

Speech: Approbation of the Lord Mayor Elect ceremony

My Lord Mayor Elect, I am commanded by Her Majesty The Queen to convey Her Majesty's express approval of the choice of the citizens of London in electing you to be Lord Mayor for the coming year.

It is a real pleasure for me to be able to welcome you, your family and other guests to the Palace of Westminster to convey to you this message, and to be the first to congratulate you on receiving Her Majesty's approval.

Responding to Mr Recorder

May I also welcome you, Mr Recorder, and pay tribute to your invaluable contributions to our justice system. As a prosecutor, you were renowned for your brilliant and scathing cross-examination. As a modernising judge, you have championed many of the key causes of the judiciary – mentoring junior colleagues and promoting diversity across the legal profession. I admire and appreciate your efforts in this, as I do your work as trustee of a prison charity focusing on offender rehabilitation. Wearing my less ceremonial hat as Justice Secretary, I thank you for everything you do to cut reoffending, cut crime and protect our society.

The historic role of the Lord Mayor

Turning to my Lord Mayor Elect, you too hold a most vital role – that of Under-Shepherd to the Under-Shepherd of the Bowman family flock. My delight that you are here is only faintly tinged with disappointment that you did not, on the way to Westminster, showcase your skills by driving sheep across London Bridge – a historic perk for freemen of the City of London. Not to worry, however – you will spend much of the coming year steeped in history and tradition as the 690th head of the oldest continuous democratic commune in the world.

Laws and democracy were first introduced to London by the Romans, who founded the city on a square mile of former marshland. The Corporation of London traces its origins to Saxon civic arrangements, when bell ringers would summon citizens to St Paul's Cross to debate and vote on pressing issues. In 1215, upon the sealing of Magna Carta, the then Mayor of London was one of only two designated guarantors charged with ensuring that the Crown did not renege on the deal to enshrine citizens' rights and uphold the rule of law.

More than 800 years later, it is my particular duty as Lord Chancellor to respect and uphold the Rule of Law, as well as defend the independence of the judiciary. I will look to you, My Lord Mayor Elect, to help promote London and the City as an enduring worldwide leader of financial and legal services whose reputation is founded on the Rule of Law. You will help strengthen economic ties with other nations, identify new business opportunities and provide reassurance that the UK remains the Number One destination for

foreign investment.

Pursuing post-Brexit opportunities

The City is the engine of Britain's financial and legal sectors, driving the economic wellbeing of the nation. In a little more detail, the UK had a trade surplus in the financial and insurance services sector of over £60 billion last year – overall, it contributed £124 billion to the UK economy. Of this, London accounts for just over half of the total gross value added – in the Square Mile alone, some 380,000 people walk into work every day. For every one job created in the City, three more are created in the regions. Legal services are crucial to the City – indeed, are so closely linked with finance activities as to be interwoven: our strong financial services beget strong legal services, and vice versa. It means that legal services swell the nation's coffers by around £25 billion pounds and contribute a trade surplus of just over £3 billion. These statistics tell an extraordinary story: that the body that you will lead, the City of London Corporation, is at once a local council and a global powerhouse. As we prepare to leave the European Union, it is ever more vital that we build upon its international success.

My Lord Mayor Elect, I bow to your undoubted expertise in building upon solid foundations. Somewhat unusually for a future audit partner at PwC who crunches FTSE100 balance sheets for breakfast, you read architecture at university. This explains why your heroes are not William Deloitte or John Pierpont Morgan, but Humphry Repton and Capability Brown. Since graduating, however, you have spent 32 years in accountancy. As such you are exceptionally well-placed to be a builder of a different kind – one who promotes the message of Global Britain, helping this country seek out – as it has throughout its history – abundant trading and business opportunities overseas.

Work on this is well underway. My colleague, Lord Keen, has just launched the government's 'Legal Services are GREAT' campaign in Singapore. This aims to promote English Law and UK legal services, including London as the go-to centre for dispute resolution for international litigants. Our capital city offers the highest standard of legal professionals with unrivalled expertise and experience, and verdicts that stand up to keen scrutiny, handed down by our independent and impartial judiciary.

It is important that our legal services operate from courts that are fully equipped to deliver 21st century justice. I am delighted that the City of London is to replace all its courts – barring the Old Bailey, Mr Recorder – with a high-tech 18-strong courts complex in the heart of legal London, specialising in fraud, economic and cyber-crime. Perfect proof – if any were needed – that the City not only moves with the times, but remains well ahead of them. The City leads the world in fintech. It is only right that it also leads the world in dispute resolution and legal redress when fintech is abused – crucial for maintaining public trust.

