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**[ANNOUNCER]**

To celebrate International Women's Day 2020 the Home Office's Communication's Directorate for diversity and inclusion asked a panel of influential female leaders to suggest ways to improve gender equality in the workplace. Here is what they had to say:

**[MUSIC FADES]**

**[ROBERT HALL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS]**

Thank you very much Danai and Elisabeth and thank you to all of you and to the panel for making the effort to come to this event this morning. I'm really very excited about this discussion that we're going to have over the next hour or so.

I should say first of all that I'm not Paul Lincoln. **[LAUGHTER]** Now Paul Lincoln whose seat I'm occupying, OBE no less, is the Director-General of Border Force. He has been called away to a coronavirus meeting here at the Home Office. He's leading the departmental response to what is obviously a hugely important issue right now for the Home Office and the wider country.

He sends his apologies to the panel and to all of you. But the reason why this enormous piece of equipment is in front of me **[REFERS TO A MICROPHONE AND LAPTOP]** is because Paul will be able to listen to a podcast after this event. So, he **[PAUL LINCOLN OBE]** is really keen to lend his support from afar.

So, I'm Robert Hall. I'm the Deputy Director in the Communications Directorate. My team has helped put this event together and I'm really proud of their work. So, Paul is the Gender Equality Champion at the Home Office and his role is to challenge the Home Office to consider gender in everything that this department does. And at the root that's making sure that men and women can reach their full potential here.

So that's what we're interested in and the Civil Service's commitment to diversity and inclusion is genuine. What does that look like? It means broader representation at all grades, in particular in the senior civil service. We need to reflect the communities that we serve and we need teams from diverse backgrounds with different experiences and different

ways of thinking so that we can bring the full spectrum of human experience into this critical role that we fulfil here in government, which affects so many millions of people's lives.

More needs to be done to deliver those objectives and this discussion is designed to help us move forward. So, we're going to think about how we can fix some of the issues that still stand in our way and how we can deliver sustained change at all levels in the organisation. But today is about focusing on what we can do as individuals so hopefully you'll leave this event with a sense of what you can do and what you can encourage your teams to do to make a difference.

What are the messages that we need to tell ourselves and the women that work with us and for us? And what role can men play in making gender equality a reality? So, I don't have all the answers, but we have a distinguished panel here who will help us move towards some answers and lend their considerable experience to us this morning.

I'm very excited that they've all made the effort to come here today so thank you once again. To my right is Pamela Hutchinson. Pamela is global head of Diversity and Inclusion at Bloomberg. She leads the company's Global Diversity and Inclusion initiatives around the world and is cited as one of the most visible and vocal thought leaders and advocates for diversity across the private sector. Pamela has been recognized regularly in various power lists and has been awarded the head of diversity of the year in 2016. She's a trustee at the inspiring leadership trust. And perhaps we'll hear a bit more about that in the next few minutes.

Brenda Trenwenden CBE is Global Co-chair of the 30 percent Club. That's a campaign group of chairs and CEOs and their aim is to achieve a minimum of 30% female representation on FTSE 100 boards. Brenda is a strong advocate for women's economic empowerment and has been recognized with several awards for her global campaigning for greater gender balance across organizations. And welcome to the Home Office Brenda.

Next to Brenda is Perminder Mann. She is the CEO of Bonnier Books UK, a major publisher with 80 million sales, it says here **[REFERS TO SCRIPT]**. Perminder Mann is one of only seven women from an ethnic minority backgrounds to appear in a survey of the UK's 1,000 most

powerful leaders conducted by the Guardian and she regularly appears in the UK's top 100 most influential people in book publishing.

We also have Maggie. Maggie Murphy who is sitting next to Perminder. Hi Maggie. Maggie is the General Manager of Lewes football club. It's the first football club in the world to pay their women's team the same wages as the men. **[CLAPPING AND CHEERING]**

Maggie also co-founded Equal Playing Field in 2016. Equal Playing Field is a non-profit organisation dedicated to advancing women's equality in sport from grassroots to elite levels. In a bid to raise the visibility of the conversation she climbed to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro to play a game of football **[LAUGHTER]** with a team of football players from across the globe.

At the end **[OF THE TABLE]** there is Suki Thompson. Suki Thompson is the founder and CEO of Let's Reset, a company that accelerates business growth through creating a shift in company culture to link well-being and resilience directly to commercial delivery and capability. She has fought cancer four times whilst building her own businesses and has written a book called 'Let's Reset', which includes tips, well-being and resilience from CEOs, founders, charity campaigners and more. Welcome!

So, let's start off. Before we get into some of the specific issues can I just start by asking the panel what International Women's Day means to you briefly and I'll start with you, Suki.

### **[SUKI THOMPSON, CEO AND FOUNDER 'LET'S RESET']**

I love the idea of International Women's Day because I think it's a really lovely opportunity to celebrate women. And you know that sounds very simple, but I think it's a good opportunity and I do very firmly believe 'if you can see it you can be it' and I think it's really important for us to talk about that and to be seen. And you know what, our amazing leaders we have here today as part of that. But I think also amongst women it's important to remember. The other expression I like is 'not to be different from you but different like you'. And we have lots of women and we're all very different and we have very different skills and for me International Women's Day enables us to do that not in isolation, and of course we'll talk about that as well. But those two things I think are really important about International Women's Day.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Thank you, Maggie?

**[MAGGIE MURPHY, GENERAL MANAGER, LEWES FC]**

Yeah, I think I can be a little bit mixed about it. I don't like the commercialisation and the superficiality sometimes of International Women's Day. I don't really need a t-shirt to remind me that I'm a great woman, I guess.

