

## Chris Hodge

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**From:** Marie-Louise Clayton <marielouise\_clayton@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** 13 July 2011 18:00  
**To:** Chris Hodge  
**Cc:** Marie-Louise Clayton  
**Subject:** Feedback on Consultation around Gender Diversity

I have recently moved from being a plc. executive to developing a non-executive portfolio and have been following closely the debate around Women on Boards. I currently sit on three Boards.

My view is that the world of the non-executive is considerably behind that of the executive in terms of its openness to, and appreciation of, diversity. I understand that diversity relates to many different groups the most identifiable of which is women and I therefore agree with the focus on that specific issue. This situation has not changed over the last 50 years and does not appear to be changing of its own accord. There is a considerable female talent pool that is currently underutilised in British Board rooms for no rational reason.

In order to generate the traction required for change I believe the code should be changed with effect for companies reporting after 1.10.11. in the manner recommended by Lord Davies. The requirement to advise measures in place and aspirations to achieve diversity is not a difficult or time consuming discussion and therefore a long time line for implementation is, in my view, unnecessary and would allow for further prevarication. It is not as if this is a surprise and most well governed Boards will be having this conversation already and will be more than prepared to include a paragraph on their plans in their next accounts.

I support the measures suggested by Lord Davies as they strike an appropriate balance between imposing quotas within a time limit which may lead to inappropriate appointments and having no measurement at all which has led to inaction. The publication of targets and strategy for achievement that are appropriate for each company and each Board taking into account the service length of members, the skillsets, the ability to induct a less experienced member, the readiness of the executive team etc.

recognises the individuality of each Board but also enforces the progress towards diversity.

I look forward to the FRC making its contribution to progress on this issue.

Marie-Louise Clayton  
Forth Ports plc.  
Zotefoams plc.  
Geoffrey Osborne Ltd.

