

Quoted Companies Alliance's Annual Dinner recognises vital role of UK engines of growth

The Quoted Companies Alliance, the independent membership organisation that champions the interests of small to mid-size quoted companies, recognised the vast contribution of the small and mid-size quoted companies to UK economic growth yesterday at its 2015 Annual Dinner.

Over 350 members of the small and mid-size quoted company community, including company directors, investors, market operators, policymakers and regulators, attended the Quoted Companies Alliance 21st Annual Dinner. The event was sponsored by London Stock Exchange, with Morningstar as a supporting sponsor of the evening. HSBC Commercial Banking sponsored the champagne reception and Winterflood Securities sponsored the after dinner drinks.

Alexander Justham, Chief Executive Officer, London Stock Exchange plc, spoke at the 9 September event, highlighting the importance of UK small and mid-size companies to the growth of the UK economy. Alexander Justham said: "Truly fundamental to the growth of UK SMEs is the ongoing support of a vibrant community, made up of a diverse range of participants – including the Quoted Companies Alliance, which plays a leading role backing SMEs across the country. At London Stock Exchange, we are committed to ensuring SMEs have access to equity capital, which is essential for their development and the prosperity of the UK economy. Recent research shows the breadth of SMEs' contribution to the UK economy. Indeed, AIM quoted firms added the equivalent of £25 billion to UK GDP, as well as 731,000 jobs. Through our markets and other initiatives, such as our business support programme, ELITE, we will continue to do all we can to champion a financing ecosystem that supports SMEs in the UK."

Michael Higgins, Chairman of the Quoted Companies Alliance, also addressed attendees, highlighting small and mid-size quoted companies' role in fuelling UK economic growth. Michael Higgins said: "Our membership – small and mid-size quoted companies – is, I believe, well prepared for the future and more optimistic and resilient than larger companies. There is a powerful statement of confidence in our most recent PULSE report – with an average expectation of employment growth in the next 12 months up to almost 7% and an average increase expected in turnover of 17%. Those figures alone justify the use of the term 'engines of growth' for the sector we represent."

Nonetheless, he stressed that, despite being in a stronger economic position than last year, small and mid-size quoted companies continue to face challenges. Michael Higgins said: "Our efforts here at the Quoted

Companies Alliance must continue unabated. We will ensure that European-led changes to our capital markets regulation and operations are carefully evaluated and their impact assessed. We must, wherever possible, ensure that any adverse impact is eliminated or minimised.”

Tim Ward, Chief Executive of the Quoted Companies Alliance, commented on the event: “The Quoted Companies Alliance’s Annual Dinner brings together the small and mid-size quoted company community and demonstrates the influence of our organisation. We represent the UK’s engines of growth. This evening reflects the strength of this key part of our economy.”

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Notes to editors:

The Quoted Companies Alliance is the independent membership organisation that champions the interests of small to mid-size quoted companies. We campaign, we inform and we interact to help our members keep their businesses ahead. Through our activities, we ensure that our influence always creates impact for our members. For more information please visit www.thegca.com