Andy Silvester

Watson to step down

ANDY SILVEST

VESTER

@silvesterldn

LABOUR deputy leader Tom Watson sensationally stepped down as an MP last night after 18 years in the Commons. In a statement posted to his Twitter just as Boris Johnson formally launched the Tory election campaign, Watson thanked his constituents and vowed to stay in public life as a health campaigner. He said his decision was "personal, not political". Watson has been at the centre of the tribal wars that have dominated Labour politics since the election of Jeremy Corbyn as party leader in 2016. He was seen as the standard-bearer of the so-called moderate left. The deputy leader fought off a coup attempt in September of this year when hard-left allies of Corbyn attempted to remove him. Watson's legacy will include his fight against the press in light of the hacking scandal, and his backing of a probe into a historic powerful paedophile network in Westminster — a claim that later proved to be incorrect. Corbyn thanked Watson for his service and said it was "not the end of our work together." He added: "I hope the horseradish plants I gave you thrive."
Elections move markets

The uncertainty that surrounds elections tends to cause volatility - and create opportunity.

2010
Uncertainty reigns
On the day before Britain heads to the polls, the pound loses a massive 2.33% against the dollar as fears of a hung parliament loom.

2015
Surprise majority
GBP/USD gains 3.5% in the week following the UK election result, on the news of an unexpected Conservative majority.

Keep up to date with election news at IG.com

Spread bets and CFDs are complex instruments and come with a high risk of losing money rapidly due to leverage. 75% of retail investor accounts lose money when trading spread bets and CFDs with this provider. You should consider whether you understand how spread bets and CFDs work, and whether you can afford to take the high risk of losing your money.
People’s Vote campaign hit by sex harassment claims and data privacy row

EXCLUSIVE

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY
@sebMcCarthy

THE people’s Vote campaign has been engulfed in fresh controversy as sexual harassment allegations have been levied against its new chief executive and concerns have been raised about campaign data security.

City A.M. understands People’s Vote chief executive and former Labour election strategist Patrick Heneghan is facing allegations of sexual harassment from at least one campaign employee, just 10 days after being appointed.

Heneghan was hired by Open Britain — one of five groups that run the People’s Vote campaign — shortly after the sacking of communications chief Tom Baldwin and director James McGovern.

The change was masterminded by Open Britain chairman and PR tycoon Roland Rudd. It triggered an open revolt from 40 members of staff who refused to work under Heneghan and have not returned to work since he was hired.

A letter has also been sent to the Information Commissioner’s Office from Cardiff University professor Leighton Andrews, voicing concerns about Rudd potentially having full control of the personal data of 500,000 people.

Andrews is concerned the data, gained online from People’s Vote supporters, could be transferred to new Open Britain parent company Bainbridge, which is controlled by Rudd. Rudd’s spokesman said he was confident it is compliant with the necessary data regulation.

Open Britain told City A.M. it has appointed law firm RPC to conduct an internal investigation into the sexual harassment claims against Heneghan, which the organisation has described as “allegations of misconduct”.

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Tories must shake it up to pull in the numbers

HAVING allowed the other parties a few days to warm up, the Conservatives last night officially joined the fray as Boris Johnson launched the Tory election campaign at a rally of the party faithful in Birmingham. He was on vintage form, likening our blocked parliament to an anaconda struggling to digest a tapir and lambasting Jeremy Corbyn’s “ruinous socialism”. The question is, will the bombard of Boris be enough to correct a faltering Tory campaign? And it is faltering. Jacob Rees-Mogg, who revels in his Victorian style, seemed positively Dickensian after some crass and insensitive comments that appeared to suggest the victims of the Grenfell fire tragedy lacked the common sense to save themselves. He insists this isn’t what he meant, and he has issued a full apology, but you can expect his political opponents to make sure the ensuing row is dragged out into the campaign ahead. Less expected, perhaps, was that one of his own Tory colleagues, Andrew Bridgen, punched the bruise by defending Rees-Mogg and causing further damage by suggesting his leader, smarter than the doomed Grenfell residents. Yesterday, a sitting secretary of state had to resign over allegations that he lied about his knowledge of a rape trial apparently sabotaged by one of his aides. Alun Cairns, the Welsh Secretary, has stood down from that role. Meanwhile, the steady stream of Tory MP’s stepping away gives the party a headache over accelerated candidate selection and a lack of name recognition for the new crop of hastily-adopted runners. On the ground, there are scores of seats that the Tories need to take from Labour but in which the Brexit Party could deny them victory. London and the south east also seems ripe for a Liberal Democrat advance on traditionally Conservative areas that voted Remain in the referendum. The Tories still have a polling lead, but it is slipping. Labour will suffer its own bad days in this campaign, of this we can be sure, but for now they’re making the weather — forcing Boris to pull in the numbers.

