US PRESIDENT Donald Trump’s latest threat to ramp up tariffs on Chinese goods rattled global markets yesterday at the start of a crunch week of negotiations between the White House and Beijing.

Trump tweeted over the weekend that tariffs on $200bn (£153bn) worth of goods from China would be cranked up to 25 per cent this Friday from the current rate of 10 per cent, in a sign that the two sides remain at loggerheads.

He also said an extra $325bn of Chinese goods will “shortly” be taxed at a rate of 25 per cent.

Last night, US trade representative Robert Lighthizer confirmed raised duties on Chinese imports would go live at midnight on Friday.

The President’s intervention saw volatility make a dramatic return to trading floors across the globe. Traders initially fled stocks, causing the S&P 500 index to open down 1.2 per cent, before later trimming its losses to close 0.5 per cent down.

The industrial-focused Dow Jones index opened down 1.3 per cent, before closing 0.3 per cent lower.

US Treasury yields also fell as investors turned to low-risk government bonds.

Despite the slump, US stocks reached a new all-time high relative to global equities and US-centric equities even managed to post gains.

The pan-European Stoxx 600 index ended 0.3 per cent lower, in its worst day in about a month and a half. Shares in the US technology and materials sectors – key areas of trade between the countries – were hardest hit. US company Microchip Technology fell by 3.7 per cent, while chemicals firm Dow Du Pont ended down 3.6 per cent.

Gregory Daco, chief US economist at Oxford Economics, said markets had “become numb to the risks of escalating trade tensions, assuming that a comprehensive trade agreement was about to be signed”.

Following Trump’s comments, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said the Chinese delegation was still “preparing to go to the US for the negotiations” scheduled this week.

It remained unclear whether lead negotiator and Chinese vice-premier Liu He would attend as originally planned, or refuse to fly to Washington in protest at the promised tariff hike.

Paul Donovan, chief economist at UBS Global Wealth Management, said recent progress in the talks and apparent US concessions “suggest that this is more likely to be a negotiation tactic than an obvious threat”.

CALLUM KEOWN
@CallumKeown1
CROSS-PARTY Brexit talks are set to enter a crucial phase today despite growing mistrust and a potential revolt from Conservative MPs.

The Prime Minister will resume talks with Labour today but is expected to face anger on all sides about her last-ditch plan to win over Jeremy Corbyn with a temporary customs union, in a bid to win support from Labour MPs.

Labour says May can’t be trusted

Theresa May after details of the talks were leaked to the press, describing the leak as an “act of bad faith”. Speaking to the BBC, he said May had “jeopardised the negotiations for her own personal protection”. It comes after reports over the bank holiday weekend that May would offer Jeremy Corbyn a temporary customs union with the EU lasting until the next general election, in a bid to win support from Labour MPs.

PARTY TIME

Talks resume but Labour says May can’t be trusted

CONTINUES ON P3
**THE CITY VIEW**

**MPs should put in the hours to fix Brexit mess**

**BABY SUSSEX** Royal fans rejoice as Prince Harry and Meghan Markle announce the birth of yet-to-be-named newborn boy

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**EUROZONE MORALE SLIDES ON ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY**

The most negative about the financial prospects for their company, with a net balance of minus 24 per cent. The second-most negative in Europe after Iceland, although that marked an improvement of six percentage points on six months previously.

Risk appetite remains low, with only 20 per cent of CFOs thinking it is a good time to take risk onto their balance sheets, the lowest level since the bimonthly survey began in spring 2015.

This remains unchanged for non-euro countries but marks a seven per cent drop for the Eurozone.

Sentiment in the euro area has deteriorated compared to a year ago, with a greater number of CFOs believing a new Eurozone crisis is likely within the next 12 months. Forty-one per cent of non-euro CFOs said such an occurrence is likely, up from 34 per cent a year previously, while 46 per cent of Eurozone CFOs thought the same, a significant increase from 27 per cent 12 months previously.

Ian Stewart, chief UK economist at Deloitte, said: “The slowdown in the euro area has come faster than expected and has knocked sentiment around the region’s largest corporates. The majority of businesses aren’t expecting a recession, but they are pulling back from hiring and are closely focused on the risks to growth.”

Separately, a survey on the the Eurozone elections by FTI Consulting found that in France, Germany and Spain, emotions rather than economic issues were driving voter choices in more than half of cases.

Dan Healy of FTI said: “Voters are becoming so emotional in their voting that it now dominates how they vote over any economic or financial arguments.”

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**THE TIMES**

**NHS LOOKS ABRAND FOR THOUSANDS OF NURSES**

The NHS is to begin a global recruitment drive for tens of thousands of foreign nurses over the next five years as it struggles to fill gaps on wards. The majority of businesses are pulling back from hiring and are closely focused on the risks to growth.

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**THE DAILY TELEGRAPH**

**DISGRACED ENRON CHIEF REGISTERS NEW COMPANY**

The disgraced former Enron chief executive Jeffrey Skilling has wasted little time in relaunching his career after serving more than 12 years in jail. Less than two months after his release from a halfway house in Texas, Skilling’s name was registered in a new firm. The amount of time teenagers spend on social media has a negligible effect on happiness, the most comprehensive study yet has found. Researchers at Oxford University blamed “slippery science” for conflicting studies.

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**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL**

**HOUSE PANEL TO VOTE ON HOLDING BARR IN CONTEMPT**

The House Judiciary Committee said it would vote tomorrow on whether to hold US attorney general William Barr in contempt of Congress, escalating a dispute with the Trump administration after Barr missed lawmakers’ deadlines to turn over an unredacted version of special counsel Robert Mueller’s report.

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**FINANCIAL TIMES**

**CHINESE COFFEE STARTUP LUCKIN EYES $510M IPO**

Luckin Coffee aims to raise up to $510m (£389.4m) in an initial public offering as the Chinese startup seeks to take on Starbucks in its home market. The company said yesterday it plans to sell 30m American Depositary Shares, or ADS, at between $15 and $17 each. Each ADS represents eight ordinary shares. Alongside the IPO, Luckin is offering 25m ordinary shares to global merchant firm Louis Dreyfus.

**US TO DEPLOY AIRCRAFT CARRIER IN REPLY TO IRAN**

Iran will be held accountable for attacks on American interests, US secretary of state Mike Pompeo said after the US announced it would deploy an aircraft carrier and bomber task force to the Middle East. Pompeo said the deployment was “something we’ve been working on for a little while”.

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US OIL and gas company Occidental said its updated $38bn (£29.02bn) bid to take over Anadarko Petroleum was designed to make it more attractive than a rival offer from Chevron by removing the requirement for a shareholder vote.

Occidental increased the cash component of its offer to 78 per cent on Sunday, meaning the deal could go ahead without a shareholder vote which would allow for “clarity of closing”.

Its chief executive Vicki Hollub said Chevron’s $33bn merger offer had been considered superior to Occidental’s as it would not require a Chevron shareholder vote. She added the company did not want to bypass the vote but it was in shareholders’ best interest to close the deal without increasing the price.

Occidental’s sixth-largest shareholder T Rowe Price said late last night it intends to vote against the firm’s board of directors at its annual meeting on Friday, as Occidental shareholders have not been permitted to vote on the bid for Anadarko.

On Sunday, Hollub said in a letter to Anadarko’s directors the revised proposal did not require a shareholder vote, which she said “has been repeatedly cited as the explanation for why you previously chose Chevron’s $65 offer over our $76 offer”. She added the updated bid represented a premium of 23.3 per cent over Chevron.

“We remain perplexed at your apparent resistance to obtaining far more value for Anadarko shareholders which has been expressed clearly through our interactions over the last week,” Hollub said in the letter.

As you know from our long-standing interest, we firmly believe that Occidental is uniquely positioned to create significant and sustainable growth and value from Anadarko’s asset portfolio.

The company announced yesterday that in connection with its bid, it has forged a deal to sell Anadarko’s assets in Algeria, Ghana, Mozambique and South Africa to Total for $8.8bn.

The Prime Minister’s efforts to win over Labour MPs could also face fierce opposition from within her own party.

Brexiter Nigel Evans, a member of the influential backbench 1922 Committee said: “If there is a compromise that turns out to be a kind of ‘Brexit in name only’ involving anything close to a customs union, there would be more than 100 Tory MPs who would never support it.”

May conceded that many of her colleagues found the decision to compromise with the opposition “uncomfortable.”

“Frankly it is not what I wanted either. But as elected politicians, who asked the public to give us an instruction on whether to leave the EU, we cannot now shrug our shoulders and say it’s all too difficult,” she wrote in the Mail on Sunday.

“We have to find a way to break the deadlock – and I believe the results of the local elections give fresh urgency to this,” she added.

US OIL & GAS giant Kraft Heinz said yesterday that it will have to restate nearly three years of financial results after discovering evidence of employee misconduct.

Kraft Heinz said in a filing that an internal probe had uncovered errors on a number of transactions concerning suppliers and procurement, causing misstatements during 2016, 2017 and the first nine months of 2018.

While the group said that the investigation was “substantially complete”, it warned that its filing to the Securities and Exchange Commission for this year’s first quarter results will also be delayed.

The company said that the investigation “did not identify any misconduct by any member of the senior management team”.

In February, the packaged food firm suffered a crash in its share price after announcing a $15bn (£11.5bn) write-down of its Kraft and Oscar Mayer brands.
INVESTORS will hope Morrisons can replicate a recent spate of bumper trading results from its supermarket rivals later this week, when it looks set to extend a long spell of like-for-like sales growth.

Following a largely better-than-expected financial performance from both Sainsbury’s and Tesco in recent weeks, the City is now turning its gaze to Morrisons, the UK’s fourth-largest supermarket chain, which is set to report first-quarter results on Thursday.

Analysts at Barclays are forecasting total like-for-like growth of 3.1 per cent during the quarter, compared with 3.8 per cent in the previous three months.

“Morrisons market share continues to fall with recent industry figures showing it currently standing at 10.3 per cent,” said analysts at The Share Centre.

“There is unlikely to be anything dramatic in its first quarter numbers, with investors hoping that the milder weather so far this [year will] have helped sales, especially when compared to last year and the ‘Beast from the East’.