But I do think it allows a space where you can bring incredible women leaders as long as we are not just here for International Women's Day and then we are seeded back into the discussions and debates at international forums later on. So, a little bit of 'yes it's good but let's also celebrate the progress and I think it is good to look back and realize how far we have come in some ways but then also to think okay what's next? What's next? and not just for this conversation to be contained here.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Yeah, work all the year round. Perminder?

**[PERMINDER MANN, CEO OF BONNIER BOOKS UK]**

I'm pretty much with you on that Maggie. I think it's great we have this. I think we need a moment in time, because we are all so busy with our lives, and we just get on with everything we just take everything in and it's time to pause and reflect so it [International Women's Day] makes us do that so that's great.

But again, pausing and reflecting and seeing how far we come it's important to celebrate but I think it's really important that we think about the journey ahead. And more importantly in how do we keep going and making progress and how do I personally, how do I influence that? How do I have an impact? So, for me it's you know, we talk about it all the time but particularly on that day I think it's just and also for me on a personal level as well you know you just stop and think about the amazing women in my life. Including my friends, my mum, my grandma and the wonderful women that I work with. It's just a great opportunity to look around and just think you know, and it motivates me then to keep going on the journey that we've started. So yeah.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Thank you, Brenda?

**[BRENDA TRENWENDON CBE, 30 PERCENT CLUB]**

Well I would agree with all of those points. I think from a 30% Club standpoint we use International Women's Day as a point to rethink about our campaign and how we can refresh it and what new messages and what more work needs to be done. But from a personal point I'm very much with Permindar.

I use it to think about the women in my life and how I can support them. There's a concept that my son introduced me to this year. I've been telling everyone he said to me when I was preparing to speak for an event, he was making me feel good and he said 'I'm your hype man mummy. I'm your hype man, I'm hyping you up.'

So I've introduced to my girlfriend's 'be a hype chick' to other women you know if you know someone that's going for a job interview or has a big day or is having a bad day drop them a postcard that says 'Wonder Woman' or something great like 'you go girl' or send them a WhatsApp and be their hype chick and be many people's hype chicks. So, on International Women's Day I try to do as much 'hype chicking' as I can. I do it throughout the year as well, but I redouble my efforts around International Women's Day.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Superb, everyone needs a hype chick **[LAUGHTER]** or a hype man!

**[PAMELA HUTCHINSON, GLOBAL HEAD OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION, BLOOMBERG LP]**

At Bloomberg we celebrate women everyday; it's not just on International Women's Day. For me though, International Women's Day is just an opportunity to remember that the struggle is still real, and we've still got so much more work to do. And it's just an opportunity to remember that for those of us who have been successful to continue to remember to reach down and pull other women up with us.

But yes, it's something that we celebrate every day at Bloomberg in fact I don't even think we actually recognize the day as such. We continue to do a number of events throughout the entire month of March not just to recognize International Women's Day. But it's important to us that we as an organization continue to recognize diversity in all its different guises throughout the entire year. So, it's not just 'oh we just focus on it during

Black History Month or Mental Health Awareness Week' but that we are focusing on it all the time.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Yep, I think it is really important to remember over the course of this discussion. Let's go into some of your experiences now. What are some of your personal experiences that influenced your thinking around leadership diversity? Suki.

**[SUKI THOMPSON, CEO AND FOUNDER, LET'S RESET]**

I've started four businesses and in certainly my last one Oystercatcher which is around marketing. The question that I used to be asked very often at dinner parties, and I started about 10 years ago, would be from predominantly middle-aged men who would ask me the same question, which is: 'what do you do?' And I would say, 'I run my own business' and they'd say, "oh you work from home"? **[LAUGHTER]**

'No, I actually have a business and it accelerates marketing performance' and they would say, 'so you have an office?'. And I would say 'yes, I have an office in London, New York and Hong Kong.' 'Oh, it's like a proper business and you have staff yeah?'. **[LAUGHTER]** 'Yeah, that's it!'. And then they would say what kind of clients do you work with and I would say McDonald's and Sainsbury's. And then they would say 'do you have a business partner?' and I would say, 'yes I do. It's a man called Peter Cowie.' 'Oh, a man. Excellent.' So, it's okay now!

Anyone who knows Peter Cowie knows he's an amazing wonderful man that came to join me on the journey. But he's utterly mad and creative. I would never let him run the business. But for me that was something that happened all the time.

I've sold my business to a PLC. I then sat on the board, I sat on the board of two businesses now PLCs, and have started another business. But that inherent... that kind of conversation, that highlights the challenge that we talked about before. It's great that things are moving, but those personal, the reality of everyday is it's just the bias is still there. Nobody means it in a bad way but it is still there so for me now it's a lovely reflection that I can sit on the boards of a couple of companies that are PLC's but that innate little bit of 'oh you know we're going to we're going to think you're something that's not the same as a man' or what other people because of how we feel about in this instance entrepreneurs mean.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Thank you, Maggie. You're a passionate advocate for change. What motivated you at the beginning? Was there a point or a moment, which made a difference? And what challenges have you faced?

**[MAGGIE MURPHY, LEWES FC]**

Yes, maybe to be clear I've only worked in football since last July and actually for the last 10 to 15 years I've worked in anti-corruption money laundry and human, I used to come here to lobby probably some of you on anti-corruption stuff. But to be honest what happened was I got angry and I think that until you are angry about something, you're not probably gonna have the impetus to change something and that's something I've only just realized in the last few years.

