

Chairman's Report to the Livery Committee
Wednesday 10th February 2016

Thank you for re-electing me as your chairman at our last meeting in September, and thank you to Ian Seaton for continuing to serve as Deputy Chairman.

The winter programme of Briefings & Courses has been as busy as ever, and there have been the all day Wardens' Course in September, three early evening City Briefings, the Clerks' Briefing last month, and next week, the half day After Livery Dinner speaking Course. In arranging all of these, I have been grateful to my fellow speakers, to Claire Holdgate the administrator, and to those members of the Committee who have been able to attend, support and host.

In that context and as explained at my Communications Working Group (WG) report, I am very grateful to Victoria Russell who is now taking on the chairmanship of the WG, and hence responsibility for arranging this programme.

The matter of the government department BIS and apprenticeship legislation has become quite a major issue over recent months, and the chairman of the Livery Companies Skills Council makes reference to it in his report. The Remembrancer, in his role as the formal link with Parliament at Westminster, has been a great help in the difficult negotiations that have taken place (and continue), and I am grateful to him, to John Taylor, and many others in seeking to ensure that the livery's historic role in apprenticeship training does not become a victim of the law of unintended consequences. A representative from the Remembrancer's Department will be present at the meeting.

The usual turnover of Corporation staff would not normally merit mention in this report. However three recent high profile appointments will be of interest to Committee members:

Sophie Smethurst <Sophie.smethurst@cityoflondon.gov.uk> has been appointed the Senior Diary Manager at Mansion House, in succession to Lucy Crowe. She took up her appointment on 11th January. Previously she has been employed in international advertising and communications agencies. Her telephone number is 020 7397 9326 and she will be present at our Committee meeting.

Bob Roberts <bob.roberts@cityoflondon.gov.uk> is the [new Communications Director](#) at Guildhall. The previous PRO department has been reorganised within the Town Clerk's Department on the retirement of Tony Halmos. Claire Holdgate continues to administer the programme of Briefings & Courses.

[Ian Dyson](#) is the new Commissioner of the City of London Police, in succession to Adrian Leppard.

Regular readers of these reports will be aware of my strongly held view that communication is a key part of our activities. Whilst the success of the Livery Companies website www.liverycompanies.info and the much improved Livery Companies Database give cause for satisfaction, the reluctance of many clerks to email the bi-monthly *Livery Briefing* to their members remains a disappointment. However, a clear omission from our communication strategy has been the lack of use of social media. This I have now addressed, and maintain a steadily growing and more active Twitter account, which limits itself entirely to livery related tweets and news.

But aside from this, the number of email enquiries relating to livery matters (from masters, clerks and liverymen, as well as many others) continues unabated (virtually on a daily basis). My practice is to try and ensure that most answers are then posted at www.liverycompanies.info usually in the Clerks' Almanac for others to read. I commend it to you.

Thank you for your continued support.

Nigel R Pullman
Chairman

1st February 2016