The Bradford-based chain, which has been battling to protect its market share against German discounters Aldi and Lidl in recent years, has seen its share price tumble from 247p to 215p over the course of the last 12 months. However, two months ago the retail giant handed investors their third special dividend in a year, in a sign of its turnaround success under chief executive David Potts.

Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell, said: “Morrisons has grown its sales on a like-for-like basis, excluding fuel and VAT, for the last 13 quarters and it will be looking to extend that record, with the fourth quarter’s 3.8 per cent rate of increase and last year’s overall increase of 4.8 per cent the likely benchmarks.”

He added: “Both Sainsbury’s and Tesco have pleased with their full-year results and now analysts’ attentions will turn to Morrisons’ first quarter update, after its perfectly solid 2018 showing.”

Euronext allows more time for Oslo Bors investors to back offer

CALLUM KEOWN
@CallumKeown1

EURONEXT has given Oslo Bors shareholders more time to accept its offer as the battle with Nasdaq over the Norwegian stock exchange operator rumbles on.

The pan-European exchange operator has extended its acceptance period to 31 May, the same date as Nasdaq, as the pair fight for support. Both offers, of 158 Norwegian kroner per share, value the business at 6.8bn Norwegian kroner (£600m).

The Norwegian Ministry of Finance is expected to hand final approval to one of the two prospective buyers later this month. Euronext has the backing of shareholders representing 53.2 per cent of Oslo Bors.

The US giant has attracted support from 37 per cent of the company and has also been publicly backed by the Oslo Bors board.

Last month both companies were approved as “fit and proper” owners by the Norwegian Financial Supervisory Authority.

AISLE BE A BIT LATE
Waiting period for UK supermarkets to pay suppliers mounts

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY
@SebMcCarthy

THE UK’s leading supermarkets are taking an increasing amount of time to pay their suppliers. Data has found the top grocers took an average of 40 days to pay suppliers in 2018, rising 18 per cent since 2013, according to data from Funding Options.

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Former Orange bosses go on trial over spate of staff suicides in 2000s

CALLUM KEOWN
@CallumKeown1

FORMER executives at French telecoms giant Orange went on trial yesterday over a series of staff suicides a decade ago.

Former chief executive officer Didier Lombard, six other former executives and Orange itself have been accused of moral harassment in the first trial of its kind on a company-wide scale. Prosecutors claim that between April 2008 and June 2010, when it was called France Telecom, there were 18 suicides and 13 attempted suicides by employees. They allege the suicides were triggered by a restructuring plan to cut 22,000 jobs following the company’s privatisation.

Prosecutors claim the company imposed “excessive and intrusive control” on staff, gave workers demoralising tasks and used “intimidation manoeuvres or threats and pay cuts”.

An Orange spokesman declined to comment on the beginning of the trial, but told Reuters a lot of work had been under current chief executive Stephane Richard to improve corporate culture. Lombard, who stepped down as chief executive in 2010, has denied any wrongdoing.
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In April 2010 EU police and tax investigators raided hundreds of offices and banks across Europe, including those of Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt. The bank ordered to repay €145m (US$174m) on VAT trades between early August 2009 until the raids in April 2010 that were connected to fraud.

The documents reveal how fraudsters set up a chain or “carousel” of bogus companies involved in the fraud. The firms that were involved were not connected to fraud. Deutsche Bank settled in the UK in May last year, without admitting liability. It has refused to tell the Bureau how big the set-up was. The company has been ordered to pay €145m to HMRC, and the UK government has already recovered £71.4m and £14m respectively by liquidators of a string of companies involved in the fraud. The firms that were involved with the VAT have gone into liquidation. Accountancy firm Grant Thornton is acting on behalf of the companies involved in the fraud.

Deutsche Bank London’s carbon trading desk, a trader, messaged a broker about the closure. “The whole carousel/VAT scam is a bit troubling,” they wrote, “maybe it really is a scam, and clearly illegal and clearly troubling.”

In any case, the trader predicted a “summer slowdown” on trades “as we all take holiday”. But in reality, over the next seven weeks trading suddenly exploded as fraudsters cashed in on the UK carbon credit market. The Paris-based Bluenext Exchange, the main trading exchange for carbon credits, closed for two days on 8 and 9 June as the French tax administration opted to charge a zero rate of VAT on carbon credits to prevent carousel fraud. A few days later, the Paris prosecutor’s office admitted it was investigating a multi-million-euro VAT fraud in the French carbon emissions market. Within a week, the Netherlands had also introduced a mechanism to combat the fraud.

This pushed the fraud to the UK – where VAT was still charged on sales of carbon credits and HMRC had been given only a day’s notice about the changes in France. An internal RBS email sent in early July said “it seems the UK’s carbon emissions market is rotten” and “is being targeted by carousel trading fraudsters”. RBS said this email reflects that individual’s opinion and not the wider team’s.

Shortly after the Bluenext Exchange reopened on 9 June 2009, court documents show an associate at Deutsche Bank London’s carbon trading desk, a trader, messaged a broker about the closure. “The whole carousel/VAT scam is a bit troubling,” they wrote, “maybe it really is a scam, and clearly illegal and clearly troubling.”

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The documents reveal in great detail the allegations made against Deutsche Bank, RBS and Citibank and the broker companies who sold them the carbon credits. It is alleged the banks and brokers did not do enough to ensure the credits they traded were not connected to fraud. Deutsche Bank settled in the UK in May last year, without admitting liability. It has refused to tell the Bureau how big the set-up was. The company has been ordered to pay €145m to HMRC, and the UK government has already recovered £71.4m and £14m respectively by liquidators of a string of companies involved in the fraud. The firms that were involved with the VAT have gone into liquidation. Accountancy firm Grant Thornton is acting on behalf of the companies involved in the fraud.

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TFS’ creditors, Grant Thornton, alleged Deutsche Bank should have questioned SVS’s purported business model as it “made no commercial sense.” No other financial institution experienced such a spike in trading.

Deutsche Bank London bought increasing numbers of credits from SVS at favourable prices while knowingly failing to investigate SVS’s business properly as it was not in its financial interest to do so, the lawyers allege. They were “wilfully shutting their eyes to the obvious, which was that there was no legitimate explanation for the trades such that there was a significant and unexplored risk that they were connected with criminal activity and in particular VAT fraud,” the claimants allege.

While Deutsche Bank settled, Grant Thornton lawyers are still seeking £50m from SVS, two of its former employees and TFS. The case will be heard in March next year.

In its defence, SVS said it denies being a knowing party in the fraud and denies that its traders “deliberately closed their minds or failed to ask questions”. They are “not culpable” for any fraud against companies or HMRC, it added.

TFS also denies assisting alleged VAT fraud but that if it did assist “it did so unwittingly and not dishonestly”.

Suspicious about Deutsche Bank’s trading were later raised at HMRC when in September 2009 the bank submitted a VAT refund claim for £48m, while prior to January 2009, the London branch would normally have paid VAT to HMRC. On investigators’ instruction, HMRC withheld the claim.

By this time, carbon credits were no longer charged VAT, putting an end to the fraud in the UK. RBS and Citibank stopped trading with SVS in July over concerns of fraud. Despite this, Deutsche Bank London carried on trading: it stopped buying carbon credits from SVS and started selling to them instead. These credits were coming from the bank’s Frankfurt branch and fraudsters were now stealing from German tax authorities, where VAT was still being charged. Deutsche Bank declined to comment further.

Almost a decade after the first suspicions of fraud emerged at HMRC, it has still been unable to recoup the full amount stolen from British taxpayers, estimated to be up to £300m. Even if it wins in court, it’s likely HMRC will only get back around half of what it is owed.

For Grand Theft Europe, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism teamed up with a network of 35 European media partners, coordinated by the German non-profit newsroom Correctiv, to investigate VAT carousels, the biggest ongoing tax fraud in the EU. Read more at grand-theft-europe.com
Boeing knew about issue with 737 Max a year before deadly crashes

SAM BUCKINGHAM-JONES

BOEING has said its engineers discovered an issue with the 737 Max aircraft in 2017 – a year before the aircraft was involved in two deadly crashes – but took no action.

In a detailed statement, the world’s largest aerospace company said an angle of attack (AOA) disagree alert, an alarm that tells pilots when two sensors report conflicting data, was inadvertently made an optional extra instead of a standard feature in some aircraft.

The US Federal Aviation Administration said Boeing did not inform it of the software issue until November 2018 – a month after the Lion Air crash – but that it was a “low-risk” issue.

The plane’s flight angle has been identified as a factor in both 737 Max disasters. Boeing has said that in both crashes erroneous AOA data was fed to the aircraft’s anti-stall system, which has come under scrutiny in recent months.

All 737 Max planes were grounded in March after an Ethiopian Airlines flight crashed, killing 157 people. It followed a Lion Air flight crash in October, and killed 189 people.

There were 387 of the aircraft in operation worldwide when the fleet was grounded.

Aeroflot share price falls after disaster flight

SAM BUCKINGHAM-JONES

SHARES in Russia’s largest airline Aeroflot fell to three-year lows after a plane burst into flames in a crash-landing on Sunday at a Moscow airport, killing 41 people.

A Sukhoi Superjet 100 aircraft carrying 73 passengers and five crew was struck by lightning as it took off towards Murmansk, in Russia’s northwest. Two children were among the bodies recovered from the crash site.

Television footage showed the plane crash and slide along the tarmac at Moscow’s Sheremetyevo airport, before its rear exploded into flames. Aeroflot’s shares fell three per cent on the Moscow exchange yesterday, but later recovered to close less than two per cent down. Many passengers on board Flight SU 1492 escaped via the plane’s emergency slides, which inflated after the hard landing.

Svetlana Petrenko, a spokesperson for Russia’s Investigative Committee, said in a statement that only 37 out of 78 people on board had survived.

No official cause has been given for the disaster. The Investigative Committee said it had opened an investigation and was looking into whether the pilots had breached air safety rules. Some passengers blamed bad weather and lightning.

“We took off and then lightning struck the plane,” surviving passenger Pyotr Egorov told the Komsomolskaya Pravda daily newspaper.

“The plane turned back and there was a hard landing. We were so scared, we almost lost consciousness. The plane jumped down the landing strip like a grasshopper and then caught fire on the ground.”