It just depends on what you do with that anger and how you channel it. So I was working in anti-corruption, I played football since I was a kid and around about the same time that I was stopping playing kind of competitively on a Sunday. I started to reflect back and go 'god that was so difficult why was it we always had to fight for the pitch? You know why did we always have to fight for a decent pitch? Why do we always get the worst referees like a kit that didn't fit? Why was every single week difficult? And at the same time there was this massive corruption scandal, that some of you might be aware of, at FIFA. So suddenly my world worlds were colliding.

And I was thinking hang on a second. The reason that the prize money is so poor in women's football the reason that we can't get the broadcast rights the reason why all the people say this is why you should be held back, you know revenue what crowds and things like that is because the people governing the sport don't care about me, they don't look like me and they have no interest in me or broadening out football beyond what is in their mind football which is for men.

So that was the kind of clash for me and I got angry and I started the climb up Kilimanjaro. We set a Guinness world record that day and I realized that it was a global thing. Like the women there were from 20 different countries' elite grassroots, and all of us face the same kind of challenges so that really catalysed something in me and I realized it was quite personal and I wouldn't be at any other Football Club as well.

So, I really have to be clear with this. I don't have an intention to, you know, be the CEO of Arsenal. Lewes FC took the decision in 2017 to not only pay its men and women the same but to split its revenue equally. This is bigger than pay. This is like how do you split it? How do you have the same marketing budget? Within two years, our women's team quadrupled attendances and that's although we increased the ticket price by 160 percent. So a tiny bit of investment, you know, equalling up, had HUGE ramifications.

So, now we played Arsenal last week in the FA Cup and we're already punching above our weight, you've never heard of Lewes I know, I know but now you do because we are actually one of the best women's football teams in the country and the club as a whole is really striving for change so I'll stop there. **[LAUGHTER]**

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Thank you. Brenda - can you tell us a bit about how you make the case for diversity and inclusion in your organization?

**[BRENDA TRENWENDON CBE, 30 PERCENT CLUB]**

Well, first of all I want to say well done Maggie I sit on the national governing body for cricket. One of four women on our Board of twelve and we just announced equal prize money for the hundred but we're not there yet on unequal pay of the players...

**[SUKI THOMPSON, CEO AND FOUNDER, LET'S RESET]**

But how can you be if you've got 12 women on the board.

**[MAGGIE MURPHY, GENERAL MANAGER, LEWES FC]**

But that's one of the best though in the country.

**[SUKI THOMPSON, CEO AND FOUNDER, LET'S RESET]**

I know but it's not. It's not great is it. I think it's really good but it's not as good as it could be.

**[BRENDA TRENWEDON CBE, 30 PERCENT CLUB]**

No, well, but I think there's always room to move. I mean I think 50-50 is where we need to get to but you've got it you've got to get on the journey. But coming back to the question fortunately I don't have to make the case at my own organization at PriceWaterHouseCooper, they actually hired me to build out a business in inclusion and diversity.



So, they've already drunk the kool-aid in that space but with other organizations I have this discussion on a regular basis. In my 30% club role - and I have to say that the business case is pretty much made and I think you know when we first started out at the end of 2010 we spent a lot of time in the business case. Now you know we're spending a lot more time on the how. But we started with the obvious points: the war for talent, the power of diverse teams for problem solving, and this goes obviously beyond gender, avoiding groupthink, better understanding of customer base, etcetera.

But we've felt recently we had to refresh our message because people you know get fatigued and they're finding they're not making enough progress and so we took another angle and we've really focused on the commercial value. And we've always been about this is good for business this isn't just an equal rights thing.

And we've launched a campaign and I happen to have a book here called 'Are You Missing Millions' and the beauty of this is actually this really answers a lot of the problems that Caroline Emma Criado-Perez OBE raises in a book invisible women and if you haven't read that book you should do it's amazing my next event I'm doing with her and I'm just in awe of this woman. But it's about thinking about gender in terms of your external piece so your clients, your customers, your communities, and putting a gender lens across the strategy and across everything you do so this is available on our 30% website and the PriceWaterHouseCooper website.

Because PriceWaterHouseCooper did this with 30 percent Club but we tried to bring out business examples with leading businesses around how they were able to use a gender lens to really impact their business. And I won't go through them all. I mean, I could be here all day, but I'll give you one really pertinent example. A company that is doing great things is Unilever. And Unilever in 2015, they tested over 1,500 adverts covering 370 brands in 54 markets around the world and they were looking at 'Does their advertising resonate with their customer base?

And guess what, you know a lot of women and men did not like how they were being portrayed in their adverts. And if you think about it how many women don't like seeing that women are doing all the cleaning the house cleaning, and stuff how many men don't like seeing that they're

incompetent looking after their kids or doing the housework and whatever these are not helpful stereotypes.

And so they launched the unereotype campaign and two years later they worked with the United Nation and they launched the unereotype alliance and actually they went out and they paid I think for 5,000 new Getty images of women that are unereotype images to be out there and to have the women put their own tags on them so instead of like gorgeous blonde or brunette you know intelligent you know pioneering scientists whatever it might be. But the impact and the outcome of doing that, of taking that time and doing that analysis was 37 percent more brand impact. A 28 percent uplift and purchase intent. A 35 percent increase in the employment of their adverts 30 percent increase in credibility and a 17 percent increase in relevance. We've got lots of other examples in this campaign and we're going to continue to source these, but I think you know really showing the business outcomes and in some cases it's a business outcome and a social impact as well is the most powerful argument that you could have so that where we are taking our discussions now.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

These are powerful examples of successes and outcomes and we've heard some others already. Perminder, what successes have you had in your organization that you want to highlight?

