

News story: Paul Lee extended as Chair of the Horserace Betting Levy Board

Paul was initially appointed Chairman of the Horserace Betting Levy Board with effect from 1 October 2009. His appointment was renewed for a further four years from 1 October 2013, and again in September 2017 for a further 18 months.

Paul spent his life as a commercial solicitor practising since qualification with the firm that is now Addleshaw Goddard, where he was the Senior Partner until 2010, specialising in commercial and corporate work. He read Law at Clare College Cambridge. He joined the firm of Addleshaw Sons and Latham on qualification, became Managing Partner in 1991, Senior Partner of Addleshaw Booth & Co in 1997 and Senior Partner of Addleshaw Goddard in 2003.

Alongside his professional life, he has held a variety of other posts, including as a member of the Board of the CBI and Chairman of the North West Business Leadership Team.

He is currently Chairman of Opera North and was, for 17 years, Chairman of the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester. He is also Chairman of the Feoffees (Trustees) of Chetham's School of Music, and a member of the Board of Governors of the University of Manchester.

He was High Sheriff of Greater Manchester in 2014-15, and is currently a Trustee of Access Sport which is the principal charity he chose to support during his year as High Sheriff.

This role is remunerated at a rate of £63,020 per annum. This extension has been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#). The process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Government's Governance Code requires that any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years is declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election. Paul has made no such declarations.

News story: Hemant Patel extended as Trustee and Interim Chair of the Royal Armouries

Hemant Patel was born and educated in London before graduating from the

University of Manchester having studied Physics with Astrophysics. He then moved into industry to train as a Chartered Management Accountant.

He has worked at various multi-national companies including Mars Inc and SC Johnson in financial, commercial and marketing roles before moving with his family to Yorkshire to join Asda in 2003. At Asda, Hemant carried out various roles in finance including Commercial Finance Director and Retail Finance Director as well as running Asda's own label business and leading business reinvention as Director of Strategy. Hemant then moved on to be Director of Online at the financial service provider, Provident Financial plc, with responsibility for their online loans businesses. He is now Finance Director of the Pub Co at Greene King plc, leading the finance function for the business's 1,700 managed pubs.

Until 2017, Hemant was Chairman of Interplay Theatre, a Leeds based company using the arts to work with children in special schools nationally and socially excluded children locally. He was given the Arts and Business Individual of the Year award in 2007 for his work with this charity.

Hemant is lead non-executive director and Chairman of the Royal Armouries Trading and Enterprises Ltd Board as well as the Royal Armouries Audit and Finance and Capital Development Committees. He became a Trustee of the Royal Armouries in July 2010.

This role is not remunerated. This extension has been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#). The process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Government's Governance Code requires that any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years is declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election. Hemant has made no such declarations.

[News story: Fireman Leaves Dstl After 40 Years](#)

After more than 40 years in the emergency services, "Taff" Jones has retired from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) fire service at Porton Down.

Originally from North Wales, Taff joined what was then the Chemical Defence Establishment in 1978.

All we had in those days was two Bedford trucks, a bowser and a fire pump. And the fire crews also doubled as the ambulance drivers.

Taff has seen huge changes at Porton Down over the four decades. “When I arrived we lived on site and the kids went to school here too. It was very much a community, even with its own garden allotments. Now there are thousands more people and many of the old buildings have been replaced. We used to operate out of some old workshops, now we have a purpose built fire station.

The kit we have got now is incredible. Chemical detection suits, HazMat [hazardous materials] suits, cutting gear – it’s a world apart from the hammers and crowbars we used to have.

Part of those changes involved the fire service being contracted out to facilities management providers, and the service is now run by Serco. “But I’ve always considered myself a site man,” added Taff.

He’ll be kept busy with children and grandchildren, and is also looking forward to building up his occasional painting and decorating jobs into a business.

I’ll miss the camaraderie and being part of a team,” said Taff, who retires as Watch Manager at the end of March. “I can truly say it has been a pleasure to be a part of the Porton Down site. I would like to wish everyone all the best in the future as it continues to grow in size and capabilities.

Fire Station Manager Russ Neal said:

Taff has been one my senior leaders since my arrival on site in 2008. His knowledge, skills and attitude have been exemplary and he will be sorely missed by all at Porton Down.

[News story: Bus revolution to put power in passengers’ hands](#)

Rural bus services could be overhauled thanks to a new digital system pioneered by the government.

Buses Minister Nusrat Ghani has today (26 March 2019) announced £4 million for a platform which will provide location information about services – giving greater certainty to passengers about when their bus will arrive.

The platform enables app developers to use information from GPS trackers, which are already fitted to 97% of buses. This will provide a service which is available in some major cities. It will give people in other areas across the country, including rural and remote areas, the ability to plan journeys more easily.

Research shows that one of the barriers to young people using buses is not having information readily available on their phones but with fares and times at their fingertips, this will cut the uncertainty out of bus travel.

The drive towards improved and open data for bus services across England is the first step in cutting the barriers to introducing mobility-as-a-service, one-stop-ticketing products and applications, in a bid to increase usage.

Buses Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

People expect to turn up to a bus stop knowing when their next service will arrive, particularly in rural areas.

We're investing in systems to make it easier for people to find out where their bus is, how much it will cost and how long it will take.

This will save the time people waste waiting, give more people certainty over services and help increase passenger numbers.

It could help revolutionise bus travel and move us one step closer to [mobility-as-a-service](#) and on-demand public transport systems.

On-demand bus travel is already available in Liverpool, run by ArrivaClick. Routes are not fixed, but are determined by where passengers want to go within a corridor – in Liverpool, 6 luxury 15-seat buses take people in an area between the city centre and John Lennon Airport. These services are driven by high quality data and computer-based algorithms.

The funding announced today builds on the recently published [Future of mobility urban strategy](#), which looks at how people will use transport in the future and how new technology can make journeys better.

The government is also investing in ways to speed up bus journeys. As part of the [first tranche of the £2.5 billion Transforming Cities Fund, Derby and Nottingham, the North East, Portsmouth and Southampton](#) will see the deployment of bus priority traffic lights to speed up trips to the city centres.

This will help unlock productivity and help the economies in these areas to thrive.

The [bus open data regulations are being implemented as part of the Bus Services Act](#), which gives local authorities additional powers to partner with bus operators and shape services in their areas to deliver improvements to

passengers.

[Press release: Foreign Secretary call with Cuban Foreign Minister](#)

Foreign Secretary call with Cuban Foreign Minister – GOV.UK

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt spoke to the Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez.



Following the call on 25 March, a Foreign Office spokesman said:

The Foreign Secretary spoke to Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez on the first full day of the Royal visit to Cuba by Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall. The Foreign Secretary said this visit was a flagship moment in our longstanding policy of positive engagement with Cuba and is testament to how far our bilateral relationship has developed. He said he hoped this provides opportunities to increase our cooperation in areas of mutual interest that UK and Cuba already enjoy.

The Foreign Secretary also discussed the situation in Venezuela where so many people are suffering at the hands of the Maduro regime. He expressed the UK's deep concern on Cuba's support for Maduro and called on Cuba to play a more constructive role in resolving the Venezuelan crisis.

The call ended with the Foreign Secretary thanking Foreign Minister Rodríguez for hosting Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall and looked forward to strengthening the relationship between the UK and Cuba. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon,

who has joined the Royal visit to Cuba, will continue discussions on our bilateral cooperation, human rights and Venezuela with senior representatives of the Cuban government.

Further information

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Thank you for your feedback