Russia’s transport minister Yevgeny Ditrikh said he saw no reason to ground the entire domestically-made Sukhoi Superjet 100 fleet after the incident.
THE WOLF OF WALL STREET
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“The UK has been a major beneficiary of zero import duties within the European Union, and low duties on imports from many of the EU’s trading partners,” the firm said.

Rising import duties due to Britain leaving the EU free trade area could affect the UK’s major exports, including cars and pharmaceuticals, as could US-China trade tensions, UHY said.

The ICAEW said that the survey shows business confidence stood at minus 16.6 per cent in the second quarter, similar to minus 16.4 per cent in the previous quarter. This marks the first time in the last 12 months the index has not seen a significant quarterly-on-quarter fall. UHY said that the survey shows underlying growth in the second quarter may stand at just 0.2 per cent, having risen as high as 0.5 per cent in the first quarter.

Its report said the first-quarter rise was partly due to the impact of businesses stockpiling raw materials and finished goods in anticipation of a March exit from the EU.

Manufacturers’ raw material stockpiles are at their highest level, relative to normal, since the survey began, while stocks of finished goods are at their highest point since the first quarter of 2009.

In the retail and wholesale sector, stocks of finished goods are at their highest since the last recession. Michael Izza, ICAEW chief executive, said: “Many have stockpiled ahead of the expected March exit from the European Union, but this did not happen. Stockpiling is expensive for businesses, but it did boost GDP growth.

“However, my fear is that this will have an impact on growth and GDP figures in the rest of the year, so we should not be surprised to see even lower growth than normal while companies use up the excess stock they now have.”

Other key findings include sales growth of 3.9 per cent, with no significant improvement expected in the next 12 months.

Employment is growing at 1.9 per cent, but the rate of expansion is expected to slip to 1.5 per cent in the next 12 months, with skills shortages expected in various sectors such as construction.
Former Goldman banker appears at US 1MDB trial

ROZANNA LATIFF

FORMER Goldman Sachs banker Roger Ng pleaded not guilty to criminal charges linked to a multi-billion-dollar scandal at the Malaysian state investment fund 1MDB in an appearance at federal court in New York yesterday.

The US Department of Justice accused Ng last year of conspiring to launder money and bribe government officials in Malaysia and Abu Dhabi through bond offerings that Goldman Sachs handled. He was extradited on 3 May to New York from Dubai through bond offerings that Goldman Sachs handled. He was extradited on 3 May to New York from Dubai.

His lawyer, Marc Agnifilo, said he convinced Ng to “come to the US and face the music” because it was evident that prosecutors were not going to drop the case, and his client had become very ill. “He was in a very difficult situation,” Agnifilo told reporters. Being detained in New York “is better than a Malaysian jail,” he added.

Ng, who left Goldman Sachs in 2014, faces up to 30 years in prison if he is convicted of the three charges against him in the United States, based on alleged violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Prosecutors and Ng’s lawyer are trying to negotiate a plea bargain. Government lawyers said they hope to avoid a trial by reaching a deal.

Malaysia’s home minister wanted Ng to face criminal charges there first, but agreed to temporarily surrender him to the United States for 10 months, Malaysia’s attorney general Tommy Thomas said. Reuters

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Brunei stoning laws dropped after boycott

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY

THE SULTAN of Brunei has backed down over plans to impose draconian new laws against LGBT people on the weekend following a global backlash.

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah said the kingdom will not impose death by stoning laws for people convicted for having same-sex relations, and will extend a moratorium on capital punishment.

In a televised speech before the start of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, the country’s ruler said: “I am aware that there are many questions and misperceptions with regard to the implementation of the Syariah Penal Code Order. However, we believe that once these have been cleared, the merit of the law will be evident.”

In recent months, a swathe of celebrities and businesses have publicly boycotted assets owned by the Sultan of Brunei, such as the iconic high-end Dorchester Collection hotels.

Firms including JP Morgan and Deutsche Bank have called for people to stop using Brunei-owned hotels following the proposed laws.

Tui to strengthen business with 20 hotel openings this summer

JESS CLARK

TRAVEL agent Tui has announced it is set to open 20 new hotels across Europe, Africa and Asia this summer as the company targets further growth in the sector.

The company revealed yesterday that it opened 10 new hotels on 1 May and plans to launch a further 20, and a new yacht, by the end of the summer.

Tui is aiming to strengthen its high-margin hotel segment, which accounts for 30 per cent of the company’s earnings, as the business is less cyclical than its “highly competitive” core tour operator business.

Tui will open new hotels in 11 countries across Europe, Asia and Africa

1 May and plans to launch a further 20, and a new yacht, by the end of the summer.

Deutsche Bank have called for hotel openings following the proposed laws.

In recent months, a swathe of celebrities and businesses have publicly boycotted assets owned by the Sultan of Brunei, such as the iconic high-end Dorchester Collection hotels.

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The Syariah Penal Code Order.

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Firms including JP Morgan and Deutsche Bank have called for people to stop using Brunei-owned hotels following the proposed laws.
Lawyer to the rich on a decade in the City

James Booth talks to one of City law’s trailblazing female partners

AWYER to the super-rich Clare Maurice has a disarmingly simple view of the world. “Life doesn’t change really, people are born, get married, make money and die,” she says.

The senior partner of private wealth boutique Maurice Turnor Gardner is reflecting on the ten years since she led a breakaway from Allen & Overy to launch the firm.

While life goes on, the political and economic climate for the firm’s wealthy clients has morphed dramatically between 2009 and 2019. Shadow chancellor John McDonnell, who has made his disdain for the rich clear, said last week that Labour’s economic policies would mark a “revolution” if the party took power.

In 2009 we weren’t contemplating a left-wing government,” Maurice says. “The front page of City A.M. this morning [30 April] was a bit alarming with Mr McDonnell saying we want revolution, not evolution.”

Maurice is no stranger to economic and political turbulence. She founded her firm following a financial crisis-era restructuring at Allen & Overy, which involved a 10 per cent cut to its workforce and a decision to stop focusing on non-core areas such as private wealth.

Despite opening at such an inauspicious time, the firm has thrived; from 23-strong at launch, there are now 50 employees. Unusually among law firms, the firm’s 10-strong partnership is majority female.

“We are pretty well all women,” Maurice says. “The boys are the ones going ‘what about me?’” she jokes.

The situation is a stark reversal from when Maurice was appointed as Allen & Overy’s first female partner in 1985.

“It was extraordinary at the time because suddenly Allen & Overy looked as if it was coming into the 20th century. It was hugely welcomed, the women in the firm went ‘wow - we can do it.’”

The attitude to women in that era is exemplified by her initial interview at Allen & Overy in 1975. Maurice asked her interviewer whether it would be a problem if she got a 2:2 in her degree rather than a 2:1.

“He said: ‘No, the only problem I had was [you were] a woman!’” she recalls.

More than 30 years later, A&O’s partnership remains just 18 per cent female, which is not an atypical ratio at leading City firms. Maurice says the 24/7 service expected from partners sits badly with family life.

“It’s a big tension and I don’t know how we are ever going to solve that,” she says.

Looking back at the firm’s trajectory, Maurice starts to say that they have been lucky, before correcting herself.

“When I was appointed as the first woman partner at Allen & Overy, I remember saying to John [Rink – then managing partner], ‘I’m so lucky, I was in the right place at the right time,’ and he said, ‘you make your own luck.’”

“That is a piece of advice I would give to younger partners: look for the opportunities and that will contribute to making your own luck,” she says.
KPMG: ‘Zombie firms’ dragging on UK economy

HARRY ROBERTSON
@henrygrobertson

INCREASING numbers of underperforming “zombie firms” are acting as a drag on the UK economy and raising the risk of contagion during an economic crisis, professional services firm KPMG warned yesterday.

Such firms are sucking the UK economy dry by continuing trading but without innovation, dynamism or investment, according to the research which examined around 21,000 companies.

KPMG’s study raised the fear that weak UK companies would not be able to cope if the Bank of England raised its main interest rate above the current 0.75 per cent level.

On Thursday, the Bank’s governor Mark Carney said markets were underestimating future rates rises, as its monetary policy committee opted to keep rates on hold.

Yael Selfin, chief economist at KPMG in the UK, said: “The threat that zombie companies pose to the wider economy is very real.”

“If interest rates rise further, highly-leveraged businesses may soon find that borrowing will become more difficult to repay, and if the economy continues to stutter, these businesses will be left especially vulnerable to adverse market forces,” she said.

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Khan to give small business AI tech boost

SAM BUCKINGHAM-JONES

LONDON may be the artificial intelligence (AI) capital of Europe, but City Hall believes the benefits of AI are failing to trickle down to small businesses.

The mayor Sadiq Khan will give 200 small businesses in London a share of £200,000 to enhance their use of AI.

“London is a leading hub for innovation in artificial intelligence and some of the advances being made right here in the capital are revolutionising how business is done,” Khan said today.

“Small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy, and I firmly believe these innovations should be available to companies of all sizes, not just the ones with the deepest pockets.”

A study by AI platform Cognition X last year found London is home to more than 750 companies working in AI – more than twice as many as Paris and Berlin, its nearest competitors, combined.

The first round of successful companies will connect with a dedicated case-worker and be trained to use enhanced web tools.

Retailers will get 24/7 customer support, while hotels will get tailored guidance for guests.

Payments startup Thunes closes $10m series A financing round

JESS CLARK
@jclarkjourno

PAYMENTS startup Thunes has completed a $10m (£7.64m) series A funding round led by Alibaba and Airbnb investor GGV Capital.

The Singapore-headquartered company will use the funding to expand its presence across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Thunes will also add to its existing regional presence in London, Dubai and Miami by opening new offices in San Francisco, Paris and a second branch in Dubai.

GGV Capital managing partner Jenny Lee said: “We pride ourselves in the long-term success of the companies we invest in, and we were attracted by Thunes because we are aligned with their mission and see a lot of growth potential in this business.”
NOTIING

"Ask a kid to sketch a supercar and it will probably look like this..."

"WE DRIVE THE NEW LAMBO PAGE 23"

ANNOUNCEMENTS
LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

CITY OF LONDON

THE PLANNING ACTS AND THE ORDERS AND REGULATIONS MADE THEREUNDER

This notice details applications registered by the Department of the Built Environment
Code: FULL/PL/MA/S4005/FULL/R3
Planning Permission: LBC - Listed Building Consent
PDO - Tree Preservation Orders
GUL - Outline Planning Permssion

Kings College Maughan Library, Caunard Lane, London, WC2A 1LR
Installation of a secondary glazing unit to the windows on the north elevation of the Library Reception room.