**[PERMINDER MANN, CEO OF BONNER BOOKS UK]**

Well, going back to actually both what Suki and Maggie said, one of the key drivers behind a lot of the changes we made in our organization last year. These were all based on personal experience. The journey that you've been through as a working mom. I've got two children, teenagers now, but it was the experiences I went through when they were younger that have now shaped or influenced the strategy that we've put in place in my organization.

I mean, I started my career working for big corporations and then I went off to work for two small businesses. And at that time I then had my young children and I when I had my second child I was working for this toy company and I went and set up there as I do, I just got into the job and I take on whatever responsibilities they're given to me and they said let's set up an international division. I set up an international division and I was flying to Hong Kong twice a year. I was actually secretly loving it because I'd been at home with my kids for a while **[LAUGHTER]** and

even there it was like 'oh, my god, this is really hard work', it was like a little mini-break from them.

So, I was lost in all of that until one day the Toy Fair which is in January, on the second I was packing my stuff for my young boy at the time. He was four [YEARS OLD] pulled my dress and said 'mommy don't go and started crying' and it just broke my heart because he was actually now aware of what was going on and I was not at home. So I then went to see my boss, my line manager at the time and said to him. 'Look I'm doing all this travelling, I'm going around the world, at least when I'm in the office can I finish work a bit earlier? I'll come in early. I won't take my lunch. I just want to get out early, so I can go home, read to my children, bathe them, put them to bed - I just want to be there for them'. And he turned around and said oh I couldn't possibly do that Perminder because if I say yes to you then I'll have a whole long queue [of staff] outside my office asking for the same thing.

And I think THAT'S the moment I sort of stopped and actually I felt like I had been slapped in the face. Really after everything I had done for the company and I think I was never the same again after that and thought I'm NEVER sacrificing family life for work. There's got to be a balance somewhere there.

Yes, I got something out of my work but also I'm here for my family. So, it was always, that's my quest to find the balance. I guess so as soon as I took over Bonnier Books UK last year, this is being almost two years now, one of the first things I did, because where 70% women in our organization was introduce flexible working hours, which we were the one of the first trade publishers to do that so we have core hours from 10:00 to 4:00 on a Monday to Thursday and then 10:00 to 2:00 on a Friday and it was and then you go to work your hours around that it's up to you.

But that was about equality really it was not just for women that had care for children. It's for men that might care for children it might be you might care for elders, people have got all sorts of responsibilities and I thought this will give people the flexibility to do that. And then also we had our paternity package was awful as well, so I thought again for a business our size at the time we were with one of the big large ones now but at the time not so financially we'll have a little bit of trouble when I took over. I said what I could do was implement maternity pay which was

actually market leading in our industry as well, which was really well received.

And now we're looking at pair shared parental leave, adoption leave, paternity leave, all of that because I think to make real meaningful change it's got to be a level playing field for everyone. And if we are going to encourage men to take care of their children the policies need to reflect that. Again, we made a conscious effort to issue our gender pay gap report as well, which wasn't required because of the size of the business that we were at the time. And we also sat down with a senior leadership team, and I said we need to measure where we are, otherwise how can we monitor change? How can we see how we've progressed?

Some of the men said 'we don't need to do it'. Well, I said I want to, and I'm going to do it, because I want to know, whatever the result is, and then we're gonna work from that. Actually it's not just about women being in leadership roles. We have a lot of women in my leadership team. It's also about having women across... and having men and the lower sort of level jobs as well.

It's the only way we're going to address some of the gender pay gap. It's not just we all talk about promoting women and we're doing a lot of that now but it's also I'm talking to women who then recruit like especially you know creative teams we've got editors designers. I'm like, think about teams as diverse. Look at - when you're looking at someone coming in - think about who you've already got in your team, and then what value that person is going to bring. Don't just recruit someone that's the same, because that's not diversity, right. You want a diversity of thought; diversity of opinion diversity. It's really crucial.

In our industry we've recently been challenged particularly in the children's space that our books do not reflect society. Kids need to see themselves in books and I think to make them authentic to make them credible they need to have a diverse team...people need to connect with authentic stories so we're doing a lot of work. But meaningful change, I keep saying to everyone - it takes time.

Let's not box tick, let's do it for the right reasons and let it you know and but long as we're making progress I know people get frustrated sometimes that we're not making progress quickly enough but I'd rather make meaningful progress, sustainable progress that is here to stay and

it's not just something that we do to tick the box and then you know a year later we're still sitting around the table talking about the same issues.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Thank you and you've given us some really vivid examples of change there and you also mentioned men so let's talk about men.

**[LAUGHTER]** Brenda talk can you tell us a little bit about how you've worked with or how you talk to men about these issues specifically? If you come up against any obstacles or particular kind of recurrent challenges?

**[BRENDA TRENWENDON OBE, 30 PERCENT CLUB]**

I think all most of the conversations I have are with men but, actually could I hand that over to Pamela? So sorry to pass the question

**[PAMELA HUTCHINSON, BLOOMBERG]**

You know men are an important aspect of the gender agenda. We can't do it on their own mostly because we work in institutions for which men are in power and at the top of the organization and so we need their help or assistance in order to progress. And it's something that's that we think about a lot at Bloomberg and we have integrated it in the way in which we manage our gender agenda. So, for example, our women's networks are open to all employees regardless of gender.