Row over ‘parachute’ pick for Labour Cities candidate

Labour’s candidate for the prized Cities of London and Westminster seat has come under fire from critics who claim the party parachuted him in, despite ongoing questions about his role in the party’s antisemitism scandal. Gordon Nardell QC’s candidacy was announced on Tuesday afternoon, having been selected by a panel that included figures from Labour’s ruling body, the National Executive Committee (NEC). But one source told City A.M. the party had “slowed the process down [into the election period] so it was forced to go the NEC,” to avoid local members being involved in the selection. Nardell is a controversial choice as he was appointed Labour’s first general counsel in 2017, charged with advising the party on its approach to dealing with antisemitism complaints as well as heading up an inquiry into sexual harassment. He quit shortly before a damning Panorama documentary aired earlier this year. It alleged failings in Labour’s response to antisemitism complaints. Christian Wolmar — who lost out by just eight votes when local members originally chose Steve Saxby before he then stood down — did not even make the NEC’s longlist. Nardell is said to have long-standing friendships with Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, shadow chancellor John McDonnell and general secretary Jennie Formby. One source said the NEC was “only ever going to select him because of his connections, which go back such a long way”. A local Labour figure said “he has friends in high places”. A former member of Militant, Nardell has ties with the Labour Representation Committee (LRC), a hard-left faction headed by McDonnell, which has been critical of the suspension of former MP Chris Williamson, among others. Prominent Jewish figures, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, told City A.M. of their concerns, with one suggesting it was “his reward for dealing with the antisemitism issue — or rather, not.” “At best they haven’t carried out their internal processes properly, at worst it’s a willful appointment,” said a former Labour member. Sources pointed to Labour’s refusal to adopt the widely used Internation Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism in full whilst Nardell was part of the complaints process as “unacceptable and inappropriate”. A Labour party source said: “That’s nonsense. Gordon Nardell is a highly respected QC, who specialises in constitutional and human rights law.” The party strongly refuted any allegation that Nardell had acted impropri- ously in his role as in-house counsel, and said the party was serious about tackling antisemitism.

THE CITY VIEW

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THE TIMES

WORKERS HALVE ABSENCE RATES BY CUTTING SICK DAYS

The sickest is on its way out among British workers, with figures showing that absence rates have halved in the past two decades. The figures from the Office for National Statistics showed that sickness absence among employees who were otherwise healthy fell to 1 per cent last year — the lowest rate since records began.

HOW KONG POLITICIAN IS STABBED IN THE CHEST

A pro-Beijing politician was stabbed in the chest while canvassing for Hong Kong council elections, raising fears that the election later this month could be postponed.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

FOREIGN PRIVATE EQUITY FIRMS LEAD LONDON BLITZ

Foreign investment firms are leading a $152bn (£118bn) blitz on the London Stock Exchange as they take advantage of the weak pound and City short-termism to snap up a string of undervalued British companies. Bookmaker William Hill and hotelier Whitbread are seen as prime candidates for a takeover.

FIAT CHRYSLER-PEUGEOT DEAL PUTS UK JOBS ON LINE

A merger between Fiat Chrysler and Peugeot-owner PSA will saddle them with massive overcapacity and could force a wave of plant closures, with UK sites firmly in the firing line, according to analysis by LMC Automotive.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

EX-TWITTER STAFF CHARGED AS SPYS FOR SAUDI ARABIA

The US Justice Department has charged two former Twitter employees and a Saudi Arabian national with spying on some users who were critical of the kingdom. One former employee was arrested on charges of illegally accessing an account of Saudi Arabia.

ENVY TESTIFIES UKRAINE FUNDS ‘LINKED TO PROBES’

A top US diplomat told the House impeachment inquiry that it was his “clear understanding” that security assistance to Ukraine would stay frozen until Kyiv agreed to pursue probes sought by US President Donald Trump, a transcript of his testimony said.
Softbank swings to a $6.4bn loss as bets turn sour

ANNA MENIN

MATSUOKA

SOFTBANK founder Masayoshi Son called the Japanese company’s disappointing results “a mess” and admitted a “problem” with his judgement, after the tech investment giant swung to an operating loss for the first time in 14 years.

The group reported a $6.4bn (£5bn) quarterly loss yesterday, driven by soured bets on tech prospects including WeWork and Uber by its $100bn Vision Fund. The fund posted a $8.9bn loss for the quarter.

“Today’s earnings are a mess,” said Son, according to a Bloomberg translation. “It’s red all over.”

Softbank recently ploughed another $10bn into a rescue package for struggling office space firm WeWork following an aborted listing. The Japanese investment giant and its fund had already invested $10bn in WeWork before the bailout.

Speaking after the results were released, Son said: “There was a problem with my own judgement, that’s something I have to reflect on”. But the billionaire pledged to defend his investment approach, and added: “There is no change in our journey, no change in our vision.”

Son is currently fundraising for Softbank’s second Vision Fund, which he said was on track to close soon. Vision Fund 2 had initially been expected to surpass its predecessor in size, but it is now thought it will be roughly the same, as investors are spooked by volatile market conditions and the poor performance of some of the first fund’s bets.

The value of Softbank’s investment in WeWork plunged $3.2bn between July and September, the results showed. Most of the Vision Fund’s listed holdings fell in value during the quarter, including stakes in Slack and Uber, which sank to a fresh low earlier this week.

Cityindex analyst Ken Odeluga told City A.M. there was “no way to downplay the magnitude” of the loss, and it reflected Son’s “determination to pursue giant potential fast-growing opportunities, almost at any cost”.

CRISPIN CASHES OUT

HEDGE fund manager Crispin Odey has ended his short position in Jupiter Fund Management after his wife, veteran fund manager Nichola Pease, was appointed chair of the group. Jupiter announced yesterday that Pease will take over as its non-executive chairman when Liz Airey steps down in March.

M&S ‘making up for lost time’ as clothing sales shrink in the wash

JOE CURTIS

WEAK clothing and home sales knocked profit 17 per cent lower at Marks & Spencer (M&S) in its latest half-year period, it revealed yesterday. However the high street chain’s share price led the FTSE risers, climbing up 5.3 per cent to 192.05p at one stage. Investors felt it could have been a lot worse as boss Steve Rowe said his company was now “making up for lost time”. Shares finished 0.2 per cent down.

