven by the Biden Administration. Delighted to announce that we have hired former MP, Anna Turley to the role.

AT – Thank you to Joffe for funding position and to everyone for the supportive welcome into the tax world. This is an historic moment for change and I want to help drive the political campaign to seize it.

## 7. Open Discussion

RH – suggests a return to the corruption in sport and specifically football agenda.

NM – recommends an event next autumn to coincide with the Qatar World Cup.

TK – upcoming free trade agreements might provide an opportunity for looking at tax arrangements  
Susan Hawley (Spotlight on Corruption) – FTAs are also relevant for anti-corruption issues.

SW – the APPG should monitor the COP26 agenda including green taxes, carbon taxes etc.

NM – it is worth keeping an eye on disguised employment, as there could be a bill to come in this area.

## 8. Presentations:

- Andrew Dixon, Founder - [Fairer Share](#) - discusses their proposal for a proportionate property tax, an innovative and equitable way of reforming council tax.
- Gavin Hayman, Executive Director - [Open Contracting Partnership](#) - provides an update on the Government's efforts to reform procurement.

## 9. Meeting closed