

Court of Common Council
Thursday 7th September 2023

Thank you, Town Clerk.

A very warm – perhaps, unexpectedly warm – welcome back to Members, officers and all who are watching.

I hope you all had a refreshing summer break.

Since we last met, I had the chance to visit several great British cities.

Just before the summer recess, towards the end of July, I visited Leeds, accompanied by Alderman Goyal. There we met a number of financial and professional services firms and had successful roundtables with Fintech North and TheCityUK – underlining the strong business links between London and Leeds, which is one of the UK's strongest professional services centres.

I then visited Sheffield, accompanied by Aldern Goyal and Sheriff Marsden – who was very pleased to be visiting his home city, one of the greenest cities in the UK.

We attended the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire's Forfeit Feast, where we enjoyed meeting the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, the Mayor of South Yorkshire and other representatives.

In August, the Lady Mayoress and I attended the opening weekend of the Edinburgh Festival, at the kind invitation of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh.

We enjoyed the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and the opening concert of the Edinburgh International Festival, which was also attended by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh.

Last week, I had the honour of cutting a ribbon at St Bartholomew the Great Church to mark the opening of the Bartholomew Fair – which has proved to be a great City of London revival after a 168-year intermission.

As a cloth fair, Bartholomew Fair was the event which gave birth to the tradition of cutting a ribbon to declare an institution open.

It was also a fair where the Merchant Taylors' Company had a leading role, so I was very proud to continue the tradition.

Earlier this week, I spoke at the fortieth Cambridge International Symposium on Economic Crime, along with several other City of London representatives.

I emphasised the importance of tackling fraud for the health of our economy, and underlined the unique role and recognised expertise of the City of London Police as the national lead force for fighting fraud and economic crime.

The City of London has a busy September ahead.

Later today, I look forward to speaking alongside the Policy Chairman at the launch of the Vision For Economic Growth, a roadmap for the future of financial and professional services, which will be vital for the strength of the UK economy.

Next week I will attend the Rendez Vous de Septembre, the annual gathering in Monaco of the global insurance industry, where I will meet with the chief executives of some of the world's major insurers and reinsurers.

It will be the first time a Lord Mayor has participated in the Rendez Vous.

This reflects our renewed focus on the insurance sector as part of a new pilot project intended to promote the London Market internationally, especially its specialisms of cyber and climate.

After that, I will be travelling to Hong Kong and to mainland China, where I will be speaking at the Bund Summit on the role of sustainable finance in tackling climate change.

On 26th September, we will be celebrating the annual City Giving Day, raising money for the Lord Mayor's Appeal and our partner charities.

I invite everyone to get involved.

Finally, I would like to mention that this will be the last Court of Common Council where I will be supported by Sheriffs Alastair King and Andrew Marsden.

My warmest thanks to them both, and to Corinne and Marian, for their support, hard work, and friendship over the last year.

Thank you.