



# City Insider: Mark Boleat's Brexit spat 'just internal politics'

Edited by Harriet Agnew

May 29 2015



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Mark Boleat, chairman of the policy and resources committee at the City of London Corporation

## **City of London Corp: Boleat's Brexit spat**

With an EU referendum now on the cards, the gloves are starting to come off — across and within organisations. A spat has broken out at the [City of London Corp](#), the municipal authority responsible for London's financial district. Alex Deane, who sits on its policy and resources committee, has taken issue with committee chairman Mark Boleat, who dismissed the [EU debate](#) as one that exists solely within the Conservative party. He told the Australian Financial Review that “it is not a debate one hears anywhere else.” In an open letter Mr Deane says the committee chairman should not claim to speak for all of the corporation, which is packed with

eurosceptics. Mr Deane, himself a eurosceptic, highlights a raft of non-Conservatives who are in favour of Brexit (British exit from the EU): notably former Labour chancellor Denis Healey. Mr Boleat dismisses the incident as “just a bit of internal politics.” Expect more of these squabbles in the months to come.

### **Palace of Westminster: peers poised for move**

The Palace of Westminster is soon to be invaded by builders for a major renovation, leaving the little question of where to accommodate its legislators during the five-year works. The Queen Elizabeth II conference centre, one of London’s ugliest buildings, has already been touted as possible digs for the House of Commons. But what about the [Lords](#)? City Insider hears that several peers have set their sights on the splendid Banqueting House in Whitehall — one of London’s historic Royal palaces. Unlike the utilitarian QEII centre, this certainly has the necessary pomp. King Charles I commissioned 17th century Flemish artist Sir Peter Paul Rubens to paint its world-renowned ceiling canvasses. Sadly, the king’s political judgment did not match his artistic eye. It was also from the Banqueting House that he was led to his execution in 1649, an event that triggered the, temporary, abolition of the Lords. With the house of peers likely to be a thorn in the side of the Conservative government over the next year or so, it’s a reminder of the grim penalties facing those who rile the Commons.

### **Civilised Bank: lenders on oath**

The aptly named [Civilised Bank](#) wants to lead a charge to change banks’ culture. This week it became the first lender to

swear a new “bankers’ oath”. This commits employees to act responsibly and “have the best interests of the customer in mind” — cue images of a Boy Scout pledging allegiance to the God and the Queen. It remains to be seen whether reading a few words off a sheet of paper, or even from memory, can herald a cultural shift. “I will confront profligacy and impropriety wherever I encounter it, for the conduct of bankers can have dramatic consequence for society”, bankers must pledge. Say goodbye to blowing that bonus on a Lamborghini then.

### **Bettina Jordan-Barber: back from ‘planet Holloway’**

Fresh out of prison, Bettina Jordan-Barber is helping others facing the same fate. The former Ministry of Defence strategist, who made £100,000 from leaking stories to [The Sun](#) about army failures, has joined Prison Consultants as a senior consultant. The company helps people who are going to prison, and their families, learn to cope and survive. Ms Jordan-Barber was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment this year. She was released after serving two months in HM Prison Holloway and a month in open prison. She tells City Insider: “Those white prison vans might as well have been a spaceship for me, taking me from Old Bailey to the planet that is Holloway.”