

On 26th October 2018, GGI welcomed Professor Mervyn King,

chair of The King Committee on Corporate Governance and renowned advocate of integrated reporting, for a special dinner with GGI staff in London.

Mervyn has a passion for helping younger people to see governance as a way of safeguarding our future and those in attendance were regaled with stories of Mervyn's life: his experience of becoming a Supreme Court Judge in Apartheid South Africa; the important role he played chairing Operation Hunger; and of his relationship with Nelson Mandela and the significance of this in his decision to, in 1994, lead the creation of a code of corporate governance for a newly democratic South Africa.

The first King Report on Corporate Governance was ground-breaking advocating an integrated approach to corporate governance which went far beyond the norms of the time.

Since then, the report has been revised three times, bringing it in line with current thinking and best practice.



The most recent iteration, published in 2016, is the first outcomes-based governance code in the world, and emphasises how important it is for organisations and institutions to be good 'corporate citizens', accountable to all stakeholders, current and future.

GGI have long been proponents of the King school of thought, having invited Mervyn to deliver the keynote address at our 2015 Festival of Governance and working with partners in the NHS and beyond to develop their own integrated reports.

Speaking candidly, Mervyn also revealed what he felt would be the two greatest challenges the world will over the next decade: the environment and cyber-terrorism. Few would disagree.

The 2017 WannaCry cyber-attack affected 80 NHS trusts and a further 603 NHS organisations costing some £92m and impacting on patient care across the country, whilst the chancellor, Philip Hammond, has suggested that, over the past six months, the UK's National Cyber Security Centre has blocked 34,550 potential attacks on government departments and members of the public.

Likewise, a recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has highlighted the need for immediate, "rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society", to stave off the most-damaging impacts of global warming.

These are, and will continue to be, live issues for national and international leaders. Interestingly, Mervyn felt each of these was ultimately an issue of governance, reinforcing the importance of work of GGI, and other similar organisations, to develop and implement good governance principles and practice.

It was a fascinating and stimulating evening and those in attendance very much left struck by the breadth of Mervyn's contribution to the world of governance, and also the importance of continuing and building upon his legacy.