

Press release: Will the Solicitor General find Goldilocks guilty?

The Solicitor General Robert Buckland QC MP will join BPP University Law School Students to help school children in Wimbledon today to decide whether Goldilocks is guilty of burgling the Three Bears.

Pupils at Bishop Gilpin primary school will take part in a mock trial of Goldilocks where they will decide whether Goldilocks should be found guilty and sent to prison for burglary and criminal damage.

The Streetlaw session, designed by BPP's Pro Bono Centre, is aligned to the National Curriculum and explains the criminal trial process through the well-known fairytale, helping children learn about the legal system, courts and the people who appear in them in an interesting and enjoyable way.

The Solicitor General said:

Teaching children about their legal rights and responsibilities means they have a greater understanding of what they can and can't do.

Public legal education helps raise confidence and skills and provides a legal foundation that stays with people throughout their lives.

These sessions not only have a practical and a beneficial effect upon our legal system but on young people's lives. I'm looking forward to an enjoyable session.

Streetlaw is a national, public legal education project that is delivered by law students in universities across England and Wales. Students deliver interactive and engaging legal workshops that aim to educate community groups and school children about the law as it relates to them.

Victoria Speed, Director of Pro Bono at BPP University Law School, said:

Streetlaw is one of around thirty BPP pro bono projects delivering free legal advice and legal education across the country.

At BPP, we educate the next generation of lawyers. Our projects aim to improve access to justice and legal awareness in our communities.

At the same time, engaging in pro bono work really helps prepare students for practice as the real life experiences are invaluable.

“We hope to embed a sense of social responsibility in our students that stays with them throughout their careers.”

The Solicitor General will also visit the City of London University which has an extensive pro bono programme. He will meet law students who have been giving free legal advice – with guidance from qualified lawyers – to members of the public including victims of domestic violence

As part of the National Centre for Domestic Violence programme students are given full training to interview the clients over the phone and then fill in the necessary forms on line that would allow injunctions to be issued.

The Solicitor will also meet students taking part in the Centre for Criminal Appeals project which involves them reviewing miscarriage of justice cases and helping prepare them for submission to the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

[Press release: Swifter justice for London fare dodgers](#)

The new paperless process, in operation at Lavender Hill Magistrates’ Court, means thousands of offenders caught dodging fares or using fraudulent tickets can now be punished more swiftly and effectively.

The system has been developed by HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) in partnership with Transport for London (TfL). It means TfL no longer have to manually process and physically deliver case papers to the court. Instead, prosecution evidence is now electronically transferred directly to the court. These cases are then considered by a magistrate and legal advisor on a laptop – freeing up court time to focus on more serious crimes.

Under the new system, Transport for London can prosecute some 18,000 commuter crimes a year in the capital more quickly and efficiently.

Justice Minister Dominic Raab said:

Using smart technology to punish fare dodgers swiftly and effectively is just one example of how our courts’ reform programme will strengthen the justice system.

We are investing £1billion to digitise the justice system – making it more accessible for all citizens, more sensitive for witnesses, and delivering better value for taxpayers’ money.

Siwan Hayward, TfL’s Head of Transport Policing, said:

We use the courts to tackle the minority of people who purposefully avoid paying their fares, licensed drivers and private hire operators who break the law, and companies who obstruct the pavements and streets.

That's why we have worked with HMCTS to streamline what has historically been a labour intensive, paper heavy process. The real-time aspect of the system results in court notices being issued within weeks of an offence and prosecutions are concluded sooner so individuals and businesses receive a faster resolution.

The new system enables our Investigations and Prosecutions team more time to target illegal behaviour and bring those who break the law to justice.

The system has already:

- processed around 4,200 cases since April 2017 and returned 3,000 sentences
- removed the need for documents to be physically transported by staff between TfL and the court
- allowed results of cases to be obtained by TfL immediately
- made enforcement faster.

Future developments will include speeding up the process for those guilty pleas which can be fast tracked, and eventually for an online system to replace the paper based system, further improving response times. Plans are also in place to offer the system to other large public service organisations who prosecute thousands of cases a year where the potential benefits would then be magnified.

Note to editors:

Evidence shows offering people the chance to plead online in these kinds of cases actually means more respond than when we ask for pleas on paper. The process will mostly replace letters (that don't work very well), and court hearings where the person doesn't turn up, not physical court appearances.

[Press release: Too good to be true...it usually is. Directors given 15 year bans](#)

Robert Adolf Mathilde Stitzinger and Omar Babbar Amighetti were each disqualified as directors for 15 years on 16 August 2017 for their part in a

bank transaction scam involving Miami International Bank Ltd, a UK incorporated company.

