

city," he said. "From the House of Lords, I want to be a friend of everyone who positively believes in this great city."

"Birmingham can play a major part in the economic growth of the nation. I firmly and positively believe that the debate in the UK has to be about the great cities other than London. We know that London naturally plays a central role but the UK is not a one stop shop."

He added: "The Prime Minister told me he wanted someone in

great city

MIKE WHITBY

City Council's first Conservative leader for 20 years in 2004 when he brokered a coalition deal with the Lib Dems.

During his eight years in office he was a key player in several major projects including the New Street Station redevelopment and Library

Queen on the recommendation of party leaders. Other new Conservative peers include Sir Anthony Bamford, Chairman of JCB.

Sir Anthony, who has given around £100,000 personally to the Tories in the last few years. But a Tory source described Sir Anthony as a "leading industrialist who has made a massive contribution to British business".

Mike Whitby, above, and Sir A

Brum security firm packed a punch for Amir

JON GRIFFIN

Business Editor

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EVEN a world class fighter like Amir Khan needs protection – especially from unwelcome and uninvited guests at his wedding.

And it was Shirley-based MAN Commercial Protection that the fighter turned to for his big day – the largest ever wedding covered by celebrity magazine Hello.

The firm landed the blue riband security role at the glittering Manchester celebrations last month, attended by 3,500 guests, after nearly 10 years of looking after Khan.

The assignment is the latest in a string of key contracts for the firm, whose managing director Iain McCallister set up the business 20 years ago with his late father. Today MAN employs 600 workers and boasts a multi-million pound turnover.

Mr McCallister said: "We've looked after Amir since he turned pro in 2004, so we know the family and many of the friends, which was useful in ensuring only invited guests came in."

"The security wasn't a piece of cake. Apart from manning-



Amir Khan with bride Faryal on their wedding day, and, above, Iain McCallister of MAN Commercial Protection

up to control 3,500 guests, there were £100,000 of jewellery gifts and a dozen super cars to be guarded as well as an amazing Bollywood display, including dance troops and musicians."

The couple flew from Bolton Wanderers football stadium to Event City Manchester for the wedding banquet – the groom's first helicopter flight.

"The only thing I asked for was a cake and it's huge," said Amir. The 14ft iced and vanilla buttercream sponge came complete with an Arabic fountain.

The city firm first broke into the big time in 1996 with local rockers Ocean Colour Scene,

and have worked with boxing promoter Frank Warren for 17 years. They've looked after top fighters such as Mike Tyson, Ricky Hatton and Frank Bruno.

"We have also worked with Oasis, UB40, Paul Weller, the Stones, Elton John. It's all about professionalism and providing a good service."

"You have to make sure that all their needs are catered for with regard to their family security," added Mr McCallister. "We have never walked away from a job. We are a national company and largely rely on word of mouth and reputation."

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