Revenue fell 2.1 per cent year on year to £4.86bn in the six months to the end of September. Meanwhile profit before tax declined 17.1 per cent to £176.5m.

M&S’s online business climbed just 0.2 per cent, compared to Next’s nine per cent increase. Rowe said the retailer was “making up for lost time”, as it pivots to digital and fights budget supermarkets with price cuts. It has paid £750m to launch an online food delivery service with Ocado, but that will not kick in until 2020.

Bitter row rumbles on within second referendum campaign headquarters

Anne Weyman OBE, non-executive member of the board of Open Britain, said the claims were anonymised and made after the sacking of Baldwin and McGrory.

She said: “In accordance with our established processes, a robust and rigorous investigation led by an external law firm, supported by leading counsel, is now underway.”

“Its investigation is independent and will be thorough, fair and conducted confidentially.”

However, the independence of the investigation has been questioned by People’s Vote staff.

“People’s Vote staff have asked us to investigate the matter properly... It’s absolutely mind-boggling that Rudd would hire his own lawyers to conduct the investigation. It doesn’t feel like an independent investigation at all to members of staff” Heneghan declined to comment.

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

RPC works for Roland Rudd on other issues and have been sending out “threatening” letters to campaign staff, according to a People’s Vote spokesperson.

The spokesperson refused to confirm whether the allegations against Heneghan were sexual in nature.

“We are very serious about the investigation and staff have asked us to investigate the matter properly...”

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More business, less work.

Stay ahead of mobile security threats with Knox defence-grade security. Remotely configure and manage your entire device portfolio, to safeguard business on the move.

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Winter health crisis could cost Johnson worst ever summer, staff shortages, a skyrocket over the coming months. A health provider appears set to warn the NHS is set for its “worst ever winter”.

EDWARD THICKNESSE

The combination of the NHS’s worst ever winter, staff shortages, a potentially cold winter and Brexit are all cited as reasons for the negative forecast.

In the worst-case scenario, nearly 300,000 patients may have to wait on trolleys to be treated, the report found.

Both the Tories and Labour have put the NHS at the heart of their election campaigns, with the Conservatives outlining £2.7bn for additional hospitals whilst Jeremy Corbyn has been warning that a proposed UK-US trade deal could lead to the health service becoming dependent on US providers.

Campaigners have taken to chanting “not for sale” at Labour events. The Conservatives deny this claim and last week US President Donald Trump himself said that the NHS would not be part of negotiations.

Shadow chancellor John McDonnell has also accused the Tories of enabling “creeping privatisation” of the NHS during its years in power.

The King’s Fund, a health think tank, rebutted the claim, saying that there was no evidence of a significant increase in the share of spending on private providers or wide privatisation of NHS services.

The days of the City dictating terms to the rest of the country are over,” he will add.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has promised to “cheer, not sneer” at the country’s entrepreneurs. Javid will echo him by touting the Tories’ economic achievements over the past nine years and say that “the best thing for our economy is to get Brexit done”.

In the worst-case scenario, nearly £9.5bn in lost working hours. Warning of a return to the so-called Winter of Discontent, the Tories claim Labour plans could lead to nearly 40m lost days to strikes.

Jeremy Corbyn’s union barons are plotting to cause misery for millions this Christmas with a series of strikes over the festive period.”

Tories: Corbyn will up strike rate

CATHERINE NEILAN

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Chinese firm ‘in pole position’ to buy British Steel

ALEX DANIEL

THE CHINESE company which has re-emerged as a frontrunner to buy British Steel is thought to have lofty ambitions for the country’s second-biggest steelmaker.

Jingye Group, which is hoping to strike a deal for the manufacturer by the middle of this month, is chaired by businessman Li Ganpo, one of the richest men in China.

Ganpo and a group executives arrived in the north of England last week for a tour of the company’s flagship Scunthorpe plant and its factory on Teesside.

Scunthorpe MP Nic Dakin, whose constituency houses British Steel’s biggest plant, said Jingye Group were “very keen” on doing a deal. “He [Li Ganpo] has quite an ambitious desire for the steelworks,” he added.

British Steel employs around 5,000 people in the UK, and supports about 20,000 further jobs in the supply chain.

Jingye reentered the fray as a bidder for the company when negotiations with Ataer Holding, an investment arm of the Turkish military’s pension fund, did not come to fruition during a period of exclusivity with the Official Receiver, which is managing the negotiations.

Ataer is still “an interested and active bidder,” Dakin told City A.M. but Jingye’s overtures to buy the manufacturer are thought to be more attractive to the Official Receiver.

City of London update

The Lord Mayor’s Show: London’s big day out

RING your family and friends along to the 2019 Lord Mayor’s Show. See the new Lord Mayor of the City of London, William Russell, take to the streets in a glittering coach as part of a three-mile-long procession full of innovation, spectacle and pageantry.

More than 6,500 people, 140 horses and around 60 decorated floats will travel from The Mansion House to the Royal Courts of Justice and back in a glorious celebration of the capital; the Lord Mayor’s Show is the oldest, biggest and best free day out in London.

Starting at 11am, the Show connects the 21st century City with its medieval roots - from pikemen, military bands and carriages to community groups, trade bodies, modern technology and performance.

Alongside the procession, Paternoster Square and Bloomberg Arcade will host Show Zones from 12noon with a full programme of free entertainment and activities for all ages.