And, we have really pushed the agenda to sort of focus on male allies within that and as a result of that and we have ended up with a women's community. We call the communities at Bloomberg 'women's community', which is 50% men and 50% women and as a result of that we've actually had a lot of men who have stepped up to help lead the community alongside women. So that's one of the things that I think makes a huge difference.

And it's really important and one of the things I say a lot at Bloomberg actually the part of our kind of vision which, is this agenda diversity is about all of us and not some of us and it's so important that we all feel that we have a stake in this and that we're all helping to find solutions for diversity within organizations. And to that end.

A number of things that we do, so another thing that we do at Bloomberg is something called 'inclusion dialogues' and those 'inclusion dialogues' are places where we bring people together on topics that are difficult to

talk about in the workplace. And, actually the first topic that we did was on race and ethnicity because if we think we can't talk about gender you start talking about race and everyone suddenly goes quiet.

And so we wanted to start where it was really difficult and we talked about race and what we did was we bring people together across the organization. We started them with bringing leaders together and we had a 90-minute session, we have a panel like this where we have experts, we have employed you know somebody from Bloomberg and we have individuals that represent those particular communities for which we're talking about. We have a bit of a discussion for about half an hour or so; the room set up with round tables of eight to ten. And with every table you have a flip chart and you have a scribe.

The idea is that after we've had this conversation at those roundtables we then ask individuals at Bloomberg to think about you've heard stuff what resonated what didn't what are some of the challenges for us in this organization, where are some of the opportunities that we're not leveraging and if you were leading this agenda what would you do and they have another sort of half an hour or so sat at the tables and charting out. The first session that we did on race we had just under 200 people attend.

We had scores and scores of ideas. The thing that I said when I stood up when we first launched it was that in order for this agenda to work and in order for us to really leverage the power of people in the room people had to be candid and honest.

You cannot move this agenda forward if you're not speaking your truth. And what I said to people is you're going to hear stuff in this room that you're not going to like it might be even offensive to you can I ask you to assume that this person's in this room with positive intent if you need to school the school them if you need to say to them, actually let me tell you how that made me feel and how you might want to say this in a way that makes me feel included. Do that but it's but everyone around this table has got an opportunity to share their own personal perspective.

If we don't get those ideas out on the table, we cannot move this agenda forward. I was amazed, actually. I thought people wouldn't be honest in that room, but, trust me, people were; people were very honest. I heard lots of things in that room, but it was great because it meant that we knew what people were really thinking and if you knew that then you can

start to work on it. And then if you have those people usually the devil's advocates who are part of the agenda it creates something that you know it's going to land better than if you didn't have them in the room.

So, the 'inclusion dialogues' have been incredibly successful. We've done them on so many things from race to Mental Health to focusing on women across to black women in diversity, another thing that's not talked about very often. So, these are really important, and I think whether it's men whoever it is within the women's agenda it needs to be a completely full group of individuals tackling the topic. So, yes men are absolutely key to this agenda. But then the other thing I would also say is that and I've been talking about this ever since I had breath and could talk about diversity and inclusion, which is as women we have to remember that there is lots of diversity across women.

And I do feel that the women's agenda has not supported women across all their diversity and frankly if we think that we have made progress on women and we have left others behind, we have not won this battle at all!

**[PERMINDER MANN, CEO BONNIER BOOKS UK]**

I'd like to just add to that Pamela. That it's interesting that you say what you say. We work with an organization called the national literacy trust and I've been working quite closely with them about women in leadership roles by going into schools and talking to students, just being a role model as you said you know 'if you don't see it you can't be it'.

So, we went to this event last year in Nottingham. In a school and it was all young girls aged sort of between 12 to 16 years old in the audience and we had a panel of women like this that they were talking about you know how important literacy skills and communication skills are in the workplace and then when we finished with the Q&A one young lady stood up. She was 14 years old, and she stood up, and she says, 'I have a question', and we said, "yeah". She goes 'why are there no boys in the room?'

And suddenly the room went silent and she said, 'because if we're going to have real change, we need boys in the room to be part of the conversation'. And honestly, we all applauded her because I was like this is a fourteen-year-old girl. She was absolutely amazing. She was my

heroine that day. It was, like, brilliant that she stood up and said that but she was absolutely right that everyone needs to be part of the conversation to make change because everyone has a stake in it.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Suki?

**[SUKI THOMPSON, CEO AND FOUNDER, LET'S RESET]**

I completely agree I just thought I'd share one of the things that I put in place at central media and developed is a development board. So we run a board that is people who have been in there probably second or third jobs maybe at a more junior level in the organization and it replicates the exco board that we have within the business. Now the benefit of that is it is much easier to get the level of diversity that we've just been talking about because it is more junior people in the organisation.

We run a whole programme to put the people on the board. I ran it exactly like you would run a normal exco. So with agenda points they have specific responsibilities and I think the benefit of it is having a conversation across the business. It has a commercial aspect to it as well so it's not just talking about some of the things that we've been talking about here, which are really important, but it leads back into the piece that drives the business forward. And we've seen a real uptake on people's changing behaviour within the organization. And, also it feeds into the exco which I think was really important because it enabled a much better understanding of some of the issues that were being experienced in the organization.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Well, thinking about accelerating change and moving to the how having made the argument, Maggie what are you going to be doing next? What would be your area of focus to accelerate change?

**[MAGGIE MURPHY, GENERAL MANAGER, LEWES FC]**

I was just thinking about the men thing. You know, obviously, working, you know, in a football club, I'm very lucky that I'm surrounded by brilliant men who are actually the driving force behind pushing for the Equality in the club which is special and rare. And I'm aware of that.