Middle Temple Hall, Middle Temple Lane, London, EC4Y 9AD

19/00256/LBC

Temporary Application:
1. Proposed installation of a solid hardwood timber in-frame double glazed window within the threshold of the Watergate Door. This will include the removal of two existing vertical panels to enable the installation of the door frame. Proposed pivot hinge floor boxes to be recessed into existing timber floor.
2. Proposed installation of in-trimseal brush seals to existing double doors adjacent to stairwell 05. Proposed intumescent brush seals will be rebraced into three edges (sides and top) of both doors.

A Salisbury Square, London, ECV 8AE

19/00355/FULL

Change of Use from Office (Class B1) to Tribunal Service (Class O) or Office (Class B1) (Class B1 to B1)

5a Old Broad Street, London, EC2M 1RJ
19/00355/FULL

Installation of a new shopfront

Planter No 2, 60 - 70 St Mary Axe, London, EC3
19/00355/FULL

Temporary Installation of a sculpture ‘The garden of floating words’ by Eliza Atkinson for a temporary period of up to 1 year, to be taken down on or before 01 June 2020.

Bury Court, London, EC3A 8AJ
19/00360/FULL

Temporary installation of a sculpture ‘Site of the fall’ by Reza Aramesh for a temporary period of up to 1 year, to be taken down on or before 01 June 2020.

Mitre Square, London, EC2A 3DH
19/00356/FULL

Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary condition 1 of planning permission 18/00955/FULL dated 14.06.2018 to extend the temporary period of the installation for the sculpture ‘Cliff’ by Justin Pegg to the summer of 2019.

Collins Street, London, EC3M 7JJ
19/00364/FULL

Temporary installation of a sculpture Series Industrial Windows by Markia Tomima-for a temporary period of up to 1 year, to be taken down on or before 01 June 2020.

Undershaft, London, EC3A 6AT
19/00358/FULL

Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary condition 1 of planning permission 18/00787/FULL dated 21.06.2018 to extend the temporary period for the installation of the sculpture ‘Thames’ by Christian Phulleanus by Nancy Rabino to 01.06.2020.

57 West Smithfield, London, EC1A 9OS
19/00364/FULL

Continued use as a marketing suite (su genius) (55.75 sq m) in conjunction with the Bartholomew Close development for a temporary period until 31 January 2021.

Hennessy Lane, London, EC3 SQ
19/00392/FULL

Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary condition 1 of planning permission 18/00747/FULL dated 14.06.2018 to extend the temporary period for the installation of the sculpture ‘Same Garden’ by Claire Jarrett to 01.06.2020.

Applications can be viewed at www.planning2.cityoflondon.gov.uk or at the Department of the Built Environment, North Wing, Guildhall, Basinghall Street, London EC2, between 09.30 and 16.30. Representations must be made within 21 days of the date of this newspaper or online at www.london.gov.uk/llicensing or to the Chief Planning Officer Office Box 270, Guildhall, London, ECIP 2EJ. In the event that an appeal against a decision of the Council proceeds by way of the expedited procedure, any representations made about the application will be passed to the Secretary of State and there will be no opportunity to make further representations.

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Money laundering fines soar as government cracks down

JESS CLARK
@johnjomo

THE VALUE of fines handed to companies that failed to comply with anti-money laundering obligations soared 91 per cent last year. HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) hit companies with charges of £2.3m in 2016-17, in a crackdown on the processing of ill-gotten gains.

The average size of the fines has increased from £1.310 to £3.450, which could be “crippling” for an early-stage business, financial services regulator FCA warned.

FCA managing director Jamie Cook said: “Cracking down on money laundering is at the top of the government’s agenda and HMRC is responding by increasing the value of fines it hits businesses with.

‘Businesses that deal with a high volume of transactions and can remit payments globally such as money service businesses, look exposed to anti-money laundering enforcement action due to the increased risk of the service they provide.”

“Although the average size of these fines may seem small, they can be crippling for early-stage fintech businesses that have limited cash reserves,” he added.

In March, a freedom of information request revealed that HMRC had launched its first criminal investigations under a new measure to fight money laundering: the corporate criminal offence of failure to prevent the facilitation of UK tax evasion.

ANY LAST WORDS?

Ex-lawyer Cohen reports to prison after taking parting shot at former boss US President Donald Trump

Caroline Dyer Bleing (Houk). DM, CITYM, FCHT
Director of the Built Environment

CITYAM.COM

CITY OF LONDON

NOTICE

City is responding by increasing the value of fines it hits businesses with.

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Chinese investor cuts staff as tech growth weakens

JULIE ZHU

SEQUOIA Capital China, widely viewed as a bellwether for Chinese tech investment, is set to lay off as much as 20 per cent of its investment staff as a slowdown in the country’s tech sector saps appetite for risk, said two people with knowledge of the matter.

The Chinese arm of Silicon Valley venture capitalist Sequoia Capital is looking to cut the number of venture investment professionals from about 70, the people said. Two other people said the cut would be at least 10 per cent.

Sequoia China told Reuters in a statement sent ahead of story publication that it regularly reviews its personnel which may result in personnel adjustments.

Within the last 12 months, we had 13 new investment professionals join Sequoia China, which slightly increased our total number of employees,” it said in the statement.

In a later statement to Reuters after this story was published, a spokeswoman said the story was untrue.

The layoffs would come after a government campaign against debt financing left startups vying for shrinking pools of fresh capital. Meanwhile, disappointing returns from firms going public amid market volatility has made investors bearish, resulting in down rounds – where a firm’s valuation in a round of fundraising falls below that of a previous round.

Chinese venture capital and private equity managers raised a combined $1.5bn (£1.1bn) for investment across all sectors in the first three months of 2019, a far cry from the $9.4bn of the same period last year, according to data firm Preqin.

Major tech firms have cut headcount and salaries to maintain performance as an economic slowdown and China-US trade war weigh on consumer and industrial technology teams, two of the people told Reuters, declining to be identified as the information was not yet public.

Investment professionals including one partner, one managing director, and several vice presidents and associates have agreed to leave the firm during these cuts, said one person.

SANDBANKING ON THE FUTURE Dorset destination comes top in new ranking of Britain’s most expensive seaside towns

SANDBANKS, the Dorset destination known for its waterfront mansions and views over Poole harbour, has topped a new list of Britain’s most expensive seaside towns.

A home in the coastal location now stands at more than £750,000, rising 26 per cent in the past 12 months and remaining comfortably above the second most expensive seaside town Aldeburgh. Over the last decade, the average house price in Britain’s seaside towns has risen by 29 per cent, reaching £239,139.

The City A.M. Watch List for Luxury Week at The Royal Exchange

Tuesday 14th May
6.30pm - 8pm
9 The Royal Exchange
London EC3V 3LQ

A voyage through time, in one luxurious evening at The Royal Exchange:

As part of The Royal Exchange’s inaugural Luxury Week, City AM brings together the horological experts from Watches of Switzerland, Bremont and Watchfinder & Co, for an unprecedented glimpse of fine watchmaking’s inner workings.

If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to events@cityam.com
Christopher Woolard assesses if our generational money stereotypes match the hype

VER the last decade or so, a narrative of intergenerational discord has gradually become an accepted part of the political wisdom in this country. Isn’t it obvious that the baby boomers have had it easy, at the expense of millennials who have been locked out of secure jobs, secure homes, and secure pensions?

Well, as the financial regulator set up with a statutory objective to look after the interests of consumers, our job isn’t to accept the conventional wisdom at face value, but to dig beneath the surface and understand the behaviours and needs of people of all ages. This will help shape the work we do in the future.

That’s why we’re launching a project to better understand the deepening financial differences between generations. Our initial analysis doesn’t suggest it’s a black and white story.


We want to know if the firms that provide financial services are responding with products which meet the disparate needs of these groups.

We want to challenge what we think we know, testing our understanding to ensure our approach stays relevant for tomorrow’s consumers.

So what do we know? Our analysis of the Office for National Statistics’ wealth and assets survey does show the total wealth of someone aged 40 to 50 in 1981 was approximately £28,000. In fact, our research shows the total wealth of someone aged 40 to 50 in 2016 was approximately £28,000.

Many baby boomers have benefitted from rising house prices and defined benefit pensions.

However, they need to find ways to access the money they have built up may not be easy to do.

Many baby boomers have benefitted from rising house prices and defined benefit pensions.

It’s also important to remember that not all baby boomers have property and pension wealth – nearly half of over 65s rely on the state pension as their main source of incomes.

Despite this, many haven’t set aside enough money for their pension or to save for emergencies. Many in generation X have also benefitted from rising house prices, and are more likely to have higher than average incomes.

And finally, millennials face a series of difficulties in building wealth. The combined impact of insecure employment, student debt and rising house prices limits their ability to save for retirement.

House buying will be further out of reach for millennials unless they have a helping hand from the lender of choice: the bank of mum and dad.

Of course, there will be those who have been helped to a helping hand.

Some of them will receive an inheritance, but not all, and often later than previous generations.

Half of millennials are saving into a pension, a number we’d expect to rise as auto-enrolment grows, and half of them are also putting additional money aside, but this may not be enough to maintain living standards later in life.

No generation is able to enjoy life entirely free from financial challenges; what is clear is that the different financial needs of the generations are constantly evolving.

It is vital that we keep up to date with, and anticipate, these patterns of changing needs to make sure regulation keeps pace.

As well as us, this discussion should involve government, businesses, and you, the consumer.

So let us know what you think below, or respond to the report we’ve launched today. That way, we can make sure what we do is aligned to the needs of the people we’re here to protect.

Christopher Woolard is the executive director of strategy and competition at the Financial Conduct Authority.
## LONDON REPORT

**FTSE ticks up as stocks prepare for trade talks**

The main index gained ground on Friday as a profit beat buoyed HSBC and miners recouped recent losses ahead of Chinese-US trade talks next week, while upbeat US jobs data kept investors happy.