And to round off the day, head for the River Thames where, building on the success of the Illuminated River display, something special is planned to mark the Lord Mayor taking office.

www.lordmayorsshow.london

News, info and offers at www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eshot

Factory orders give Germany hope but Eurozone economy stays weak

HARRY ROBERTSON

GERMAN industrial orders picked up by more than expected in September, data showed yesterday, providing a glimmer of hope for the country’s weak economy.

Europe’s biggest economy has had a torrid 2019, thanks in large part to a slump in global demand hurting its exports.

Germany’s economy ministry said it hoped yesterday’s figures “could point to a bottoming out of orders”. It also highlighted how business expectations had brightened.

Orders for German industrial goods rose 1.3 per cent in September month on month. The rise was a marked improvement on the 0.4 per cent fall suffered in August and well above the consensus prediction of a mere 0.1 per cent rise.

Yet German optimism was tempered by weak survey data covering October, which suggested the Eurozone remains close to stagnation. The bloc’s rate of growth was among the weakest seen in the past six-and-a-half years last month, data firm IHS Markit said, as manufacturing and trade remained weak.

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THE STATE of California is investigating Facebook’s disclosure of user data to Cambridge Analytica, it emerged in a court filing last night, demanding the firm respond to a subpoena.

Facebook is already being investigated by 47 states in the US. Some have raised concerns that Facebook and other tech giants engage in anti-competitive practices, expose consumer data to thieves and inflate advertising prices.

Investigators working for California’s attorney general, Xavier Becerra, asked the court to force Facebook to hand over information about how much access developers and other third parties had to data and changes in privacy settings.

The document said the 17 June subpoena followed Facebook’s initial responses, and came after news reports “concerning claims of wrongdoing by Facebook over users’ privacy”. “Facebook’s responses to this second subpoena and set of interrogatories is patently deficient,” it said.

In particular, the attorney general’s office pointed to a failure to look at communications of Facebook boss Mark Zuckerberg. “Facebook has not searched the email of the company’s chief executive and chief operating officers for documents responsive to the subpoena,” it said.

Separate documents indicated the company started cutting off developers’ access to user data from 2012, in a bid to squash potential rivals. The move was sold as a boost to user privacy, in what became known to executives as the Switcharoo Plan.

Portions of the material, which came from a lawsuit filed by developer Six4Three, have been released over the course of the past year, after MP Damian Collins obtained them. However they provided an incomplete picture of the period.

JESS CLARK

HOUSEBUILDER Redrow suffered a shareholder revolt at its annual general meeting (AGM) yesterday as around a third of investors voted against the appointment of its executive chairman and payment plans for senior management.

At the AGM in central London yesterday 32 per cent of shareholders voted against the re-appointment of John Tutte as executive chairman, while 30 per cent protested the directors’ remuneration report. Both motions were approved after receiving enough support.

The firm said it would “keep current arrangements under review”.

JESS CLARK

THE UK competition watchdog has approved the £1.4bn acquisition of student accommodation provider Liberty Living by rival firm Unite Students.

The Competition and Markets Authority announced yesterday that it has decided not to escalate its investigation into the merger to a stage two inquiry after seeking comment from interested parties on whether the take over could reduce competition.

Unite said the acquisition of Liberty Living, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB), is expected to be completed at the end of the month. Following the deal, CPPIB will appoint its London-based real estate investments managing director Thomas Jackson to the board of the enlarged group.

Unite said the combined group is expected to deliver cost synergies of £4m next year and £15m per year from 2021.

Unite currently has approximately 130 student properties across 22 cities.

Green light for £1.4bn student housing deal

DAVID AND GOLIATH Xerox makes giant leap in $33bn bid for computer behemoth
UK FUND managers have called on the next government to protect cross-border investment arrangements and secure close alignment with EU rules post-Brexit.

Entering the fray of General Election campaigning, the Investment Association (IA) also warned against a no-deal Brexit, calling it “the worst possible outcome for UK investment managers”.

In an industry manifesto released yesterday, the IA said the UK’s future relationship with the EU should be “underpinned by regulatory cooperation” and must focus on preserving managers’ ability to offer cross-border investment products.

Citing the loss of passporting arrangements covering the cross-border sale of funds and the need for the UK to retain equivalence in clearing houses, the IA said it was “particularly vital that plans already made are not changed”.

The head of the UK’s financial regulator has previously called for equivalence between the UK and EU post-Brexit. Speaking in September, Financial Conduct Authority boss Andrew Bailey said overlaps between UK and EU share regulations post-Brexit would damage markets “to no good end”.

Brussels has warned that if the UK leaves without a deal, EU investment firms will have to trade euro-denominated shares within the bloc.

The IA said the UK should be given a “strong voice” in the development of future regulation, both at European and global levels.

Chief executive Chris Cummings said the investment industry was “one of the jewels in the UK’s financial services crown”, and said the country needed to maintain its position as a “global centre of excellence for investment management”.

VITAL

Hong Kong bourse posts profit drop amid civil unrest

SEBASTIAN MCCARTHY
@SebMcCarthy
HONG Kong’s bourse has reported a fall in profit during the last quarter, as months of political unrest took its toll on the stock exchange operator. Profit at the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing (HKEX) dropped 9.5 per cent against the same period last year.

Revolut’s head of information security quits

ALEX DANIEL
@alexmdaniel
REVOLUT’s chief information security officer (CISO) Dinis Cruz has quit less than two months after he joined the firm.

Cruz announced last week that he will leave the challenger bank this month, in a move described as being “by mutual agreement”. He said he was “looking for my next challenge”.

