

Directors of Scunthorpe headstone company banned

Paul Richard Hubbard, 60, and Susan Ann Hubbard, 62, have been disqualified as directors for eight and six years respectively, after taking deposits in excess of £30,000 from customers despite knowing their business was insolvent.

The couple were directors of Scunthorpe-based Barningham Memorials Limited, which produced headstones and other memorial items. The company had traded since 2003 but went into liquidation in March 2020.

However, the company was in fact insolvent from August 2019, yet continued to take payments and deposits from would-be customers despite knowing it would not be able to provide the finished products. In total, the company took over £30,000 from 41 customers during this period.

The company had previously been hit by a five-year ban by North East Lincolnshire Council in 2015 for a failure to adhere to local regulations. From this point on it was forced to rely on subcontractors to install memorials.

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted disqualification undertakings from both directors, after they did not dispute that they had been responsible for the company continuing to take money from customers while it was insolvent. Paul Hubbard has been banned for eight years, and Susan Hubbard banned for six years, both effective from 3 August 2022.

The disqualification undertakings prevent them from directly, or indirectly, becoming involved in the promotion, formation or management of a company, without the permission of the court.

Rob Clarke, Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service said:

Any business in financial difficulty should be aware that its primary duty is to its creditors, and ensuring that their losses are minimised.

In continuing to accept pre-payments for memorials which they had no reasonable prospect of supplying, Paul and Susan Hubbard have caused additional pain to grieving families over and above the purely financial loss.

Notes to editors

Paul Richard Hubbard and Susan Ann Hubbard currently reside in Scotland. Their dates of birth are July 1962 and July 1960 respectively.

Barningham Memorials Ltd – company registration number 04713249.

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

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

[Information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct](#).

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[Government to set up strategic futures panel to support growth and lead Liverpool to bright future](#)

- Greg Clark 'minded to' take further action after commissioners' report highlights continued problems
- New measures include appointing a Finance Commissioner
- Government to set up Liverpool Strategic Futures Advisory Panel chaired by metro Mayor Steve Rotheram, to work alongside the commissioners and help develop plan for revival

Levelling Up Secretary Greg Clark has today (19 August 2022) announced he will set up a strategic advisory panel to develop a long-term plan to guide Liverpool City Council out of the current government intervention and help shape the future of the city, alongside confirming he is "minded to" expand the intervention in the council, in response to the [latest report from commissioners](#).

The Liverpool Strategic Futures Advisory Panel will work closely with the City Mayor Joanne Anderson and her Cabinet, and also with the commissioners, to help the council make the right decisions and to develop a plan to give long term confidence in the future of the city, beyond the current temporary intervention. The panel will have a particular focus on driving growth in skills, jobs and opportunities for the city.

The Panel will be chaired by Steve Rotheram, metro Mayor of Liverpool City Region. He will be joined by two of the most experienced people in city leadership, Sir Howard Bernstein, Chief Executive of the City of Manchester from 1999 to 2017, and Baroness Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council from 2015 to 2021. The Panel will be asked to nominate an experienced

business leader to join them.

Using their expertise and knowledge, the Panel will work closely with Mayor Joanne Anderson and her Cabinet, members, and wider partners, as well as with the commissioners to support the council to make the right decisions and employ its resources to bring long-term confidence and meet the ambitions of the people of Liverpool.

This further step comes after the report on the council's progress revealed serious shortcomings, particularly around financial management and senior leadership. It also criticised the slow progress made in driving improvement measures that were highlighted in the commissioners' second report.

Four commissioners were sent into Liverpool City Council in June 2021 to oversee the Council's highways, property and regeneration functions. They submitted a second report into the council's progress on 10 June 2022.

Following the report, in addition to setting up the new Strategic Futures Panel, the Secretary of State is announcing that he is minded to appoint a commissioner to oversee the authority's financial management and to transfer functions associated with governance and financial decision-making to the commissioners together with powers regarding recruitment to improve the running of the organisation.

Levelling Up Secretary Greg Clark said:

I am determined to help do everything I can to help Liverpool come out of the current intervention stronger and able to achieve its ambitions.

The commissioners' report shows that there are still serious shortcomings that need to be sorted out, especially in financial management. But I want this to be a turning point at which the City of Liverpool can see a bright future that lives up to the power this great city embodies.

So following talks I had in person in Liverpool with Mayor Joanne Anderson and Mayor Steve Rotheram in recent weeks, I am appointing a new panel, chaired by that same Mayor Rotheram and supported by some of the wisest, and most experienced people in city leadership, to lead this transition from current interventions to a successful future.

Lead Commissioner Mike Cunningham QPM CBE said:

Our report outlines the challenges the council has faced over the past year in their improvement journey, and highlights some of the

areas that need urgent improvement. We welcome the Secretary of State's decision to expand the directions, and the creation of the Strategic Futures Panel. We have confidence that the council can now address these challenges.