The FTSE 100 ended 0.4 per cent higher, following three sessions of declines, as the FTSE 250 overturned earlier losses to close up 0.1 per cent. HSBC was the biggest support to the main bourse, rising two per cent to its highest level in over eight months as its earnings surpassed analysts’ expectations thanks to a surge in income from its core Asian business.

Miners snapped a seven-day losing streak with a 1.1 per cent jump as metal prices picked up with China and the US set to resume trade talks this week.

Online grocer Ocado also inched up by 2.6 per cent following bullish comments from Peel Hunt, which said the company’s technology was ahead of retail giant Amazon’s when it comes to speed and efficiency.

BT will post its full-year results on Thursday, its first set under new chief executive Philip Jansen, who took over from Gavin Patterson earlier this year.

The telecoms firm previously reported revenue for the first nine months of the year at £17.6bn, with profit before tax up 20 per cent year-on-year to just over £2bn.

“BT can’t seem to extricate itself from the accounting scandal in Italy after reports emerged last month that the decision to misreport profits came from its management in London,” said CMC Markets analyst David Madden.

“This week’s full year numbers need to confirm the positive direction of travel given this year’s share price performance which has been disappointing.”

Meanwhile British Airways’ owner International Consolidated Airlines will publish its first quarter results on Friday, after posting decent profit at the end of last year. It reported revenue of £3.3bn ($3.6bn) on revenue of £24.4bn. Madden said it is “likely to see the effects of higher fuel prices take their toll on profit in these latest numbers, given how the rest of the sector has struggled in recent months”.

### TOP RISERS

1. Smith & Nephew Up 2.29 per cent
2. Ocado Up 2.60 per cent
3. Anglo American Up 2.34 per cent

### TOP FALLERS

1. EasyJet Down 2.10 per cent
2. Intl Consol Air Down 2.05 per cent
3. Hiscox Down 1.93 per cent

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## BEST OF THE BROKERS

**To appear in Best of the Brokers, email your research to notes@cityam.com**

### FTSE

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
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### OCADO

Peel Hunt analysts have described online supermarket Ocado’s technology as more advanced than that of e-commerce giant Amazon after a trip to Amazon’s Tilbury warehouse left them “underwhelmed.” Ocado’s robots are three times faster and its warehouse utilisation is more efficient than the US company, analysts explained, saying the food delivery firm could become the “Microsoft of retail” in the future as it “teeters” on the brink of a 10bn market cap. Peel Hunt issued a “buy” recommendation and a target price of 1,700p.

### WHITBREAD

Analysts slashed forecasts for Whitbread after the Premier Inn owner’s preliminary results fell of expectations. Canaccord Genuity cut its earnings per share forecast by 23 per cent to 228.3p for 2020 after the firm reported profit before tax of £438m, three per cent less than expected. The mosh can be blamed on lower room rates, rather than declining occupancy, as Whitbread is “determined to keep its rates, rather than declining occupancy, as Whitbread is ‘determined to keep its hotels busy rather than protecting price’.” Canaccord Genuity reiterated its “hold” recommendation and reduced the target price to 4,850p from 5,400p.

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## CITY MOVES

**WHO’S SWITCHING JOBS**

**TLT**

TLT has announced it is continuing to grow its clean energy team with the hire of Tom Cowling as a partner in its corporate services group. Tom joins from Eversheds, where he has been a general counsel for over eight years advising on major projects for the company including its Ecobond fundraising, the set-up and growth of the UK’s leading electric car charging network, and the launch of a green energy mobile powered mobile service Ecotalk.

He also advised the world’s first vegan and carbon-neutral football club – Forest Green Rovers – and is a trustee of charities The Green Britain Foundation and Sustainability in Sport. Tom will also work with the firm’s wider clean energy team to grow the business and develop its range of services supporting organisations in the clean energy sector. This will include how clean technologies can benefit more widely including the opportunities for electric car charging and storage in retail, leisure and real estate.

**QUEENSGATE INVESTMENTS**

Queensgate Investments has confirmed the appointment of Iain Morpeth as group managing director. Iain will bring significant commercial, transactional and legal gravitas to Queensgate, the real estate investment firm which advises and manages approximately £3bn in assets through the suite of Queensgate Investments Funds. Iain is a former partner at Ropes & Gray, where he held the position of global chair of the firm’s international private equity real estate group. Prior to this, Iain was a long-standing partner at Clifford Chance where he worked as a partner for more than 20 years.

Throughout his career Iain has advised private equity, opportunity and credit funds, investment banks, sovereign wealth funds and numerous investors and sponsors on a wide-range of transactions spanning all types of real estate and including real estate M&A, finance and equity investment.

**REDINGTON**

Redington has announced a number of promotions including three new managing directors and two directors as it continues to add strength across the business. Sebastian Schule, Nick Samuel and Lee George have all been promoted to Managing Director, joining the firm’s strong incumbent team of MDs, including Carolyn Schulte-Woldan who recently joined from LCP. The firm made additional promotions across the business within its ALM, research, rating, IIP and corporate functions teams.
### EU Shares

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### US Shares

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**Markets**

- **FTSE 100**
  - 7350.64
  - HOLIDAY

- **FTSE 250**
  - 19705.17
  - HOLIDAY

- **FTSE ALL SHARE**
  - 4046.86
  - HOLIDAY

- **DOW JONES**
  - 26438.48
  - 66.47

- **NASDAQ**
  - 7123.29
  - 40.71

- **S&P 500**
  - 2932.47
  - 13.17

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**Main Changes UK 350**

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**Commodities**

- **Gold**
- **Silver**
- **Crude Oil**
- **Natural Gas**

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**Credit & Rates**

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**World Indices**

- **MCSI World**
- **MCSI Europe**
- **MCSI EM**
- **Dow Jones Industrial Average**
- **Nikkei 225**
- **Hang Seng Index**
- **Shanghai Composite**
- **Russell 2000**
- **Russell 1000**

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**UK VALUES ARE FROM FRIDAY, MAY 3**
Is your boss a narcissistic psychopath?

From conflict to compromise, which of these kinds of office culture sounds most familiar?

S YOUR workplace chronically chaotic, ferocious, and riven with conflict? Is it a command-and-control environment that you and your colleagues find threatening due to coercion and Machiavellian-esque collusion? Are you in a defeated culture, where everyone is looking at compromise – a sad race to the bottom? Or is it a workplace powered by collaboration and consensus?

There are many owners, chief executives, directors and managers who bully those working for them: "remember I’m the boss and ruler, and don’t you forget it". By manipulatively managing their staff, they create anxiety, stress, and fear. Their internal politicking leads to chaos and conflict in the workplace. Sound familiar?

Those working for bullies who demand that “people do as they are told” know what it’s like to operate in such a vicious environment. Perhaps the most obvious traits of a conflict-driven culture are hostility and damaging arguments. A conflict-focused culture means that disputes will lead to quarrels and dissensions, with some of your colleagues struggling against the enterprise for prolonged periods. You’ll recognise this when harmful confrontations due to incompatible opinions are central to most activities.

Conflict cultures are encouraged by narcissistic, sociopathic bosses who see themselves as a never-wrong ruler. They thrive on clashes and friction, believing that is better to divide and rule than encourage and engage with colleagues and employees. Perhaps your workplace is less extreme, but there are still examples where pushing someone to do something using force or threats is the order of the day – a way of doing things which could be described as coercion culture. Oppression, harassment, compulsion, and manipulation are key leadership tools in these command-and-control environments.

When political power is more obvious but conflict and coercion are less prevalent, with different groups vying for control through secretive cooperation, collusion culture can be typified as a series of conspiracies in order to benefit members of a particular cabal without putting customers, other employees, or the enterprise first.

A culture where personal benefit comes from political intrigue tends to exhibit non-ethical activity, where people scheme and plot to gain power. Whatever happened to adding value for customers and shareholders?

You may be fortunate enough to be in a place where there are attempts to find the lowest common denominator for the sake of agreement. Such a compromise culture at least exhibits people listening to each other. But there will be slippage of moral and ethical standards, and principles will weaken. There will not be a sense of coming together, more a pathetic recognition of mediocrity as everyone “races to the bottom” to keep the peace.

How would you describe your work environment: a chaotic, conflict-driven approach; rife with coercion; needing collusion to get anything done; a place depressingly focused on compromise; or a collaborative culture creating consensus?

How wonderful to work in a collaborative culture, where people, teams, departments, divisions, and the overall enterprise operate through generative dialogue following harmonious reflection and new ideas. Creating such synergy and concord out of conflicting opinions has to be one of the toughest yet most rewarding leadership tasks. And working in such an environment is oh so wonderful. As we all know, content colleagues and a happy workplace drive an enterprise much more effectively. Most people are happier when they recognise that they are being listened to and included in how things are done.

If your office has a chaotic conflict culture, perhaps it’s time for change.

Mike Orlov is a speaker, business coach, and executive director of the National Register of Public Service Interpreters.

WE GOT A SPY ON THE INSIDE

Glassdoor

Free

It’s hard to know what the culture of a company is truly like before you’ve signed the contract and shaken hands with your new boss. Glassdoor, on the other hand, offers you an inside look at the business, with reviews written by the staff who work or worked there. You can also use the app to search for your next job.

Mike Orlov is a speaker, business coach, and executive director of the National Register of Public Service Interpreters.
**FORUM**

**EDITOR BY RACHEL CUNLIFFE**

This series of UK politics feels suspiciously like daytime TV

**Sophie Harwood**

The British aversion to foreign languages isn’t charming – it’s a diplomatic travesty

Michael Hayman MBE

Will Corbyn and May pronounce on the world stage that Britain’s Got Talent, and end the uncertainty of Brexit once and for all?

Change UK

The sooner we can confine this tabloid circus to the past and begin the business of leading a country that can make a big contribution to the world, the better.

The British reluctance to learn foreign languages is a sign of appreciation and a cultural olive branch. British leaders of tomorrow must get to grips with multiple languages, not so they can ask where the beach is or order in a restaurant, but so they can understand nuance and build genuine international relationships.

The sooner we can have a real debate, the better. But the debate must be based on knowledge and understanding, not on the cheap rhetoric of simplistic supporters who would rather stay in the cocoon of comfortable ignorance.