MONZO

ONLINE bank Monzo’s attempt to trademark its distinctive “hot coral” colour has been turned down by the Intellectual Property Office. The move, first reported by Financial News, was an attempt to protect the brand’s image against a number of other global companies that have been using a similar shade of orange. It is expected to launch another application in the future.

RED-FACED

Monzo’s move to trademark its signature ‘hot coral’ colour is rejected

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Mothercare shares surge after UK retail division enters administration

JESS CLARK
@jclarkjourno

SHARES in Mothercare soared yesterday after the maternity and baby retailer’s UK business entered administration. Mothercare’s share price jumped 32.6 per cent to 32.6p, after management firmed up administration plans and revealed further details on the company’s turnaround proposals. On Tuesday Mothercare announced PwC had been appointed as administrators and will close its 79 UK stores, putting thousands of jobs at risk. The retailer also unveiled further restructuring plans for the group, including a share placement, repaying bank debt facilities through the administration and a revised pension payment schedule.

The company said it was in talks with potential partners to maintain a presence in the UK through a franchise agreement. Mothercare chairman Clive Whiley said the transformation plans will ensure the retailer has a “bright future ahead as a solvent and cash generative group”. Shore Capital Markets analysts said the move removed a “structural milestone” for the group.

EDWARD THICKNESSE
@edthicknesse

CONNECT Group boss Jos Opdeweegh resigned yesterday as the company reported an 18 per cent fall in pre-tax profit for the year ending 31 August.

According to the group’s preliminary results, profit fell from £28.4m in 2018 to £23.2m, with earnings per share down 15 per cent to 7.9p. Continuing legacy issues with Tuffnells, a parcel freight distributor, offset a strong performance from Smith News. In September the division won a new five-year contract worth £100m a year to distribute the Telegraph and Sunday Telegraph. Division boss Jon Bunting was announced as the group’s interim boss.

The company announced that it would conduct a strategic review of Tuffnells in an attempt to speed up its recovery. It also said that it would appoint an executive chair to the freight company to support it during the strategic review.

Chairman Gary Kennedy said: “The turnaround of Tuffnells remains our most pressing challenge. The strategic review and the management changes that we have announced today reflects our focus on delivering improvement.” Shares fell just under two per cent to 29p yesterday.

GOING UNDERGROUND £100m health and leisure complex planned for West End

PLANS have been submitted for a £100m underground development to expand the Harley Street medical area in London’s West End. The 280,000 sq ft development beneath Cavendish Square will house healthcare, retail and leisure facilities.

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City economists say BoE should keep it steady

HARRY ROBERSON

THE BANK of England (BoE) must leave interest rates on hold today and resist the urge to tinker until Britain’s economy is out of the General Election and Brexit fog, City A.M.’s panel of expert economists has said.

Much has changed in British politics since the BoE’s last monetary policy committee (MPC) decision in September. Prime Minister Boris Johnson could not push his new deal quickly through parliament, leading him to request a Brexit extension and ultimately call a General Election.

The UK economy has had a mixed time since the Bank published its last quarterly “inflation report” economic forecasts in August. British GDP shrank in the second quarter, figures revealed later in August, but economists think third-quarter growth will have picked up.

Another quarterly forecast — rebranded as the “monetary policy report” — is due today. Investors and analysts will parse the text to see whether the BoE has changed its prediction of 1.3 per cent growth this year and next, and what is expected to happen to business investment.

City A.M.’s shadow MPC voted eight to one in favour of keeping interest rates on hold. The consensus view was that with politics in flux, any move would not be grounded in any reliable expectations about the future.

The only person voting for a cut, Simon Ward of Janus Henderson, said that “economic weakness has spread to the labour market,” causing unemployment to rise.

BoE governor Mark Carney’s term is set to end on 31 January, the new deadline for Britain to leave the European Union.

Last week, chancellor Sajid Javid said the decision over Carney’s successor would be delayed until after the General Election.

HOLD: The bank rate should be kept flat. Inflation remains below the two per cent mark with economic growth data for the third quarter looking more positive than the previous quarter. And with real wage growth continuing, there is less of a rush required to create further stimulus. With the current political landscape now in General Election mode and further fiscal boosts on the cards, it seems prudent to wait and see the outcome of the election before making a change. However, if there is further Brexit delay leading to slower economic growth a cut may be required.

City A.M.’s Shadow Monetary Policy Committee

The Bank of England would be guessing if it cut rates now, says our panel

HARRY ROBERSON

Our panel’s guest chair: Frances Haque Santander

JAVON LOLAY

LLOYDS BANK

Hold: There is a strong case for waiting for further news before any move. Brexit developments remain conditional on the upcoming election, adding another layer of uncertainty to the economic outlook.

MIKE BELL

JP MORGAN ASSET MANAGEMENT

Hold: With an election approaching, where there could potentially provide more clarity on what type of Brexit, if any, we are heading for, it makes sense to stay on hold for now.

RUTH GREGORY

CAPITAL ECONOMICS

Hold: The chance of a Brexit deal in January suggests a cut would be premature. But unless the headwinds of weak global growth and Brexit uncertainty fade, the next move in rates may be down.

JEAVON LOLAY

LLOYDS BANK

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SIMON WARD

JANUS HENDERSON

Cut: The case for easing is at least as strong as elsewhere. Inflation is below target and falling while economic weakness has spread to the labour market, with unemployement and redundancies picking up.