But I think that there's some times very natural focus on nasty or bad men and in my head I have like a bit of a spectrum right you have the



people here the trolls that a lot of you in this room will probably come across and have experienced or the negative people the people that think that they know a lot about what you're talking about and that and then you're over here you have the people that I'm lucky enough to work with some of the directors who are real positive people.

But there are a huge number of people in the middle that wouldn't even class themselves as an ally because they haven't really had to think about whether they are an ally or not but who we can help to be better and I think there's some really, I never think of inspiring men to be change makers our allies but I do think about small things that men and women can do.

And for me personally I want to normalize women doing sport especially football. I want to normalize that. So I want men to consider taking their children to women's football games, not just men. I want them to eradicate from their language things like 'oh don't be such a girl', which I do hear male friends tell their sons 'or play like a girl, throw like a girl, shoot like a girl'. All of that stuff. Just be super conscious of language. It's quite simple.

And then other things like lifting up women in the workplace. Barack Obama - pretty woke guy, right? Have you heard of the thing that his female advisors had to do within his first six months of office. His female advisors would be in a room and they'd have lots of ideas and then there'd be a kind of guy would be like 'well we're going to do this and I think that was Alicia's idea', and so the female advisors in Barack Obama's own kind of Cabinet Room, took to reflecting and naming the people around the room to say 'oh I love that idea from Alicia or coming back to Sarah's idea'.

I really like you know and there's little things like that I think we can all do; that was women supporting women. But I think men can think about those small things about lifting up and raising off, and providing that voice too. So there's little things I think everyone can do I'm laughing in my head because I can think of a time when I had this like idea at a previous job, were I thought do you know what you know everyone's super stressed and complain everyone hates meetings right so I said 'why don't we just like declare Friday like a non-meeting day so and if we can't get it across the whole organization'.

'We could start in our team and there may be other teams would join in' and I said that's my male boss and he kind of said 'yeah right'. Okay, two weeks later he said to me I've got this idea **[LAUGHTER]** and I looked down. I thought he was joking. I laughed and he was like 'yeah, I just think we could try it and see what happens'. Two weeks after that his boss, my boss's boss, said to me, 'Craig's had this great idea', and I laughed again. I said look this is not even that brilliant an idea, it was just the thought you know but don't take away my thought. and my boss's boss was just kind of 'okay fine but you know it's a good idea right?' and I was like 'it's not the point', so I don't know there's little things like that that happened.

And I think we can just be a little bit conscious of who speaks in a meeting, even if there's more women in a room than men, who's speaking, provide the floor, come back to people, little really small things that I think can change the dialogue in a really substantial way, tangible way.

#### **[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

And sort of thinking about broadening the conversation and bringing other voices In we're going to give you a chance in a minute to ask some questions. I'm sure there's lots that you want to ask the panel but just before we do, Pamela, you've given us a couple of pointers to the change that's that you're helping to lead in Bloomberg. But if you needed to highlight let's say two things two key things that can make a difference what would they be?

#### **[PAMELA HUTCHINSON, BLOOMBERG]**

Accountability. I've been doing this work for so long and we've had numerous business cases. We've got data coming out of every orifice **[LAUGHTER]** and it's still not making a difference. And partly that's because organizations and people at the top are not holding their people accountable for diversity and inclusion.

It's really that simple I speak to lots of CEOs and senior leaders who stand up and say it's really important to them. I was coaching a CEO recently and he said how important it was. He was at an event I was at. He was on a panel that I was at and then I said to him quietly, 'so tell me when you were sitting down with your leaders, did you ask any of them about what they were doing on diversity and inclusion in their businesses?' It went very quiet. You could hear crickets.

And this is the problem. There's lots of people out there who say this is really important but is it so important that they're holding people accountable? No, not really. Business always comes first and diversity might come a bit further down. So one of the things that we're doing about it, but we've been doing it for a while actually, but because accountability is so key to driving diversity inclusion right through the organization particularly, that middle level that we've talked about is at Bloomberg every single head of business has got global head of business has got a diversity plan.

And that diversity plan forms part of what we call a 'conversation' that's held twice a year at mid-year and end-of-year, an organizational health review. And we look at the health of your organization from a diversity and inclusion perspective and that conversation is had and it has to be the head of the business. You can't give that to somebody else or a champion or a woman typically who does diversity and inclusion. It cannot be given to anyone else. Only the head of the business.

And they turn up to an hour meeting with myself and the chairman of Bloomberg Peter Grauer and we walk through their plan. We look for progress against the plan, we look and see if their numbers are changing. We have some very difficult and challenging questions. We then send them off and say okay and then we follow up with an email saying great conversation, these are the two three four things that we expect you to start working on when we meet you at the end of year.

And so it continues and we've been doing that at Bloomberg for four years and we continue to do that. We've started to broaden it out now, so now the management committee as a whole is a part of those conversations. And so that's really important. Our chairman Peter Grauer also as a leader on diversity and inclusion sets a 'chairman's challenge' every year.

The Chairman's challenge is around holding leaders accountable for driving diversity and inclusion. And we're looking for innovation we're looking for ideas, we're looking for evidence of what they're doing to drive diversity and inclusion. That is the only way that you are going to progress this agenda is through accountability. And every time I speak, I talk to leaders in the room. If you have not had a conversation with your direct reports around what they're doing on diversity and inclusion then you don't really care.

**[FLOOR OPENED TO QUESTIONS FROM ATTENDEES]**

**[ATTENDEE: ELISABETH UKANAH, HOME OFFICE]**

You're all incredibly successful and you're all prominent leaders in your field. But how do you manage to be that successful, not ruffle feathers, and take people with you along that journey? Particularly who don't expect success to look as you do?