The directors persuaded a US investor to pay €200,000 into a bank account held in Liechtenstein on the promise that the investment would yield a promised return of €10million within 15 days of payment.

The investor paid €200,000 into the Liechtenstein bank account in the name of Mr Stitzinger on 15 May 2014. The funds were never returned to the investor and no explanation was provided as to what happened.

A similar scam was operated in New Zealand also with the name "Miami International Bank Limited". This scam attracted the attention of the FBI in the United States who issued warnings about that company on its website. A previous company director of the UK company, was shown as "president" of the New Zealand company.

A winding up order was made against Miami International Bank Ltd on 16 December 2015 upon the petition of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy following an investigation by the Insolvency Service. Anthony Hannon, Official Receiver of Public Interest Unit (South) was appointed as liquidator.

Anthony Hannon, Official Receiver in the Public Interest Unit, said:

The Insolvency Service will look closely at any evidence of misconduct and take appropriate action where others have suffered as a result of directors actions, as has happened in this case.

Miami International Bank Ltd was incorporated on 2 June 2009 (CRN: 06922097) and remained a dormant company.

The Disqualification Order was pronounced by Chief Registrar Briggs on 16 August 2017, with the Deputy Official Receiver appearing on behalf of the Secretary of State. The defendants were not present or represented.

Mr Stitzinger and Mr Amighetti were appointed as directors of Miami International Bank Ltd on 22 July 2013.

Mr Robert Adolf Mathilde Stitzinger is of the Netherlands and his date of birth is August 1968.

Mr Omar Babbar Amighetti is of Costa Rica and his date of birth is February 1958.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company

- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies.

The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[News story: Over 160 firms are now signed up to the Women in Finance Charter](#)

A further 26 companies have signed up to the [Women in Finance Charter](#), including the Bank of England, Deloitte, and Tesco Bank, increasing the number of employees covered by [the Charter](#) to over 600,000. To coincide with

the launch, and in collaboration with HM Treasury, Virgin Money has also created the Women in Finance app to support companies who want to sign [the Charter](#) and take action to improve gender balance within their organisation.

HM Treasury's [Women in Finance Charter](#) asks financial firms to commit to four industry actions to prepare their female talent for leadership positions. Over 600,000 employees in the UK – over half of those employed in financial services – are now covered by the plan, an increase of over 43,000 since July this year.

Since [the Charter](#) launched, 120 financial services firms have committed to have at least 30% women in senior roles by 2021 and of those, 40 firms have committed to a 50/50 gender split in senior roles by 2021.

Today's (10 November 2017) new signatories will announce their targets in February 2018.

Among the new signatories to [the Charter](#) are the Payment Systems Regulator, RSA Group, Allianz Insurance, UK Finance, the Association for Financial Markets in Europe, Old Mutual Wealth and Funding Circle.

The Women in Finance app which is also announced today, will feature video case studies, research and practical tools to support companies who want to act on the gender balance within their organisation.

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Stephen Barclay, said:

This is another excellent group of signatories to the Women in Finance Charter. Their actions, alongside those of the other signatories, have the potential to make the UK's pre-eminent financial services sector more representative and more inclusive. I'm keen to see even more firms follow their example and make a positive, public commitment to improve gender balance in our financial services.

Jayne-Anne Gadhia, CEO of Virgin Money and the government's Women in Finance Champion said:

I'm delighted to see that 162 companies have now signed up to the Women in Finance Charter. Improving the gender balance of the financial services sector will undoubtedly improve productivity, profitability and outcomes for customers.

There are a range of issues organisations must address to develop fully inclusive workplaces. Through a recent YouGov survey we asked managers in Financial Services how greater equality in Financial Services could be achieved and they identified ten positive actions to help create the right culture.

To drive change, the Women in Finance company signatories have

collaborated to share best practice on these ten positive actions, which are now freely available through the 'Women in Finance App' which is launched today. I believe this innovation will help drive improved gender balance throughout the Financial Services industry.

Stephen Jones, Chief Executive of UK Finance, said:

The Women in Finance Charter is an important part of the initiatives and support across the financial services industry for the advancement of women in senior management positions. UK Finance is proud to commit to the Charter and we have set ourselves the target of achieving 40 per cent female representation within senior management over three years, and aspire to achieve gender parity over the medium term.

Press release: New Secretary of State for International Development

Prime Minister Theresa May has appointed the Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt as International Development Secretary.

Secretary of State for International Development, Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt, said:

I am honoured to have been appointed International Development Secretary by the Prime Minister.

I look forward to working with the fantastic and dedicated DFID team to build a safer, healthier world for us all and giving the British people every reason to feel pride in what we do.

ENDS

General media queries

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