Liverpool City Council and other interested parties will have until 2 September to provide representations on these proposed intervention measures.

On 10 June 2021, the government intervened in Liverpool City Council, appointing four commissioners to oversee the councils' highways, property and regeneration functions of the council at the request of the former Secretary of State.

They are:

- Mike Cunningham QPM CBE (Lead Commissioner) – Mike has been involved in policing for more than 30 years, most recently as Chief Executive of the College of Policing from 2018 – 2020, the standards setting body for policing in England and Wales. Formerly one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, inspecting forces in the north of England and Northern Ireland, and the national lead inspector for the development and implementation of inspections into police efficiency, legitimacy and leadership, and Chief Constable of Staffordshire Police.
- Joanna Killian (Local Government Improvement Commissioner) – Joanna has more than 30 years of experience in the public sector delivering transformational change and service improvement. Since March 2018 she has been Chief Executive of Surrey County Council. Prior to this Joanna worked at KPMG and was also Chief Executive of Essex County Council for 9 years.
- Neil Gibson (Highways Commissioner) – Neil is the former Executive Director of Transport Economy and Environment for Buckinghamshire County Council, where he also acted for a time as Interim Chief Executive. Neil is also a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation and former President of the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport.
- Deborah McLaughlin (Regeneration Commissioner) – Deborah has extensive experience working in Regeneration and Housing for over 30 years across public and private sectors, including as Director of Housing at Manchester City Council, regional director for the North West at Homes England and Director of Capita's real estate business. Deborah has also previously worked at the Audit Commission as a Best Value Inspector and auditor.

The Liverpool Strategic Futures Advisory Panel

On 19 August, Levelling Up Secretary Greg Clark announced the creation of the Liverpool Strategic Futures Advisory Panel. The Panel will work closely with Mayor Joanne Anderson, her Cabinet, members, and Liverpool City Council's commissioners.

The members of the panel are as follows:

- Mayor Steve Rotheram (Chair) – Mayor Rotheram has been the metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region since May 2017. He will convene and chair this panel as part of his role as Mayor.
- Sir Howard Bernstein – Sir Howard was Chief Executive of Manchester City Council from 1999 to 2017 and is synonymous with success in regeneration, business investment and negotiations on devolved powers.
- Baroness Judith Blake CBE – Baroness Blake was Leader of Leeds City Council from 2015 to 2021 and has experience of leading a major city with a good record of attracting new investment

New data shows small businesses received £21.3 billion in COVID-19 local authority business support grants

- Government figures show £21.3 billion allocated to micro, small, and medium sized businesses in England through COVID-19 business grants scheme
- new data shows grants supported businesses in many sectors of the economy, including accommodation and food services, wholesale and retail, and arts, entertainment and recreation

Smaller businesses across the whole of England received £21.3 billion through the government's COVID-19 Local Authority Business Support Grants scheme, a new report has shown.

Micro, small, and medium sized firms across different business sectors benefited from the funds available under the scheme, which was created to support businesses during and to recover from the impact of the global

pandemic.

[The new data](#) – which includes a sector breakdown for the first time – shows over one-third of all available funding was allocated to the accommodation and food services sector, a part of the economy hit hardest by the pandemic.

The grant scheme was created by the UK government and administered by local authorities, with all regions in England found to have allocated most of their total available funds to businesses in need.

Data shows the accommodation and food services sector received the most funding. Businesses in this sector have also seen significant support from the government’s Hospitality Strategy, published in July 2021.

Firms operating in wholesale retail, arts and entertainment, recreation, and other services industries were also among the different business sectors to receive substantial help under the scheme. A full breakdown of allocations is below.

Sector	Percentage of funds	Value of funds
Accommodation and Food Services	36%	£8.2 bn
Other Services*	19%	£4.3 bn
Wholesale and Retail Trade	16%	£3.5 bn
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	14%	£3.2 bn
Transportation and Storage	10%	£2.2 bn
Manufacturing	1%	£0.2 bn
All other sectors	4%	£0.9 bn

*Other Services includes the activities of membership organisations, the repair of personal and household goods and a variety of personal service activities not covered elsewhere in classifications.

Small businesses and others have also been supported through initiatives including the government’s Recovery Loan Scheme (RLS), which has backed almost 19,000 firms with average support of £202,000 each, as well as the increase in Employment Allowance, slashing of fuel duty, and the introduction of business rates relief for high street businesses.

The government remains committed to supporting small businesses, and firms of all sizes, as they recover from the impact of COVID-19 and prepare themselves for a bright, prosperous, and innovative future.

[A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Road](#)

Improvement scheme development consent decision announced

The application involves the dualling of the A428 between A1/A421 Black Cat Junction and A428/A1198 Caxton Gibbet Junction to high quality dual carriageway. Construction will include 19km of new Dual Carriageway, and Grade separated junctions.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by National Highways on 26 February 2021 and accepted for Examination on 23 March 2021.