**[BRENDA TRENWENDON CBE, 30 PERCENT CLUB]**

Well you know I'd be lying if I were to say that I've always been successful at that you know certainly it's been it has been a journey and it's been a learning experience and you know I have ruffled feathers along the way and sometimes it's right to ruffle feathers and sometimes it's not. And it takes experience to learn when to choose your battle and to fight it and when not to.

But I think, you know, having learning about stakeholder management, you know, finding sponsors, finding people you can work with and, you know, also looking at the organisation that you're working in, is really important. You know, if you find that you join a company and, you know, you're continually battling and you're just knocking your head up against the ceiling, you know, at some point, either if the company is big enough, you move or you move companies. And I think learning when to do that as well is incredibly important. So, I think it's all a learning experience, but sponsorship is really what I think is key.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

I'm not going to invite the rest of the panel to answer that just because I want to make sure that people have a chance to ask questions, and if you direct your question to who on the panel you'd like to answer initially please and introduce yourself.

**[ATTENDEE: SHERNETT RANSON, CABINET OFFICE]**

My name is Shernett Ranson and I work in Cabinet Office. I'm part of a small group of people who do the 'Let's Talk About Race'. So Pamela I was quite heartened by your comment of what you've done at Bloomberg. I've always felt very uncomfortable in a workplace to talk about race because I feel that the merits of your work should speak for yourself.

But most recently I've become aware of colleagues who made me not have been able to navigate as well as I have through the workplace and

therefore, I thought to get involved in let's talk about race. I'm what I think I have six lined up across the Cabinet Office across the different units to go and talk about what it feels like – to talk about race and to go through and explore ideas. So, I'm quite keen to that the point you made about the effect it had, the accountability of the senior team and holding senior managers to account. So, my question to you today is would you be willing to work with us? **[LAUGHTER]** to achieve that? And secondly, Perminder, thank you for responding on the gender pay gap.

**[PAMELA HUTCHINSON, BLOOMBERG]**

I'll give you my card afterwards **[LAUGHTER]**

**[ATTENDEE: SIMON GOMEZ, GOVERNMENT LEGAL DEPARTMENT]**

My name is Simon Gomez, I'm from the Government Legal Department. Perminder, how do you keep yourself motivated when you're constantly going up against that brick wall?

**[PERMINDER MANN, CEO OF BONNIER BOOKS UK]**

It's funny that when I got into this role, I actually, I didn't plan to be a CEO. It just kinda of happened. I arrived at this place. And, actually when I first arrived here I had an identity crisis as well, because when I looked around the industry there was no one like me at the top of their organization.

I'm like the only female woman of colour from a working-class background. It was like I ticked every box. And I told myself I don't actually belong here? How did I get here? Why did I get here now? So, I began questioning my own like success.

And this happened to me early on in my career as well, when I first joined the industry and I worked in large corporations. Immediately, I think there is a human desire internally to conform and I suddenly started changing the way I looked. Everyone knows this story. I came to the office one day and I cut my hair. Because I'm so short and I look quite young for my age, I'll accept that and at the time I was like 'oh my god no one's gonna take me seriously!' I'm like 'everyone thinks I'm much younger! How do I fit in with everyone?

I tried everything just to blend in. And I had three very three months of being very unhappy. I wasn't myself and my husband said to me 'why have you changed? Why are you changing ? What are you doing to yourself? And I was like 'oh I've gotta fit in, I've got to be taken seriously and I'm small, I must have gravitas when I walk in the room. I'll go to these big meetings and all the men are sitting there and then I want to sort of look like everyone else.' And he [my husband] said 'but you got here because of who you are as a person and what you've done is in your role. Don't change that.'

And then I said right okay you know what he's right and that moment was really liberating. So, then I was like I'm gonna be myself and people are gonna have to accept me for who I am. And, actually I'm here because I do a great job and I'm just gonna carry on doing a great job and I want to let everybody in my organization be themselves at work.

And I've got to lead by example. So, immediately I started to grow my hair back again and I went back to dressing the way I used to. I wanted to allow other people to be that in the organization. I look within my organisation, I don't look outside. And I think that's what motivates me because I can make changes within my team. It's now having an impact on the rest of the industry because people that I work that work in my team are talking to other people in the industry and it's kind of filtering out everywhere and people are now saying in other companies 'we want flexible working hours, we want to work at Bonnier Books, because it's like a great place to work. But that wasn't what I set out to do.

I wanted to make our place, our business, a great place to work. I wanted everyone to bring themselves to work, be themselves. That's diversity in itself, you know, as I said you can put another Indian woman, working class sat next to me and we will be completely different in our book and music tastes or travel destinations and our dress sense. That's diversity. So, I think, for me, diversity is allowing people to be themselves and that's diversity in itself.

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

Thank you Perminder. Thank you. We've got a question here...

**[AUDIENCE MEMBER]**

I'm Lindo and I work at the Home Office. My question is to you Pamela. You have said earlier one of the final remarks you made in response to why International Women's Day is important was around how you felt

that the agenda on women would not be complete if we didn't fully address the diversity of women. The different types of women that make up the community and I wondered if you could speak a bit more about that if you can see what you actually meant. Who do you think has been left behind and perhaps more importantly what do you think needs to be done?