**AST week’s local elections were a democratic annus horribilis. A mere mouthful of popular sentiment, sending a shockwave through the political elite that an offering meant to delight the taste buds has fallen as flat as a soggy soufflé.**

It’s increasingly clear that the British public want Brexit completed, or managed, or perhaps neither or both.

The sooner we can have a real debate, the better. But the debate must be based on knowledge and understanding, not on the cheap rhetoric of simplistic supporters who would rather stay in the cocoon of comfortable ignorance.

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**The author and academic Hans Rosling called this the “overdra- matic world view”, describing such reactions as “strutting and misleading”. In his book Factfulness, he argued that we are better off than most people and that it’s important to think in terms of numbers.**

Last week’s elections suggest that we are indeed in far better shape than many of our critics advertised. The Brexit Party, which won seven seats and garnered 14% of the vote, is more of a chintzy new show from Phil and Kimmy from the EU than the UK. It is a mere brouhaha, and the wheels will fall off.

For years, our wilful lack of knowledge of EU institutions has been a severe problem. In order to deal with the menace, there is some- thing reassuringly daytime TV about the new forces in the land. Less Game of Thrones, more Homes Under the Hammer.

We could see Change UK as the chintzy new show from Phil and Kimmy: looking to make sure that a new lack of political will and a change of government is to our benefit, not your worry. Over at the Brexit Party, meanwhile, it’s all beer and bungas and ‘taxation gets redistributed from the floor dance floor – although the show creators should watch out for watershed violations, especially given the views of some of the more colourful candidates.

Still, despite the best efforts of Nigel Farage, Ann Widdecombe, Rachel Johnson and Gavin Esler – leading figures in these new parties who all know a thing or two about daytime TV – you can’t help but be drawn back to Westminster if you want the real deal, the darkest drama. Brand things up, but crowd them up west. Gavin Williamson has given us the best Phil Mitchell moment since the hard man left Walford back in the early 2000s, swearing on the life of his kids that he didn’t do it in his Huawei-induced exit.

The sooner we can begin the business of leading a country that can make a big contribution to the world, the better.

Sophie Harwood

Dr Sophie Harwood is project manager at a language-learning app Babbel.
The green rush? Dazzling new highs in the cannabis industry

Predicting the emergence of the UK’s next billion-pound industry is the dream of any investor. Yet what if, unknown to many of its citizens, the UK was already competing as a global leader in that market? When it comes to the burgeoning legal cannabis market, this is already the reality. According to the UN’s International Narcotics Control Board, the UK is one of the largest legal cannabis producers in the world. In 2016 alone, the UK’s production doubled to 95 tonnes, making it responsible for 69 per cent of global exports, with the majority going directly to the US. While the focus of the commercial conversation so far has largely centred on developments in North America, in Britain the domestic discourse has surrounded local patients, personal stories, and the lack of infrastructure regionwide. Yet behind the scenes, the UK has stayed busy, becoming one of the world’s largest producers and exporters of medical cannabis. Since 2000, the “green rush” has led to political developments and a shift in mainstream discourse around cannabis, with more and more European countries developing medical programmes and establishing prosperous industries in the process. According to the consultancy Prohibition Partners, the European cannabis market could be worth in excess of £100bn by 2028. That’s more than twice the revenues that Apple reported in the region last year. Unsurprisingly, things are moving quickly. The campaigns of patients like Alfie Dingley and Billy Caldwell helped make history in the UK, with Dingley receiving the first legal cannabis prescription in Britain in November 2018, when the Home Office introduced new legislation which would make medical cannabis legal – much sooner than many analysts had anticipated. In the wake of this, the first medical cannabis clinics in the UK have been opened to assist patients with chronic conditions, with two more due to open before the end of the year in Birmingham and London. From an investment perspective, the positive domestic media attention, a growing global shift in attitudes, and the increasing number of countries moving towards legalisation of medical cannabis are opening the door for a few UK companies to float on London’s public exchanges. Already they are attracting buoyant backing from fund managers, institutional investors and more recently state investment funds. Navigating the cannabis market does have its complexities. High street stockists, such as Holland and Barrett, have been successful in promoting CBD ranges, as consumers have shown a skyrocketing interest in CBD products, from lip balms to snack bars. However, the CBD market remains in a legal grey area, with regulators playing catch up to the innovation of the private sector. This is just one of the developments that global players in the market will be discussing when they descend on London on 18 May for the Women, CBD & Medical Cannabis Conference. Why the gender angle? This is a new industry that really works to understand female consumers – a demographic that virtually doubled in the US in 2018 – and is leading in terms of its practices around sustainability and equal opportunities. Female empowerment in the fast-emerging global medical cannabis business has become a big theme in 2019, and the number of women in leadership positions continues to consistently outstrip the national average. As Britain’s medical cannabis regulations undergo further reform, I am excited about the opportunities. There have been recent calls in the European Parliament to create a region-wide resolution on medical cannabis, while the UN has released positive findings from studies on both CBD and THC. Change is in the air. It’s an exciting time to be in this industry – for me personally, and for the UK as a whole.

Could Mark Zuckerberg’s Facebook omnipotence be about to come to an end?

Facebook was originally set up to connect friends who share interests, primarily through a news feed that users controlled. Now, algorithms dictate the user experience, and with feeds more crowded than ever, what once was fun and informative now feels like work. At its conference last week, Mark Zuckerberg announced a key focus on groups, private messaging, and smaller communities in an attempt to stem the tide of criticism. However, it is unclear if people will embrace the new vision, as questions remain over who has control of the users’ Facebook experience, data, and private communications. With Facebook planning to take a $5bn hit from the US Federal Trade Commission for privacy violations, people are rightly asking whether the company and its offshoots can be trusted with our private moments – either through groups or messaging. If Zuckerberg can’t win over consumer trust, then further changes could be dictated for him.

The European market could be worth in excess of £100bn by 2028

The European market

Hannah Simon

Hannah Simon is chief operating officer of ECH. She will be speaking at the Women, CBD & Medical Cannabis Conference on 18 May (www.3cmconference.com).
WE MIGHT be a nation best known for drinking tea, but Brits are increasingly obsessed with coffee. According to market analyst Allegra, we spent a tea-splitting £10.5bn in coffee shops last year.

You can’t walk 100 yards in most town centres without stumbling on a Starbucks, Costa, or Cafe Nero – though, with many coffee connoisseurs preferring to get their caffeine fix from artisan shops, smaller players are certainly stirring things up.

Black Sheep is one of these new breeds, and it’s arguably the trendiest coffee chain in town.

Inside the Leadenhall cafe, where I meet co-founders Gabriel Shohet and Eirik Holth, the walls are speckled with street-art murals and graffiti, while lively music makes it feel more like a bar than a coffee shop.

I spot the pair sitting at a table – dressed casually in jeans and jumpers, these young entrepreneurs seem totally in their element.

In 2013, the two friends – who had been flatmates together at St Andrews University – quit their office jobs and moved to London to start a specialist coffee chain, despite neither of them being from the capital.

Full of beans but without financial means, Shohet admits that they didn’t have a plan. “We went to London and slept on couches for a while. We knew we wanted to start a company, but we didn’t have any money, so the first year was rough.”

They managed to secure a startup loan and got grinding – running pop-ups in various locations around central London.

Before long, they had raised £23,000 through a Kickstarter campaign to set up their first permanent kiosk in Aldgate East. There are now 25 Black Sheep kiosks and cafes scattered around the country, the vast majority in London, with two in Manchester.

And, reluctant to limit themselves to the UK, Shohet and Holth have already branched out abroad with a store in Manila, Philippines.

Coffee plants obviously go in and out of season, meaning that there are opportune times to harvest in different parts of the world. But with the mainstream brands looking for consistency above all else, most tend to blend their beans, which Shohet argues creates a boring coffee.

“With blended coffee, you don’t know where it’s from and you can’t isolate the taste profile,” he says. “All of our coffees are single origin – we want to celebrate the differences of the beans, so we source coffee depending on the season.”

One of the limited edition coffees during winter is sourced from Tanzania, where a meteorite landed thousands of years ago, which Shohet says makes the soil really rich, affecting the flavour of the beans.

“We always look for beans with an interesting story behind them,” he says. “The ones we found in Papua New Guinea grow at the flank of an active volcano.”

The company has also gone against the grain when it comes to the species of bean, unusually offering the strongest-tasting Robusta coffee, as well as Arabica.

“When we started off, Robusta had a bad reputation, because it was produced with very little attention to quality control in the production, and was the favourite for instant coffee producers because it has a bigger yield per acre,” Holth explains.

But he tells me that Robusta has a higher caffeine and protein level, as well as lower acidity and a fuller flavour. Really, it’s about giving every customer – coffee geek or not – the full range of choice.

“We don’t want to set too many rules on how you drink your coffee,” Holth adds.

I’m told that the chain buys all of its coffee at a multiple of the fair trade threshold. The pair also go to the plantations themselves to buy direct, and do the due diligence on the farms’ drying and washing methods – factors that are increasingly important to Britain’s sustainability-minded coffee lovers.

Sustainability is also factored into single-use coffee cups, which have become a hot topic as pressure mounts on businesses and consumers to help clean up our plastic-riddled planet. These founders, who were clearly on-trend before anyone had even coined the term “latte levy”, have managed to get rid of plastic at front-of-house, dishing out plant-based, compostable takeaway cups and cutlery instead – something that they implemented in the second year of the business.

And making a difference isn’t just limited to how Black Sheep deals with waste either.

Its shops let customers donate their loyalty cards so that homeless people can have free hot drinks.

“One of these men and women can go for days without even making eye contact with anyone,” says Shohet. “We want to fight social exclusion.”

Homelessness is a growing problem on London’s streets, and while free coffee won’t fix this, cafes are a way of bringing communities together; it’s more than just coffee.

Though British consumers are feeling the pinch financially, the pair aren’t concerned about customers cutting back on coffee. Holth points out that a £2.50 latte is far cheaper than going to a restaurant, adding: “Coffee is social.”

But the founders also avoid keeping all their beans in one cup. They’re launching an e-commerce platform so that customers can buy bags of coffee beans to have at home, and some of their cafes host late night events serving coffee-based cocktails.

With 25,483 coffee shops around the country, and the number expected to rise, are the Black Sheep founders worried that the market could end up oversaturated?

Shohet says no, pointing out that, while new shops are opening, others are closing. Or, as he suggests, customers flock to Black Sheep, sending mediocre mainstream stores packing.