Mayoral Mission: the trust agenda

My Lord Mayor Elect, you want the issue of public trust to be a key element

of your Mayoralty – specifically, rebuilding relations between the City and the public following the financial crisis of 2008. It is clearly important that there is mutual trust between the public and businesses, and your programme will challenge City firms to connect with communities, operate responsibly and with integrity, and make a positive impact on society and the environment. This of course chimes with the best traditions of the City, stretching back centuries: as a local council, looking after the immediate needs of citizens; as a business hub, attracting the brightest and most innovative talents, and in general promoting knowledge, diversity and culture. Since medieval times, the great livery companies have been generous and enlightened patrons of charities and schools. I myself had the good fortune to attend Haberdashers' Aske's, founded in 1690 with a bequest from a wealthy Haberdasher, Robert Aske, to educate 'Twenty poore Boyes, who shall be freemen's Sonnes'.

At the end of your schooldays, My Lord Mayor Elect, you took a gap year. Some of your guests may not know that you sought to fund this year off by sketching buildings and selling the artwork – I admit I do not know how successful this money-making venture proved to be. No matter – what is of interest to us is not the revenues raised but your subject matter. Not just any buildings – these were some of the beautiful Wren churches dotted around the City between the Gherkins and Walkie-Talkies. This was familiar territory for you: your father, grandfather and great-grandfather all worked in the Square Mile, and it was perhaps your destiny to follow them. You remember as a child being whipped off to your father's office in London to watch the Lord Mayor's Show. That's now your show.

Conclusion

Your Mayoralty will promote all that is impressive about the City: the talent, knowledge, expertise, opportunities and energy. I am greatly looking forward to working with you. Let's get this show on the road.

[Press release: Opportunity for residents and business to find out more about plans to reduce flood risk in Otley](#)

Otley residents and businesses are being invited to come along and meet the team at a drop-in event on Tuesday 17 October.

Visitors to the drop in will have an opportunity to meet representatives from Leeds City Council, Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water and WSP (consultants

undertaking survey and investigation work). It will also be a chance to find out more about plans to reduce the risk of flooding in the historic market town and provide feedback, which the team hopes to use in the early stages of the programme to develop the Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme.

The drop in will be held at The Core Otley, Unit 11 Orchard Gate, Otley LS21 3NX, on Tuesday 17 October between 4pm and 7pm.

The town suffered flooding on three occasions between November and December 2015, which saw 74 properties affected. In the Autumn Statement 2016, Government announced £2 million to invest in a scheme to reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses.

The scheme is being led by Leeds City Council working closely with the Environment Agency. Leader of Leeds City Council Councillor Judith Blake said:

We are firmly committed to taking a whole catchment and citywide approach to flood prevention in Leeds, which is why the plans for the Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme are so important to help provide confidence and reassurance to our communities who currently live in areas of flood risk. We would encourage as many people as possible to attend the drop-in session to find out more and give us their views, as local people have a key role to play in helping us to get this right.

John Woods, flood risk management advisor at the Environment Agency said:

We're committed to keeping the people of Otley updated on progress around the development of a flood alleviation scheme for Otley. The drop-in event not only serves as a way for residents to meet the team, but also as a means for us to gather their feedback to help us develop the best possible scheme for the town.

Work to pull together data to better understand the potential paths of flood water as well as collating historic and recent flood information began earlier this year. The information from these investigations, carried out by consultants, WSP, will be used to update an existing digital model of the River Wharfe which can then help form potential options for a scheme.

The Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme is one of several schemes that is adopting a catchment-wide approach. This means the entire River Wharfe catchment area will be considered to help reduce flood risk. This approach looks at a combination of natural processes and engineered options to help slow the flow and catch water further up the catchment so that flood peaks are reduced further downstream.

Press release: Badsey Brook flood scheme open day

The open day will be held on Wednesday 25 October between 2pm and 6pm at:

West End Lane (access via site entrance)
Broadway

It will give visitors the opportunity to see the construction works in action and the progress made so far. Members of the Environment Agency project team will also be available to provide information and answer questions people may have.

Broadway, Childswickham and Murcot were severely flooded in 2007 following record-breaking rainfall across the area. The £4 million flood storage area in Broadway will be able to hold up to 135,000 cubic metres of water during times of flood and will only allow a set amount of water to flow downstream at times of intense and high rainfall. This will reduce flood risk along the Badsey Brook downstream of Broadway.

The scheme, which will reduce the risk of flooding to around 290 homes and businesses, is due to be completed in spring 2018.

Dan Wilkinson from the Environment Agency said:

This is a significant scheme for residents living in Broadway, Childswickham and Murcot who know only too well the devastating impact flooding can have. The open day will give them an opportunity to see the work in action and see for themselves how, once completed, the scheme will help reduce the risk of flooding.

