

Election address John Pulford MBE

Proposer: Master Denise Fellows

Seconders: Past Master John Corneille, Third Warden Bob Harris and PM David Peregrine-Jones



Why I am standing as Master

Since joining the Company in 2002 and becoming a Founder

Liveryman in 2004 I have become increasingly involved in our modern, vibrant Livery Company through my pro bono work and service on the boards of the Company's Charitable Fund and our joint venture with City University Business School, the Cass Centre for Charity Effectiveness Trust and latterly on the Court of Assistants.

In the last year as First Warden I have worked collegiately with the Master and Court of Wardens(CoW) and believe that I am now able to take on the responsibilities of Master.

Our 2019/20 year started with the CoW leading a review of the strategic plan across our agreed priorities in the areas of Philanthropy, Education and Fellowship to which we added Governance, only for work to be halted in March by the developing Covid-19 crisis. Since then we have responded with urgency to the needs of our increasing number of pro bono clients and by moving our meetings to a virtual environment.

If the Court wishes, I should like as Master in 2020/21 to bring that updating and implementing of the strategic plan to fruition. I shall also continue to work collegiately as we find new ways of working and where possible returning to in person meetings to be filled with the Joy envisaged by Master Denise at her Installation.

Professional background

I have worked since the age of 16, initially in the chemical industry as a laboratory assistant. Through part time and full time study I obtained a professional qualification in chemistry. I became a management consultant after gaining an MBA at Cranfield. I spent 12 years at the firm now known as Accenture, where I retain links through former colleagues and the London Alumni Office. I am also an alumni of Deloitte. I was chairman/ceo/shareholder of two SMEs over a period of 25 years, where I continued to take a management consultant's approach to my various roles and challenges.

Voluntary and public sector background

I have been an active citizen throughout my life, first as a Cub Scout, then progressing as a Scout, Army Cadet and Scout Leader. Early in my consulting career I undertook pro bono work for a national charity, CSV (now known as Volunteering Matters) becoming a trustee and subsequently Chairman during a period of sustained growth, for which I was awarded an MBE. I have been recruited as a trustee by other charities, principally Ex Cathedra, the Birmingham-based chamber choir and Creative Kernow, where I am the Chairman of this cross-Cornwall arts organisation. As Chairman I had a lead role in the purchase and conversion of a redundant school in Redruth, using social finance. Our Krowji building is the largest creative hub west of Bristol. Over 200 people work in our offices and studios and we are currently completing a £3m development of additional studios and supporting the development of two further hubs in Cornish towns.

Although our family home is in Truro, I am based in London, where I am actively involved in my local borough of Tower Hamlets as Chairman of the Council's Standards (Advisory) Committee and of the Planning Department's Conservation and Design Advisory Committee, which reviews sensitive planning applications at the 'pre-app' stage where it is possible to influence design before final plans are developed.

Through our Company pro bono work with YMCA England & Wales I was instrumental in bringing 60 jobs to Whitechapel, where I have undertaken the financial rescue of a charity, The Davenant Centre, which has three splendid buildings, including a listed Victorian school hall. The charity is now self supporting and cash positive.

I have a particular interest in governance matters and am an active member of the Association of Chairs.

Company Pro bono work

We talk about 'giving and gaining' and that's certainly been my experience of Company pro bono work. In particular through YBI I have been able to extend my experience of youth entrepreneurship through five overseas assignments. During the Covid-19 emergency I have had two virtual assignments, which have led to the release of Google.net philanthropic funds. My own networks have also been a source of pro bono clients and I am currently assisting YBI to find a partner in Japan, which will also receive Google.net funds.

The future

I look forward to working with members both through the Court of Assistants and attendance at Company events. Meanwhile I can be contacted at: john.pulford@hotmail.co.uk and 07771 905300.

25 September 2020