Competition is definitely hot, but Black Sheep is proving itself by not following the herd.
MOTORING
BY MOTORINGRESEARCH.COM FOR CITY A.M.

BLAZE OF GLORY
The Lamborghini Aventador SVJ is among the last of the old-school supercars. Tim Pitt mourns its passing

LAMBORGHINI AVENTADOR SVJ
PRICE: £360,000
TOP SPEED: 217MPH
CO2 G/KM: 542G/KM
MPG COMBINED: 14.4MPG
THE VERDICT:
DESIGN: ★★★★★
PERFORMANCE: ★★★★★
PRACTICABILITY: ★★★★
VALUE: ★★★★

ASTON MARTIN DBS SUPERLEGGERA
PRICE: £225,000
0-62MPH: 3.4 SECS
TOP SPEED: 213MPH
CO2 G/KM: 285G/KM
MPG COMBINED: 23MPG
THE VERDICT:
DESIGN: ★★★★★
PERFORMANCE: ★★★★★
PRACTICABILITY: ★★★★
VALUE: ★★★★

FERRARI 812 SUPERFAST
PRICE: £263,008
0-62MPH: 2.9 SECS
TOP SPEED: 211MPH
CO2 G/KM: 340G/KM
MPG COMBINED: 19MPG
THE VERDICT:
DESIGN: ★★★★★
PERFORMANCE: ★★★★★
PRACTICABILITY: ★★★★
VALUE: ★★★★

MCLEAREN 720S
PRICE: £208,600
0-62MPH: 2.9 SECS
TOP SPEED: 212MPH
CO2 G/KM: 276G/KM
MPG COMBINED: 26.4MPG
THE VERDICT:
DESIGN: ★★★★★
PERFORMANCE: ★★★★★
PRACTICABILITY: ★★★★
VALUE: ★★★★

NOT CONVINCED? CHECK OUT THESE ALTERNATIVES...

BLAZE OF GLORY

The Lamborghini Aventador SVJ is among the last of the old-school supercars. Tim Pitt mourns its passing

Ask a seven-year-old to sketch a supercar and it will probably look like this. Chances are it’ll be radioactive mutant green, too. The Lamborghini Aventador follows a formula established by its great-grandfather, the archetypal Countach, way back in 1974. It’s a supercar 101: the stuff of bedroom walls, car magazine covers and Instagram likes. Yet this SVJ limited edition is also a last hurrah for a dying breed.

Lamborghini’s chief test-driver, Maurizio Reggiani, has already confirmed that the next generation won’t look vastly different – they’ll still be impossibly low, wide and wedge-shaped – but naturally-aspirated V10s and V12s are making way for downsized turbos, hybrids and electric power. Although hybrids and electric power.

Lamborghini’s chief test-driver, Maurizio Reggiani, has already confirmed that the next generation won’t look vastly different – they’ll still be impossibly low, wide and wedge-shaped – but naturally-aspirated V10s and V12s are making way for downsized turbos, hybrids and electric power.

The SVJ’s ‘Ring record of 6min 44.97sec was short-lived – since beaten by the 911 GT2 RS. By any yardstick, that’s quicker than a Porsche 918 Spyder. Its race-style pushrod suspension transforms potholes into moon craters, its swollen hips are way too wide for width restrictors and you can’t see anything behind you. Meanwhile, the old-fashioned sequential manual gearbox is hopeless in auto mode: clunky, agricultural and less decisive than almost anything else. Yes, even in supercar-saturated Knightsbridge.

Outside the city – and no doubt on a racetrack – is where the ultimate Lamborghini suddenly makes sense. The roar that rattles your ribcage, it swells to a feral howl that haunts your waking thoughts for hours and days afterwards. Multi-layered and richly mechanical, it makes even the most potently turbocharged engine sound sanitised. As for the whirring near-silence of electric supercars… not even close. For all its booted-on technology, the SVJ remains utterly dominated by its engine. And what an engine.

No doubt this car’s as-yet-unnamed successor will be even faster. It will certainly have a better gearbox, more socially acceptable economy and a less dated interior. Whether it can pack such exuberant charm, such aural satisfaction and make you crave another hit is another matter.

Then there’s the noise. A stentorian roar that rattles your ribcage, it swells to a feral howl that haunts your waking thoughts for hours and days afterwards. Multi-layered and richly mechanical, it makes even the most potently turbocharged engine sound sanitised. As for the whirring near-silence of electric supercars… not even close. For all its booted-on technology, the SVJ remains utterly dominated by its engine. And what an engine.

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Driving the SVJ in London is equal parts frustration and superhuman restraint. Its race-style pushrod suspension transforms potholes into moon craters, its swollen hips are way too wide for width restrictors and you can’t see anything behind you. Meanwhile, the old-fashioned sequential manual gearbox is hopeless in auto mode: clunky, agricultural and less decisive than almost anything else. Yes, even in supercar-saturated Knightsbridge.

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In New York this summer a book on double-entry bookkeeping will be auctioned by Sotheby’s. The 19th-century text offers a definitive guide to the accounting practice and forms the basis of so much of what followed financially for the next half millennia. We now have the potential, with distributed ledger technology (DLT), to do something that should be as significant for the next half millennium.

A quick note on terminology: DLT is an umbrella term for all the technologies, including Blockchain, that store, distribute and facilitate the exchange of value between users either privately or publicly. Blockchain is the most famous example as it is the technology that underpins Bitcoin.

GOVCoin Sparks Interest

I became interested in DLT not through Bitcoin speculation but from a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) pilot known as GoVCoin. When first questioning the government on the subject in early 2017 it was clear that fellow legislators were not hugely engaged with this technology.

If using the quality of responses from the House of Lords’ Chamber as a benchmark for general levels of interest and understanding I’m happy to report that there has been a significant improvement in the intervening years.

An early and excellent report by Sir Mark Walport had spelled out a compelling argument for investigating the potential applications of DLT and detailed some of the potential barriers. Inspired by my understanding of the benefits and potential of the DWP/GoVCoin pilot I was determined to urge the government to explore potential use cases, invest in pilots, work cross-government and most of all consider this from the perspective of the public good. My report, Distributed Ledger Technology for Public Good, argues that much can achieve if we get the right combination of leadership, collaboration and innovation.

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

We are now at a stage that although awareness is increasing many challenges remain. One is around the crucial issue of language and an agreed understanding of key terms. Blockchain and Bitcoin are less likely to be used interchangeably but the distinction between Initial Coin Offerings and Security Token Offerings or coins, tokens and securities is a clear one. This is also, of course, a huge part of the regulatory puzzle.

Regulating DLT is a slight misnomer. Generally, you don’t regulate the technology, you regulate the activities, services or operations of the technology. The internet is a good comparator because even now we are still getting to grips with ‘internet regulation’. The Government last month published its Online Harms White Paper, which proposes a new regulatory framework for online platforms. Aggregation verification for certain websites has also just come into force.

Last year, the Treasury (HMT), Bank of England and Financial Conduct Authority formed a Cryptoassets Taskforce to consider regulation of cryptocurrencies. The taskforce has promised guidance by the end of this year. As well as investor/consumer protection it is likely that regulation of distributed ledgers will focus on issues around identity and privacy. Questions are being asked about whether distributed systems comply with privacy regulations, and the French Government has raised concerns about the incompatibility of this technology with specific regulations around privacy in GDPR.

The platform opens up novel use cases beyond exchange and remittance. Along with the ability to access a range of innovative services on one platform many competing platforms, Wirex offers a paid-monthly subscription-based pricing model that provides complete transparency on cost. Business accounts are designed to be managed through flexible role and permission management, with the option to hide/undeck currency accounts depending on role. Corporate products such as Wirex Business are vital for the growth of crypto-friendly businesses that have been stunted by existing market restrictions. The recent proliferation of similar companies is a clear indication of the gradual shift towards a decentralized token economy.

With over 2,000 cryptocurrencies already in circulation, it’s only a matter of time before established financial institutions join the crypto space – until then, Wirex Business provides a genuine and in many ways superior alternative to conventional corporate payment products.

For more information, see http://wirexapp.com

Crypto AM shines its Spotlight on Wirex Business

A decade since the Bitcoin white paper popularised decentralised digital currency, consumers enjoy an extraordinary wealth of options for buying, exchanging and spending their cryptocurrency.

The ever-increasing number of fintech startups that offer digital currency services have helped open the market for more mainstream adoption, with one notable exception.

The reluctance of financial regulators to legislate for digital currency has restricted the scope for crypto-friendly business services. Today, many crypto and blockchain-focused startups struggle to find bank accounts that can accommodate their needs due to widespread institutional resistance.

The long-term goal of these businesses to try to make and manage digital currency are on their own, including prohibitively high transaction costs, unnecessarily complex knowledge a customer (KYC) journey and no facility for holding funds under a legal entity name. The outlook isn’t entirely bleak, however. This February, Wirex launched the world’s first FCA licensed, crypto-friendly business account. Developed specifically to disrupt the way that businesses and consumers send and receive payments, the new product allows registered businesses to make and accept crypto and fiat payments around the world, free of charge. Forget multiple, arduous KYC processes for multiple platforms that offer individual products - Wirex Business enables companies to access a range of innovative services on one platform.

The platform opens up novel use cases beyond exchange and remittance. Its counterparties feature gives users the ability to make their account details and wallet addresses public, allowing invoices, bills and employee salaries to be settled quickly and efficiently.

Wirex worked closely with corporate clients and their wider community to develop a user experience centred around control, transparency and flexibility. At the time of writing, Wirex Business features multi-currency accounts in four fiat currencies (GBP, EUR, HKD and SGD) and with six cryptocurrencies (BTC, ETH, LTC, ETH, XLM and DAI), with IBANs linked to registered company names.

Users can pay and get paid in any of these fiat and traditional currencies through SEPA, SWIFT and blockchain payments. Unlike
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one of the three main pillars of blockchain is that of ‘decentralisation’, the other two being distributed and immutable. However, many blockchain applications have a significant level of centralisation even if the underlying protocol maintains a decentralised and distributed structure and design.

We should start by looking at what we mean when we talk about decentralisation. No single party should have the power to stop, change, delete, authorise parties, censor or otherwise control what happens on the blockchain.

