

Tributes pour in following death of Mukesh Patel, loved and 'irreplaceable' member of Leicester business scene

Tributes have poured in following the death of Mukesh Patel, a senior and much loved member of the Leicestershire business community.

The married father-of two from Stoneygate, Leicester, was just 54 years old when he died on February 18, having been taken ill a week earlier.

A litigation specialist by profession he joined Freeths in 2009 and became managing partner of its Leicester office in 2014. The firm said he had regarded the team there as his second family and was admired for his "impeccable manners, courtesy and respect".

He was also a director of Team Leicester, the public/private sector inward investment group set up to promote the region at the annual MIPIM property and construction conference in Cannes.

Mr Patel grew up in Leicester, studying at Crown Hills Community College and Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I College, before attending Corpus Christi College, at Oxford, and doing his law finals at The College of Law, in Lancaster Gate, London.

Richard Osborn, regional director and partner at Excello Law, based in Leicester, worked with him at Freeths until 2014 and sat alongside him on the board at Team Leicester.

He said the whole city business community was devastated by

the loss of such a well-known, loveable character.

He said: "He always had so much time for everyone and this has come completely out of the blue.

"He was a close friend of mine, a former colleague, irreplaceable really – he was Freeths in Leicester, and did so much more than that. He was genuinely a true gent who will be missed by everyone that knew him.

"It's rare to have such a genuinely liked and nice person in business these days. He was genuinely one of life's good guys."

Kevin Harris is head of the RSM accountancy firm's Leicester office and chairman of East Midlands Chamber, where Freeths is a strategic partner.

He said: "Having known Mukesh for many years as both a friend and fellow managing partner in Leicester, we had much in common and I always enjoyed his company, and respected his professional and pragmatic approach.

"A great advocate of Leicester, he will be greatly missed. My thoughts are with his family at this sad time."



Mukesh Patel, managing partner of Freeths in Leicester
(Image: Alistair Langham)

Freeths chairman Julian Middleton called the news “desperately sad, shocking, and heartbreaking” and a blow to everyone at the firm.

He said: “Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are with his wife and their two boys.

“He was an exemplary team player and would always place his personal interests second to those around him for the common good.

“Mukesh was very well known in the Leicester business community and was tireless in his efforts to raise the profile and reputation of the firm and his office.

“We have lost a real force for good in the Freeths community, but we will ensure that his legacy lives on through our commitment to those shared principles that were so dear to

him.”

Posting on the Linked In professional social media network, Dr Nik Kotecha OBE DL, founder of Loughborough’s Morningside Pharmaceuticals and another well regarded member of the county business community also said it was “heartbreaking”.

He wrote: “A true gentlemen and stalwart ambassador for his profession, Freeths and Leicestershire.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with Rita and the boys. It was an honour to call you a friend and you will be sorely missed. RIP”.

Helen Donnellan, Pro Vice Chancellor Business and Innovation at De Montfort University, and a previous part of Team Leicester when she was at Leicester City Council, said he had mentored her and her team on her arrival in the city.

She said: “He was the most generous person who always went above and beyond to support our business community and will be greatly missed by very many.

“My thoughts go out to his family to whom he was devoted.”

In a joint statement on behalf of Team Leicester, Richard Osborn and follow director Rob McGuinn said Mr Patel had played an integral and active part in championing Leicester and Leicestershire’s investment potential on an international stage.

They said: “He was such a kind and genuine soul who always strove for positive outcomes and looked for the best in everything.

“Our thoughts are with his family at this very sad time.

“Mukesh, you are and will always be sadly missed. Rest in peace our dear friend.”

Richard Blackmore, Midlands regional director for the CBI, added that he was a “truly kind, supportive and warm gentleman”.

A JustGiving page set up in Mr Patel’s memory has already raised more than £1,500 for Sightsavers, an international charity close to his heart which works to help prevent avoidable blindness. [People can support it by clicking here.](#)