

Shrieval Acceptance Speech to Common Hall on Friday the 24th of June

My Lord Mayor,

My fellow Liverymen,

It sounds like the beginning of a rather bad joke doesn't it... "An Irishman, a Scotsman and a Yorkshireman meet in Common Hall!"

In truth my friend and Sheriff Elect Alastair King and I both rather hope it is prescient of a period of enthusiastic cooperation and growth for The City - creating jobs and prosperity, especially in the financial and professional services sectors, and thereby enabling greater social mobility, inclusion, and equality of opportunity for all.

As you've heard, I was born on a farm in God's Own County – Yorkshire - to a father who at over 90 still jokes with his 3 sons – "Always remember...There are Yorkshiremen. There are people who aspire to be Yorkshiremen...and there are those with no ambition whatsoever!"

Yet, Ladies and Gentlemen, from the earliest days of my business career 'The City' has been my adopted home.

After studying finance and corporate strategy, I have been fortunate to spend most of my career, building valuable global brands for some of the world's largest and most admired companies. Why is that important?

Well, whilst it's well known that strongly branded organisations significantly outperform the market, few people realise that today more than half the equity value of listed companies in the major markets is accounted for by intangible assets, like their brand's reputation, rather than tangible ones. Globally, this equates to some \$ 75 trillion dollars!

More recently in my career, I was part of the team which floated the soft drinks company Britvic on the LSE, and I have since become an international business consultant, a portfolio non-executive director, and an advisor and investor in the corporate finance, communications, and manufacturing sectors.

It is this experience of growing valuable international brands - together with my knowledge of government communications, of trade and regulatory affairs, and of the charity sector - that I bring to the Civic Team in the task of promoting The City internationally.

My fellow Liverymen I love travelling to those 'Far Pavilions' Alastair mentioned. But despite having been to all 7 continents and well over 100 countries, 'The City' is the place to which I have always returned; and where I too have been actively involved in the Livery for over a quarter of a century - as a past Master Marketor, a Stationer, a Court Assistant of the World Trader and the Glaziers; as Chair of the 15 strong FSG of Livery Companies, and as a member of the Livery Committee for the last 6 years. I have a deep and abiding belief in the power of the Livery network to do good...to adapt to changing circumstances...and to make for a more resilient and diverse 'Destination City'.

As I said in my Election Address to you – we all know there is much to be done to rebuild The City's Brand in the post Brexit and post Covid world – now set against the backdrop and severe economic consequences of the unconscionable war in the Ukraine,...to build anew the reputation and relevance of the Livery amongst the current generation... and of course in these difficult times to renew our efforts to help those less fortunate... to increase inclusion... and build greater sustainability.

I must take this opportunity to thank my campaign team - especially its Chair, Sir Michael Bear, and my Agent Lars Andersen - and frankly, the quite overwhelming number of people from across the Livery and The City who signalled their early support for my candidature.

I am both honoured and humbled to accept the High Office of Sheriff for the ensuing year to which you, **My Fellow Liverymen**, have this day elected me, and I am really looking forward, accompanied by Marian a fellow Glazier, to working alongside Alastair and Corrinne in serving the Lord Mayor, the Livery, and this my adopted City to the very best of my ability.

In the words of one of 'our' ABBA songs, thank you for 'Taking a chance on me!'

My Lord Mayor