VICKY PRYCE

CEBR

Hold and be prepared to do more if needed. UK economy appears to be stagnating. Brexit worries continue to dampen business and consumer sentiment and forthcoming general election is adding to uncertainty.

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TEJ PARikh

INSTITUTE OF DIRECTORS

Hold: The chance of a Brexit deal in January suggests a cut would be premature. But unless the headwinds of weak global growth and Brexit uncertainty fade, the next move in rates may be down.

PETER DIXON

COMMERZBANK

Hold: Economic conditions remain benign and inflation is contained. With the Brexit deadline merely having been postponed another three months, the prudent strategy is to keep the powder dry for now.
Sir Philip Green’s Arcadia bolsters senior digital team in online push

JESS CLARK @jclarkjourno

SIR PHILIP Green’s Arcadia has bolstered its digital team with three new senior hires, as the embattled retail group seeks to improve online sales as its physical stores continue to struggle.

Arcadia, which owns high street brands such as Topshop and Dorothy Perkins, has created a new role — group chief digital officer — as it doubles down on its bid to boost its online shopping offering.

Rafaele Petruzzo, former chief transformation officer at Nets Group, has been appointed into the new digital chief position.

Former Primark IT transformation director Karl De Brujin recently joined Green’s retail empire as chief information officer, and Simon Pakenham-Walsh has been appointed as the new director of digital and retail technology.

Chief executive Ian Grabiner said the spate of new appointments aimed to “drive forward digital ambitions and boost sales from online channels”.

Arcadia reported an operating loss of £138m in the year ending 1 September 2018, its most recent financial filings, and a 4.5 per cent drop in turnover to £1.8bn.

Peer-to-peer lender Zopa makes banking debut as pressure rises

EMILY NICOLLE @emilyjnicolle

ZOPA, one of the UK’s three largest names in peer-to-peer lending, is to launch its first foray into banking.

The debut comes as the peer-to-peer sector is facing scrutiny from regulators and falling demand from investors.

The firm will today launch fixed-term savings accounts, which will be closed in an early testing phase due to limits placed upon the lender by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

Zopa’s restricted banking licence only allows it to accept up to £50,000 in customer deposits. A spokesperson would not comment on a timeline for full authorisation.

Investor demand for peer-to-peer lending has been in decline, prompting firms to seek other profit-generating avenues. In July London-listed rival Funding Circle halved its sales growth targets.

City A.M. understands Zopa is currently seeking further funding. It disclosed a £60m funding round in November last year.

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WHY WAIT? IT’S HERE ALREADY.

BEST EVER BLACK FRIDAY

Peer-to-peer lender Zopa makes banking debut as pressure rises
SHOPPING centre owner Intu is expecting to report a sharp drop in rental income for 2019 after a higher-than-anticipated volume of insolvencies from its occupants.

Shares in the group tumbled over 17 per cent to 33.3p at the end of trading yesterday as the real estate giant revealed that it might have to sell off assets or make a cash call.

The retail landlord said yesterday that it was forecasting like-for-like net rental income for 2019 to be down by roughly nine per cent compared to last year, with more than half the reduction coming from the impact of controversial cost-cutting insolvencies known as company voluntary arrangements (CVAs).

Retail giants including Sir Philip Green’s Arcadia and Monsoon have both embarked on CVAs to close stores and cut jobs amid a widespread industry downturn.

New rent in the nine months to 30 September 2019 hit £19m, falling from £32m during the same period last year.

However, footfall rose 0.9 per cent, “significantly outperforming Springboard footfall monitor for shopping centres which was down on average by 2.4 per cent”, the group said.

During the third quarter, Intu agreed 47 long-term leases amounting to £5m in annual rent, compared with 84 leases equalling £15m in annual rent in the same period a year ago.

Shares in the Lakeside and Trafford Centre owner have tumbled more than 75 per cent this year.

Norwegian Air stock slumps as airline seeks to raise 2020 cash

SHARES in Norwegian Air fell more than 11 per cent yesterday after the struggling airline on Tuesday launched its third share sale in two years and a bond issue.

The company raised 2.5bn Norwegian krone (£211.5m) to meet its cash needs through 2020 after selling 27.25m new shares at 40 krone per share.

Norwegian Air also raised $150m (£116.8m) through a convertible bond issue. The proceeds... will secure required financing of working capital during the winter season and create headroom to financial covenants while completing the strategic transformation of the company,” Norwegian said.

Engine issues and the grounding of its 18 Boeing 737 Max aircraft have put a halt on Norwegian’s expansion plans as the airline seeks to cut costs.

The company has plans to add 27 Airbus aircraft to its fleet.
ASTRAZENECA yesterday unveiled three new initiatives to further deepen the UK-based company’s footprint in China.

The pharmaceuticals multinational has agreed a partnership with China International Capital Corporation, one of China’s leading investment banks, to create a $1bn (£780m) Healthcare Industrial Fund. Astrazeneca will be a minority partner in the fund and will largely take an advisory role in selecting investments and supporting the firms. The fund will support domestic companies, as well as international companies looking to establish a presence in China.

It will be the first and largest-scale healthcare industrial fund established by Astrazeneca.

The Anglo-Swedish firm also announced the creation of a new global research and development (R&D) centre and an AI innovation centre, both in Shanghai.

The former will conduct R&D for potential new medicines, with its primary focus on diseases that are prevalent in China and across Asia more broadly. The latter will aim to capitalise on the latest digital technology to accelerate the delivery of treatments to patients in China and around the world.