If a single business entity is using blockchain and it’s a fully centralised business or organisation, then there is no valid use case for blockchain. A database will not only suffice but would actually work far better.

Understanding that many projects start off as fully centralised, with an aim to be fully decentralised when mature is key.

Decentralisation should be thought of as a journey. For example, when Bitcoin was first created in January 2009 it was fully centralised, with Satoshi as the only miner, until news of this new digital money spread and there were mining nodes. Now there are circa 10,000 nodes around the world and bitcoin is considered to be decentralised. If you are considering building a blockchain business or looking at putting together an industry consortium for enterprise, decentralisation should be top of mind.

So why would JP Morgan create their own blockchain instead of just picking something off the shelf like Ethereum? Well, a public ledger like the Ethereum blockchain, transactions are open and transparent, but banks need to comply with a plethora of laws and regulations designed to keep financial data safe and activity legal. This means that these current solutions are a no-go area without addressing the need for private transactions and permissioned actions first.

JP Morgan’s project is called Quorum. It’s a fork of Ethereum and is updated in line with Ethereum releases, yet has some extra features built on top designed specifically for the financial industry.

The first addresses the performance issue. Quorum is built for enterprise-level scale and performance, able to process dozens to hundreds of transactions per second depending on how the network is used.

Quorum also addresses the issue of privacy and permission by allowing private transactions between parties while still maintaining the transparency that the transaction took place.

Since all players are known and approved in a private network, we don’t need the need for a consensus mechanism like proof of work. Quorum has support for several different types of consensus algorithm, such as RAFT, Istanbul BFT, or their own vote based Quorum-chain consensus.

Smart contracts are also increased with the introduction of private smart contracts whose state remains hidden from the rest of the network.

Quorum uses a blockchain to facilitate interbank settlements in near real time, a huge improvement on the 24 to 48 hours that it takes on the SWIFT network which is the backbone of the fees.

In summary, Quorum is an open-source enterprise blockchain ecosystem that allows for private transactions, permissioned chains, and different consensus mechanisms. It is configurable for different networks, and represents a significant step forward in institutional attitudes towards distributed ledger technology.

Quorum aims to solve the privacy, and scalability issues by using something like Ethereum in an enterprise setting where the contents of data may be subject to both local laws and regulations as well as needing larger throughput and performance.

JP Morgan have made an important contribution to the field: a robust yet flexible enterprise solution that solves that an area without scalability issues that may have made institutions hesitant in exploring blockchain in the past.

Quorum delivers an open platform for institutions to explore blockchain technology on their own terms, learn how to live in a blockchain world, and operate with tokenised assets on their books.
MANCHESTER City can beat you in so many ways, but a Vincent Kompany out-of-the-foot, long-range screamer? That is not something you expect to happen. Pep Guardiola’s side are team built on the foundations of rigorous drilling on the training field. Their manager is a football obsessive who has built his reputation on a distinctive style: pass and move. Get to the by-line, pull it back to the six-yard box, ensure you take shots with a high chance of success.

And yet the goal which could well seal the Premier League title – their 91st – was a pot-shot from the least likely source. Leicester’s players, who had defended manfully for 70 minutes, looked up and welcomed the City captain’s effort – and with good reason.

Kompany had never scored from outside the box. He had not even fired in a shot on target from outside the penalty area since December 2013. His attempt had an Expected Goals (xG) rating of 0.02 – meaning if he took on that same shot 100 times, he would, on average, score just twice. Luckily for them, this was one of them.

The Etihad Stadium last night didn’t quite match the drama of Sergio Aguero’s famous Martin Tyler-exploding match and title-winning goal against Queens Park Rangers from the Premier League header in May 2012. After all, City have still got to beat Brighton on Sunday. But by the end of this week it could prove to be just as significant.

MAN FOR THE OCCASION

Many people thought 33-year-old Kompany was beginning to look like a relic of City’s past. He was used sparingly at the start of the season, with Guardiola preferring Aymeric Laporte, John Stones and Nicolas Otamendi.

But with the title going down the wire the Catalan coach has stuck with his captain and handed him a 12th Premier League match this season. There have been some misplaced challenges – like his on James Maddison in the first half – and shaky moments, but there can be no question now of his importance to his team.

The Belgian hadn’t scored for over a year, yet his last three goals now read: potential title winner, Manchester derby, EFL Cup final. He is unquestionable the man for the big occasion; a Premier League title at the Amex Stadium on Sunday would make it nine trophies in 11 years.

NERVY CITY

The context for the strike heightened the moment even more. The Etihad crowd had been audibly nervous throughout the opening 70 minutes, groaning at misplaced passes, cursing Kasper Schmeichel’s saves and Leicester’s blocks.

As timed ticked on it looked as though City could be going down to the wire. Wilfried N’didi intercepted, Hamza Choudhury harried, Ricardo Pereira tackled, Jamie Vardy and Maddison looked a constant threat on the break.

Phil Foden had shot straight at Schmeichel, Aguero had headed against the woodwork from a corner, Raheem Sterling had headed over. Ilkay Gundogan had curled wide from the edge of the area. Schmeichel had produced an instinctive save from Aguero. Still it went on.

Leroy Sane was summoned from the substitutes’ bench. A bold 4-2-4 formation was deployed. But still Leicester, with a clear game-plan, solid shape and great determination, wouldn’t budge.

Kompany stepped forward into midfield, surveyed the scene around him and considered a pass out to the right winger. As Choudhury stepped off, Kompany stepped forward, swung his right boot and sent the ball rocketing past the despairing Schmeichel and into the top corner.

“I hadn’t scored this season but for me I always feel in big moments like this that I’m going to do something,” Kompany told Sky Sports after the final whistle.

“Today was a little bit of frustration because everyone was saying: ‘Don’t shoot! Don’t shoot!’ and I could really hear it and it was annoying me and I thought: ‘Hold on a second. I’ve not come this far in my career for young players to tell me whether I can take a shot or not,’ so I just took it.”

City fans will be glad he followed his hunch.

Homa’s stellar maiden win shows the magic of golf

MAGIC MIKKO

On the European Tour there was a big second victory for Mikko Korhonen at the Volvo China Open. Korhonen, who became just the third player from Finland to win on the European Tour when he took the Shot Clock Masters Championship last summer, started the day three shots behind Benjamin Herbert but clawed his way back to beat Frenchman in the first play-off hole.

Lots of players win one event, but with his second inside a year Korhonen has marked himself out as a good player.

The China Open has a big field and a decent atmosphere so he’ll take a lot of self-belief from his performance.

The 38-year-old is a strong competitor and fit as a butcher’s dog, I think he helped him playing alongside Herbert, as when you’re behind you can assess your opponent and put pressure on.

Finally, I must mention Jorge Campillo again. The Spaniard, who won the Trophée Hassan II last weekend in Morocco to claim a first European Tour title, finished on 19 under-par to take third place in China.

His performances are like London buses at the moment. He’s now got five top-three finishes in his last six events and it just goes to show what confidence does.

Follow him @TorranceSam
SALAH AND FIRMINO RULED OUT OF BARCELONA MATCH
Liverpool forwards Mohamed Salah and Roberto Firmino have both been ruled out of this evening’s Champions League semi-final second leg against Barcelona. Salah sustained concussion following an aerial collision with goalkeeper Martin Dubravka in Saturday’s 3-2 win over Newcastle, while Firmino has not recovered after missing the Premier League game with a muscle injury. Their injuries are a major blow to Liverpool, who will try to overturn a 3-0 deficit at Anfield. “Two of the world’s best strikers are not available tomorrow night and we have to score four goals,” said manager Jurgen Klopp. “It doesn’t make life easier but we will try for 90 minutes.”

CASILLAS OUT OF HOSPITAL AFTER HEART ATTACK
Iker Casillas said he was “fine” after being discharged from hospital yesterday following a heart attack. The 37-year-old goalkeeper suffered “an acute myocardial infarction” during Porto training on Wednesday. “The most important thing is to be here,” he said. “A few days ago I went through a difficult situation, something that can happen at any moment of life, but fortunately I’m fine. I’m grateful and feel I’m very lucky.”

ARCHER CAN MAKE THINGS HAPPEN, SAYS ROOT
Joe Root says Jofra Archer’s performance during Saturday’s T20 win over Pakistan showed what he could do if he is picked for this summer’s Ashes series. Archer took figures of 2-29 in Cardiff, reaching 90mph and troubling the batsmen with his pace and bounce. “You could see the value of what he could bring to a side, that extra bit of zip,” Root said. “He makes things happen, he is someone that wants to get into the game and make things happen, which is a brilliant quality to have on this stage.” Archer will be given further chances to impress in five One-Day Internationals against Pakistan before the World Cup starts on 30 May.

SMITH KEEN TO FIGHT CANELO IN THE AUTUMN
Britain’s Callum Smith has welcomed the idea of fighting Saul ‘Canelo’ Alvarez after the Mexican unified the middleweight titles with a points win over Daniel Jacobs on Sunday. Smith, who is unbeaten and holds the WBA belt at super-middleweight, is on a list of Canelo’s potential next opponents, with Liverpool’s Anfield stadium a preferred venue. “If his team are serious and want to make the fight then I’m game!” Smith tweeted. “A big fight in the autumn sounds good to me.”

AUSTRALIA FORWARD KEPU TO JOIN LONDON IRISH
Newly-promoted London Irish have completed the signing of Australia Test prop Sekope Kepu for next season’s Premiership campaign. The 33-year-old forward, who has won 103 caps for his country, has previously played for New South Wales Waratahs and Bordeaux. He joins Leinster’s Ireland international Sean O’Brien in joining the Exiles, who are due to move into Brentford FC’s new ground in 2020.

UNPLAYABLE Trump overcomes Higgins in classic Crucible final
Judd Trump out-played four-time champion John Higgins to claim his maiden World Championship title in a highly entertaining final yesterday. Trump, who held a commanding 12-5 lead coming into the final day, ran out the 18-9 winner to claim the £500,000 prize in a match which contained a Crucible record 11 centuries. “I was the lucky one to not have to pay for a ticket, he was just awesome,” said Higgins. “I was lucky to get nine frames. It will be the first of many I’m sure, to produce a standard like that is incredible. He was unplayable.”

SPORT DIGEST
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