**[PAMELA HUTCHINSON, BLOOMBERG]**

Well, what I meant by that, if I wasn't clear enough, is that the women's agenda has in the main benefited white women. If you look at the progression, if you look at the progress that we've made with women on boards generally they don't look like me or like Perminder. Generally! And that's just racial diversity, never mind anything else. So, it is concerning to me that's for some reason even within the women's agenda we have got levels of importance and as a black woman, for me progressing the gender agenda, if it's not talking about me then I've got one of two options I can check out which actually a lot of black women do check out. Black and Asian women check out this agenda because it doesn't talk to their specific needs. I also feel that the agenda as a whole talks about women as if we are one homogeneous mass.

And that we all experience being women in the same way and the reality is yes, there are certain aspects of being a woman that we all as women, for us that are women in the room, experience but then you layer on that things like race sexual orientation disability and various other diversity demands socio-economic background and it takes a completely different it just feels different.

So, what I meant by that was that if we all pat ourselves on the back because we think wow look we've made sorry 30% women on boards or 50 percent and that 50 percent will look the same then we haven't actually made progress on this agenda at all. And so, for me it's very much about as women we should be a sisterhood of women. All women together supporting and pulling each other up and if we're not doing that, if we're not looking out for other women that don't look like us then I don't know really if we're very true to the cause

**[BRENDA TRENOWDEN, CBE – 30 PERCENT CLUB]**

But don't you think that means we should be focusing on inclusion? I really think we need to move on from just setting these targets, you know, it's really about inclusive culture and about what a number of

people have touched on is allowing people to be themselves and celebrate difference.

**[SUKI THOMPSON, CEO AND FOUNDER, LET'S RESET]**

I completely agree and I think it's... but it's hard getting people to speak out. and actually men and women to speak out about. you know. being their true selves and talking about their own thing. And I pulled together a book last year where I got 82 business leaders, of which quite a lot of women actually, talking about what it means to bring their whole selves to work.

Well, what it means to lead organizations, what it means to look after their own well-being and what struck me was a third of every one I talked to would tell a very personal story. Every one of the eighty-two people it was much more difficult to get men to come and talk forward and talk openly about themselves and then of, again, of all the people that I spoke to, only some of them would say a personal story. The rest would talk about what they're doing in their organizations even though I know they have a much more personal story.

What then has happened though the good bit about it is now the number of people have come back to me and said you know what if I'd seen what the book looked like has these lovely photographs by Rankin you know they go 'I wish I'd told my own story' and a number of men who have come back to me and said 'when you asked me to do it, Suki – I kinda said no but I wish I had said yes.'

**[BRENDA TRENWENDON CBE, 30 PERCENT CLUB]**

You're absolutely right but I think it's the role model piece and it's seeing it. So you know we talk about disabilities and things and not all disabilities are visible. I have cancer and I recently had surgery and I now have what's called a stoma, which is a very odd thing, something I never expected to have, and I had a real issue with it at first.

And I went online and there are loads of people who are proud to stand in bikinis, or men who are bodybuilders with their bags, their stoma bags, and I thought, wow, that's fantastic, you know, telling this story, as you say, and being open. And it really opens, you know, opens it up to other people.

People have said to me you can just get on and no one will know you don't have to say anything. Well, I think it's the opposite. I think it's



incumbent on us to be open and talk about it and make other people feel open in all aspects, and so I really applaud this idea of having men talk more about the stories. But have everybody. Include people and be more open with each other. I don't think I've shared that one before, that's a bit weird. **[LOUD CLAPPING]**

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

I'm unconscious that the tyranny of diaries means that some people have got 12 o'clock meetings that they're heading out to. We do have a little bit of time. I'm going to just give Maggie one chance to respond to questions to kind of complete the circuit as it were and then then I'll invite Paul [Lincoln] to reflect on some of the conversation that we've been having and then we'll conclude. So, Maggie.

**[MAGGIE MURPHY, GENERAL MANAGER, LEWES FC]**

Maybe, it comes back to the very first question which links things through

I think if you are allowed to be yourself, that's kind of the most powerful thing but you also need to know yourself. And I think that when teenage girls, definitely me, when I was growing up you were not allowed to always be your full self or you're trying to figure out what self you're meant to project or what you're meant to look like. So, once you have figured out what you like, what you don't like, what you're, I think, what is really essential is what are your principles and your values.

Then it makes everything much easier when you are going into battle with someone in a workplace.

So I think the question was, you know, ruffling feathers or something like that, if you know your principles and if you know yourself and if you know your principles and values, you've made it easy for yourself - you know what you're going to fight over and you know what you won't fight over.

And I actually think that's the same for an organization or a company. If an organization or a company has a set of principles or values then it's really easy to just say yes or no.

And I guess my last example from a Lewes Football Club point of view we were approached by a gambling company to sponsor us. We need the money right and immediately we said no because we are a strong community club. We're a hundred percent fan owned and we do not agree with the creeping normalization of gambling and football and the

impact that that has on our communities, our societies, our young people, our old people and so it was really easy to therefore turn down what would have been probably the most lucrative amount of money that we could have accepted and which would make my job easier. But it's just having those principles but knowing yourself, knowing your principles and values and then just operating through them. **[LOUD CLAPPING]**

**[ROBERT HALL, HOME OFFICE]**

We'll conclude the session there if that's all right? But I'd like this not to be the end **[TURNS TO PANEL]** you've come into the Home Office and I hope that we can continue our relationship. This is just the beginning so perhaps you can come back next year and see what we've done as a result of this discussion. I want to thank you all sincerely once again for taking the trouble to be here this morning. You are busy, hugely accomplished people and I'm sure you've got a million places to be so thank you for choosing us today.

**[MUSIC ENDS SESSION]**