Pascal Soriot, chief executive officer, said: “China is rapidly emerging as a global scientific powerhouse, which is why we have taken this exciting decision to follow the science, by expanding our R&D presence and by working with the investment community.”

Fintech duo Gocardless and Transferwise link up on payments plan

FINTECH giants Gocardless and Transferwise have teamed up to create a service to help businesses collect recurring international payments.

The companies said they have created “the first global network for bank debit”, which will involve Gocardless using Transferwise’s business product to provide the money transfer company’s foreign exchange rates to its own customers.

“Businesses today have global ambitions, but an antiquated, fragmented and opaque payments system is holding them back,” said Gocardless co-founder and chief executive Hiroki Takeuchi.

Firms on the network will not have to open accounts in countries where they collect payments, and will not have to pay fees for transactions in foreign currencies.
NATIONAL TREASURE Britain’s favourite veteran broadcaster Sir David Attenborough tops poll on figures of positive influence

THREE-quarters of Britons consider Sir David Attenborough as the public figure with the most positive influence in the UK, according to a new survey. At the opposite end, Mindshare research found just 14 per cent of people thought parliament had a positive influence on the country.

Sophos posts loss ahead of £3bn private takeover

JAMES BOOTH
@jamessbooth

CYBERSECURITY firm Sophos yesterday posted a loss for the first half of the year, blaming restructuring and legal costs. The London-listed firm is set to be taken private after accepting a £3bn takeover bid from US private equity firm Thoma Bravo last month.

Today announced a loss before tax of £1.5m (£1.16m) for the six months to 30 September, which it said was due to restructuring and legal costs. Sophos also said its $26m profit in the first half last year was further boosted by an exceptional credit.

Reported group revenue of $365.8m grew five per cent year on year and eight per cent at constant currency. It said exceptional items were a net expense of $14.3m during the period compared to a net credit of $5.5m in the prior year.

Sophos said its expenses arose as a result of restructuring costs, legal costs and professional fees incurred in connection with a review of “apparent non-compliance with certain regulatory matters pertaining to the use of some of the group’s products in certain overseas territories.”

The Oxford-based company makes antivirus, encryption and cloud security products, boasting more than 400,000 customers in over 150 countries around the world.

Chief executive Kris Hagerman said: “Our performance in the period shows the continued progress we are making towards fully transitioning our business to next-generation cybersecurity.” Sophos shareholders are yet to approve the offer by Thoma Bravo of $7.40 per share.

Sophos is active in the software buyout market, having already made more than 200 acquisitions representing worth over £50bn overall.

Nicholas Hyett, equity analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown, said: “The Thoma Bravo offer still needs shareholder and regulatory approval – but with the three largest shareholders already on board and no obvious regulatory conflict, we see little chance of it falling at these hurdles.”

He added that the offer comes after a “painful couple of years for investors.”

“More recent results have stabilised the ship somewhat, but growth has been slower and investor confidence needs a lot of rebuilding. Against that background we suspect most investors will be gratifyingly happy with the offer,” he said.

TfL plans new Thames piers to cater for over 20m passengers

STEVEN BOSCIA
@StefanBoscia

PLANS to transform the Thames into a major commuter hub have taken a step forward with new passenger piers set to be built along the river.

Transport for London (TfL) announced yesterday it would build new public piers in a bid to increase the Thames’ capacity to cater for public transport journeys. TfL has worked with the Port of London Authority (PLA) on the Pier Upgrade Framework Plan to add more piers to the Thames and make the existing 24 more sustainable.

The PLA and TfL are working with the Port of London Authority, the London boroughs, Transport for London and Environment Agency to develop an outline business case for the piers.

Uber rival Bolt to boost investment in environment

ANNA MENIN
@annamennin

RIDE-HAILING app Bolt is set to launch a £10m (£8.6m) environmental impact fund in a bid to boost its green credentials.

Bolt, which recently committed to making all journeys taken via its app carbon neutral through offsetting, said the fund would invest in initiatives that deliver “social and environmental benefits”.

Funder and chief executive Markus Villig said the company was “working hard to accelerate the global shift to shared and efficiently-used vehicles”.

In 2019 the global economy has gone into a marked slowdown. US-China relations have remained tense. Drones have attacked oil infrastructure in the Middle East. Global corporate earnings growth has collapsed towards 0%.

If at the start of the year you had foreseen this cascade of bad news – what would you have predicted for stock market returns? I doubt many predictions would have stretched as high as the 21% US equities managed to deliver in dollar terms by the end of the third quarter, according to MSCI indices. Nor the 16% from European equities or the 14% from the UK, in euro and sterling terms, respectively. So what has been behind this? Not corporate profitability (fundamentals). Analysts consensus forecasts for the corporate sector have been steadily downward throughout the year. UK and Japanese companies are now both forecast to suffer profit declines this year, while profits are only expected to grow by around 2% in the US, Europe and emerging markets.

Things have been looking worse on this front, not better. Furthermore, Schroders’ economists are forecasting that economic growth in 2020 will be lower than it has been this year. In reality, the main drivers of stock markets have been central banks. Near the end of 2018, the market was expecting the US Federal Reserve to raise interest rates twice this year. Instead, it has cut them three times to encourage spending and stimulate the economy.

The European Central Bank and Bank of Japan have also joined the “cutting club”.

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SCHRODERS TALK

Duncan Lamont explains why investors have many reasons to be fearful but stock valuations aren’t one of them.

