

## **BLME opens Manchester office to serve mid-market companies in the North**

**London, 16 April 2015** – Bank of London and The Middle East plc (“BLME”), the specialist finance provider to UK mid-market corporates, today announced the opening of a new corporate banking office in central Manchester.

The office, part of a strategic expansion for the Bank in response to increasing demand for finance from mid-market corporates, will support the effective take up of opportunities arising in the North of England and enable BLME to provide stronger client coverage.

The strategic expansion of activities in the Manchester area is complementary to BLME’s primary focus of servicing the UK’s mid-market segment. With a successful track record of dealing with and investing in local companies, BLME has provided financing totalling £50 million to businesses across the North of England over the past year.

### **Jervis Rhodes, Head of Corporate Banking at BLME, commented:**

*“The UK mid-market has a huge presence in the North of England and opening up a BLME presence in Manchester allows us to help with the financing needs of local companies, who no longer wish to rely on the larger London-based institutions. BLME is ideally positioned to provide customised and specialist services catering for mid-market companies looking to finance the next stage of growth in a very important commercial region of the UK.”*

In conjunction with the office launch, BLME has also announced the appointment of Andy Krauza, who joins as associate director for BLME’s ABL finance division. Andy will be based in the Manchester office and will assist in the controlled expansion of BLME’s Wholesale Funding portfolio. Andy brings nearly 30 years of experience to the role, having previously worked with The Co-operative Bank plc for 18 years, followed by three years at The Funding Corporation Ltd and then eight years at Hitachi Capital UK plc.

### **Robert Harris, Director, Head of ABL Finance at BLME said:**

*“Andy’s appointment together with the opening of our Manchester office enables BLME to further support our existing customer and introducer base. It also widens the scope of our activities by offering innovative financial solutions in the ABL and Wholesale Funding spaces as well as across other BLME Corporate Banking products.”*

BLME has also confirmed that a recruitment plan is in place to appoint further staff in Manchester covering Acquisition Finance and Leasing.

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#### NOTES TO EDITORS

##### About BLME

BLME is an independent wholesale Sharia'a compliant bank based in London and is a leading provider of alternative finance to the UK mid-market. BLME received FSA authorisation in July 2007 and is the largest of its peers in Europe. Led by a management team that brings together a combination of experienced international bankers and leading experts in Islamic finance, BLME has three key business areas; Corporate Banking, Treasury and Wealth Management, providing a wide range of financing solutions and investment opportunities.

- **Corporate Banking** consists of six business units: Real Estate, which includes acquisition, investment and development finance; Leasing which provides solutions for the UK mid-market, including international facilities; Trade Finance; ABL Finance; Islamic Capital Markets; Acquisition Finance and Syndications.
- **Wealth Management** consists of Private Client Services, providing a comprehensive property service, and Asset Management.
- **Treasury** which funds the financing activities in Corporate Banking and Wealth Management, provides BLME's Premier Deposit Accounts and manages the Group's capital and liquidity.

BLME is dedicated to offering innovative Islamic investment and financing products to businesses and high net-worth individuals in the European, US, Asian and MENA regions. To ensure that BLME's services and operations are wholly Sharia'a compliant, the Bank has a dedicated Sharia'a Supervisory Board ("SSB"). The SSB's role is to review contracts and agreements relating to all transactions ensuring that they are consistent with the principles of Islamic jurisprudence.

Website: [www.blme.com](http://www.blme.com)