Following an Examination during which the public, Statutory Consultees and Interested Parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, recommendations were made to the Secretary of State on 18 May 2022.

This is the 116th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and 43rd transport application to have been examined by The Planning Inspectorate within the timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

"The Planning Inspectorate has now examined more than 100 nationally significant infrastructure projects since the Planning Act 2008 process was introduced, ensuring local communities have had the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them.

The Planning Inspectorate is committed to giving local communities the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them. Local people, the local authority and other interested parties were able to participate in the six-month long examination.

The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views and the evidence gathered during the Examination before making its recommendation."

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation are publicly available on the project pages of the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#).

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Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: <Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk >

Notes to editors:

The [Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.

Self-driving revolution to boost economy and improve road safety

- government unveils plan to rollout self-driving vehicles on UK roads, sparking a transport revolution to improve road safety and better connect communities
- estimated 38,000 new jobs could be created in the UK from predicted £42 billion industry
- backed by £100 million to support industry investment and fund research on safety developments

UK roads could see self-driving vehicles rolled out by 2025 thanks to new government plans – backed by £100 million – which prioritise safety through new laws and create thousands of new jobs in the industry.

Some vehicles, including cars, coaches and lorries, with self-driving features could be operating on motorways in the next year, and today's (19 August 2022) plans set out new legislation which will allow for the safe wider rollout of self-driving vehicles by 2025. This enables the UK to take full advantage of the emerging market of self-driving vehicles – which could create up to 38,000 jobs and could be worth an estimated £42 billion.

The government's vision for self-driving vehicles is backed by a total of £100 million, with £34 million confirmed today for research to support safety developments and inform more detailed legislation. This could include researching the performance of self-driving cars in poor weather conditions and how they interact with pedestrians, other vehicles, and cyclists.

The government is also today confirming £20 million, as part of the overall £100 million, to help kick-start commercial self-driving services and enable businesses to grow and create jobs in the UK, following an existing £40 million investment. Successful projects could help see, for example, groceries delivered to customers by self-driving vehicles, or shuttle pods assisting passengers when moving through airports. £6 million will also be used for further market research and to support commercialisation of the technology.

Self-driving vehicles could revolutionise public transport and passenger travel, especially for those who don't drive, better connect rural communities and reduce road collisions caused by human error. Further in the future, they could, for example, provide tailored on-demand links from rural

towns and villages to existing public transport options nearby. They could also provide more direct and timely services that enable people to better access vital services such as schools and medical appointments.

Vehicles that can drive themselves on motorways could be available to purchase within the next year, which users would need a valid driving licence for, so they can drive on other roads. Other self-driving vehicles, for example used for public transport or delivery, expected on the roads by 2025, would not need anyone onboard with a driving licence because they would be able to drive themselves for the whole journey.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

The benefits of self-driving vehicles have the potential to be huge. Not only can they improve people's access to education and other vital services, but the industry itself can create tens of thousands of job opportunities throughout the country.

Most importantly, they're expected to make our roads safer by reducing the dangers of driver error in road collisions.

We want the UK to be at the forefront of developing and using this fantastic technology, and that is why we are investing millions in vital research into safety and setting the legislation to ensure we gain the full benefits that this technology promises.

The government is today consulting on a 'safety ambition' for self-driving vehicles to be as safe as a competent and careful human driver. This ambition would inform standards that vehicles need to meet to be allowed to 'self-drive' on the roads, and organisations, such as manufacturers, could face sanctions if standards are not met.

The new laws for the safe rollout of self-driving vehicles by 2025 will be brought forward when parliamentary time allows.

The legislation will build on existing laws, and state that manufacturers are responsible for the vehicle's actions when self-driving, meaning a human driver would not be liable for incidents related to driving while the vehicle is in control of driving.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

Self-driving vehicles have the potential to revolutionise people's lives, particularly by helping those who have mobility issues or rely on public transport to access the jobs, local shops and vital services we all depend on.

This funding will help unlock the incredible potential of this industry, attracting investment, developing the UK's growing self-driving vehicle supply chain, and supporting high-skill jobs as

these new means of transport are rolled out.

AA president, Edmund King, said:

The automotive world is changing rapidly and so the government is right to embrace the positive changes offered by this new technology and back it by funding research and putting forward legislation. Assisted driving systems, for example, autonomous emergency braking and adaptive cruise control, are already helping millions of drivers stay safe on the roads.

It is still quite a big leap from assisted driving, where the driver is still in control, to self-driving, where the car takes control. It is important that the government does study how these vehicles would interact with other road users on different roads and changing weather conditions. However the ultimate prize, in terms of saving thousands of lives and improving the mobility of the elderly and the less mobile, is well worth pursuing.

Today also sees the publication of the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation's (CDEI) Responsible Innovation in Self-Driving Vehicles report, which sets out proposals for a trustworthy approach to the regulation and governance of self-driving vehicles.