Councillor Barrie Parmenter, Chairman for Broadway Parish Council, said:

Broadway Parish Council are delighted that the project is progressing well and which when completed, will improve the lives and alleviate the worries of many residents of Broadway and the surrounding area.

Press release: Statement by the British Ambassador to the UAE, Philip Parham

Foreign Office staff around the world work hard to support British people who need our help. You can talk to a member of the consular team 24/7 by calling the Foreign Office, or the local Embassy number. Our consular network helped more than 23,000 people last year as well as continuing to help those with long-running cases from previous years. I am proud of the contribution which our consular team in the UAE makes to this global effort.

More than 100,000 British people live in the UAE and another 1.5 million visit every year. Fortunately, most stays in the UAE are trouble-free. The nature of consular work means that our team become involved when something has gone wrong. These can be highly distressing cases. Our team is there to provide support to the individuals and their partners and families. This support can include issuing emergency travel documents, visiting British people in hospital or in prison, or providing advice when they have fallen victim to crime. For people in detention our staff are there to support them and take an interest in their welfare. In 2017 so far there have been 213 new detainee cases (in 2016 there were 281).

There are, however, limits to the support we can provide. We cannot interfere in the legal processes or prison systems of other countries (just as we would not allow other governments to interfere in ours). But we do make representations if we have good grounds to believe that, for example, the host country's own laws are not being properly followed, or a British person is being held in conditions which fall short of international standards. More information on what we can and cannot do can be found [here](#).

[Our travel advice for the UAE](#) explains that local laws and customs are very different to those in the UK and that there may be serious penalties for doing something which may not be illegal in the UK. Both our travel advice and our Embassy's many public awareness-raising campaigns cover some of the specific issues which may arise from differences in laws and customs.

We recommend that people make an effort before they travel to familiarise themselves with local laws and customs, and respect them while abroad. The Foreign Office doesn't promote any country as a holiday destination. We do publish travel advice on 225 countries or territories to help British people make better-informed decisions about their foreign travel. No foreign travel can be guaranteed safe, but our advice is one source of useful information to help people make well-informed decisions – and take responsibility for their choices – when they are travelling. But we understand that, regardless of how prepared we all are, British people can still find themselves in difficult or distressing situations, and we are ready to help on those occasions.

More detail on how we put together our travel advice is available [here](#).

Press release: Director scamming small businesses hit by large ban

Sarah Elizabeth White, also known as Sarah Regan, has been disqualified from acting as a director following an investigation by the Insolvency Service.

She was director of Manchester-based Harrison Black Associates Limited, which, together with the London branch Hayden Moss Associates Limited, promised small business owners that for a fee of up to £3,000 it would reduce their business rates.

Business owners were led to believe they were guaranteed a reduction in their rates or they would received a full refund. Following various complaints, the Insolvency Service opened an investigation into the company under powers set out within the Companies Act 1985.

Both companies were then wound up at Manchester District registry last year. A number of small business owners were left out of pocket by over £34,000.

Commenting on the disqualification, Cheryl Lambert, Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said:

Sarah White was purporting to offer a service she knew the company could not, and did not, provide. She took no steps to ensure that Harrison Black did what customers had paid for and what had been promised within a contract.

Taking action against her should serve as a warning to all directors that if they are abusing their position we will remove them from the marketplace.

The Secretary of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted an undertaking from Sarah Elizabeth White on 11 September 2017. The disqualification is from 2 October 2017.

Notes to editors

Sarah Elizabeth White (aka Sarah Regan) is of Audenshaw, Manchester and her date of birth is January 1985.

Harrison Black Associates Ltd (Company Registration No.08978150) was incorporated on 4 April 2014. Its registered office was 83 Ducie Street, Manchester, M1 2JQ, United Kingdom. It traded, at various times, from the registered office and 345 Chester Road, Manchester

Harrison Black Associates Ltd was subject to an investigation by Insolvency Service and, following an application to wind it up in the public interest, was placed into liquidation on 1 March 2016 (Manchester District Registry 3328 of 2015).

The Insolvency Service investigation established that:

- Misleading information was provided to customers regarding the potential benefits of the Company's services
- Customers were shown misleading documents in order to induce them to make payments
- Customers were wrongly led to believe they were guaranteed a reduction in their rates or they would received a full refund
- While informed customers payment was required to instruct a surveyor and 31 of the 33 customers made a payment and received no such visit
- There is no evidence of any rate reduction appeals have been made on behalf of customers or any refunds made

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

Contact Press Office

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: