

Chairman's Report to the Livery Committee
Wednesday 14th June 2017

Farewells: I would like to take this opportunity to bid farewell to departing Members of the Committee.

Firstly, Bill Fraser, who is no longer on the Court of Common Council and as a consequence is also no longer on our Committee. Bill has been a dedicated servant of this Committee and indeed the wider Livery for many years, serving on this Committee since 2008 including three years as Chairman. Bill's many contributions, including assisting in the process of the election of Sheriffs, will be sorely missed and we wish him well for the future.

This meeting also sees us bid farewell to long-serving Committee Members Rear Admiral Nick Harris and Paul Herbage, both of whom are now at the end of their second and final terms; as well as Philip Grant, whose first term on the Committee expires this month, and Colonel Hamon Massey, who is stepping down from the Committee. We thank each of them for their contributions over the years.

Welcomes: Having already welcomed Julia Sibley and David Barrett to the Committee at previous meetings, we also have a number of other "new starters" set to formally join us later this month (subject to confirmation by Common Hall). We look forward to welcoming Colonel Robert Murfin (Clerk to the Pattenmakers), Rob Abernethy (Clerk to the Mercers), Major General Andrew Kennett (Clerk to the Skinners) and Deputy Philip Woodhouse (Common Councilman and Past Master Grocer) to the Committee; as well as welcoming back Ian Seaton and David Cole-Adams for their second terms.

Committee Dinner: Between you receiving these papers and our meeting, I very much hope you will have all enjoyed this year's Livery Committee dinner at Cutlers' Hall. This year, we returned to the traditional approach of inviting around a third of Masters and their Clerks to ensure that each gets to attend at least once every three years. I would like to seek your thoughts and feedback as to whether or not you feel that this is the correct approach or if we should perhaps explore something different for next year.

Common Hall: As you'll be aware, one of the primary functions of this Committee is to ensure the smooth running of Common Hall. I hope to see you all on 26 June and, in continuation of the practice we introduced last year, would like to ask for any volunteers to help with the direction of Liverymen in the Great Hall. The presence of several Members of the Committee is helpful in ensuring that guests can find seats as expeditiously as possible, in addressing any concerns people might have and, importantly, is a useful way of ensuring the Committee plays a more visible role in proceedings.

Aldermanic Succession: You will, I hope, have all seen a letter circulated on behalf of the Court of Aldermen concerning their endorsement of their preferred members to go forward to the offices of Lord Mayor and Sheriff over the next two years - subject, as always, to election by the Livery at Common Hall. In 2017, they are endorsing Charles Bowman as Lord Mayor and Tim Hailes as Sheriff; for 2018, they are supporting Peter Estlin as Lord Mayor and Vincent Keaveny as Sheriff.

Non-Aldermanic Shrieval Succession: The suggestion has been made that some thought should be given to the management of this process – perhaps through the issuing of guidance to clerks, or the establishment of some sort of informal sounding panel – to ensure that there is good communication concerning prospective candidates. There is of course the risk of multiple strong candidates competing in a single year, rather than staggering their candidacies pragmatically; the recent changes to the requirement of the role could also perhaps be made clearer to those seeking election. I welcome your thoughts on this matter.

Livery Schools Link (LSL) Appointment: As highlighted at February's meeting, Paul Herbage currently represents this Committee as an ex-officio Director on the Board of Livery Schools Link. With his term on the Committee coming to an end this month, we will consequently need to identify a successor to take up the mantle. A separate item has been placed on the agenda for this and I would ask that any interested Member notify me please in advance of the meeting.

Livery Companies Skills Council: As you'll recall from our last meeting, one of the key issues for the Skills Council and indeed myself over the past few months has been the issue of apprenticeships and the Government's proposed Technical and Further Education Bill. I'm pleased to say that progress has been made and you'll note a fuller update from the Remembrancer on today's agenda; Philip Saunders, the Parliamentary Affairs Counsel who has been battling for our cause on this issue will also be in attendance at the meeting to provide an update and answer any queries.

General Advertising: Over recent weeks I have received approaches regarding either the possibility of advertising certain events or offerings to Livery Companies, or concerns about certain events which Liverymen feel have been misleadingly labelled as Livery activities.

I would like to reiterate that, whilst we can of course draw attention to charitable activities that may be of interest to the Livery (such as the Lord Mayor's Appeal), it is not appropriate for us to advertise on behalf of commercial organisations nor advocate on their behalf, and we will not alter our policy of refusing any such requests – clerks have quite enough on their hands without having to be bombarded with advertisements!

However, we are unfortunately not in a position to prevent others advertising to Livery Companies directly. I have received one complaint concerning a golf day, targeted at Livery Companies; as you will be aware, e-mail and postal addresses can of course be obtained quite easily by organisations and alas we simply cannot stop them writing directly to you to offer their services. Rest assured though that such items will never be advertised through this Committee and its Briefing newsletter.

**Richard Regan OBE, Deputy
Chairman
6th June 2017**