In reality, the main drivers of stock markets are not central banks but rather corporate profitability (fundamentals). Analysts’ consensus forecasts for the corporate sector have been steadily downward throughout the year. UK and Japanese companies are now both forecast to suffer profit declines this year, while profits are only expected to grow by around 2% in the US, Europe and emerging markets. Things have been looking worse on this front, not better. Furthermore, Schroders’ economists are forecasting that economic growth in 2020 will be lower than it has been this year. In reality, the main drivers of stock markets have been central banks. Near the end of 2018, the market was expecting the US Federal Reserve to raise interest rates twice this year. Instead, it has cut them three times to encourage spending and stimulate the economy.

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It comes as part of the PLA goal, announced in 2016, to double the number of passenger journeys on the Thames to 20m by 2015. “New piers served by extended by river bus services will make the river a prime transport choice in east London where they can support new developments, homes, jobs and growth,” the plan said.

The three main forms of transport on the river are the river bus, Woolwich ferry and river tours. The numbers of trips has steadily grown over the past 10 years for river bus passengers, with large growth in the number of people travelling on the river bus.

SUSTAINING THE RALLY

Questioning the sustainability of the equity rally based on central bank support, rather than fundamentals, is natural. This is where analysis of valuations can help, by providing a more dispassionate take on things.

What investors may find reassuring is that, while fundamentals may appear shaky, valuations are not giving any warning signals (see table).

With the exception of the cyclically-adjusted price earnings (CAPE), UK and European stock markets are valued close to their 10-year average (see table in brackets). Japanese equities also appear cheap but our economists are forecasting a fall in Japanese economic output next year, so this cheapness may not be without reason.

Emerging markets present an interesting proposition. Valuations look cheap but stocks could be buffeted by political manoeuvring on trade. The US market is the only one where valuations give cause for concern. However, it is also where growth is forecast to be strongest.

The underlying message is that even though the fundamental backdrop has been miserable and most markets have performed exceptionally well this year, valuations remain at reasonable levels. There are plenty of reasons why investors could justifiably feel pessimistic or fearful about the future, but valuations may not be one of them.

Forward price to earnings (P/E) divides a stock market’s price by the forecast weighted average earnings per share of its constituent companies over the next 12 months. A low number represents a better value.

Trailing P/E works similarly to forward P/E but looks at the last 12 months’ earnings instead.

Cyclically-adjusted price earnings (CAPE) multiple compares the price with earnings over the past 10 years, with those profits adjusted for inflation.

Price-to-book (P/B) multiple compares the price with the book value or net asset value of the stock market.

Dividend yield (DY) is the income paid to investors as a percentage of the price.

© Duncan Lamont is Head of Research and Analysis at Schroders. The value of investments and the income from them may go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amounts originally invested. The information contained in this article is not an offer, solicitation or recommendation to buy or sell any financial instrument or to adopt any investment strategy.
Societe Generale profit plummets amid restructuring

SEBASTIAN McCARTHY

SOCIETE Generale yesterday posted a steep drop in profit for the third quarter of this year, missing analyst expectations amid a major restructuring effort.

The bank reported net profit of €854m (£734m) for the three month period, dropping almost 35 per cent when compared to the same quarter last year. Analysts expected a net income of €863m for the third quarter, according to Refinitiv.

Equity trading revenue slumped 20 per cent, with the bank citing "lower volumes and adverse market conditions, particularly in August". Societe Generale's core Tier 1 ratio, a key measure of capital strength, rose to 12.5 per cent in September from 12 per cent at the end of June.

The bank reported reserves of €5.98bn compared with €6.53bn in the previous year. Under chief executive Frederic Oudea, Societe Generale has been pressing ahead with a new strategy aimed at reversing the effect of several weak financial quarters.

The bank announced 1,600 job cuts earlier this year and is planning to downsize its commodities trading arm.

It also cut 23 branches in French retail networks and freed up capital at its corporate and investment bank. “We have achieved results very much in line with our objectives and priorities,” Oudea said in a statement yesterday morning.

He told CNBC: "Our performance is very much in line with our objectives and priorities. Our priority number one is around capital. This is the core focus of our shareholders." The bank continued deleveraging by reducing risk-weighted assets, which could allow it to use the funds to support business or return some of the money to shareholders.

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BMW beats income estimates for third quarter after top SUV sales

SEBASTIAN McCARTHY

BMW HAS reported a sharp rise in earnings, trumping analyst estimates following one-off accounting changes and a rise in SUV sales.

The German luxury car manufacturer posted earnings before interest and taxes of €2.29bn (£1.97bn) during the last quarter, jumping 33 per cent compared with the same period last year. Group revenues rose 7.9 per cent to €26.67bn from last year’s €24.72bn. Sales of BMW Group cars, which include brands Mini and Rolls-Royce, edged up 3.6 per cent, with a consumer shift away from sedans to high-margin SUVs.

Shares rose one per cent yesterday.

Pizza Express owner to inject £80m into firm

ALEX DANIEL

THE CHINESE owner of restaurant chain Pizza Express yesterday launched a tender offer to buy up £80m of the company’s unsecured bonds, as it seeks to allay concerns about the firm’s financial future.

Chinese private equity firm Hony Capital, which bought the company in 2014, appointed financial advisers before crucial talks with creditors last month over its £1.1bn debt pile.

The cash injection, of up to £80m, will be used to help pay off debt which bondholders are owed. “Approximately 95 per cent of our UK and Ireland restaurants are taken outside the normal course of business,” the firm said.

The company was founded in 1965, and has grown into a family-favourite staple of Britain’s high street. It just under 500 restaurants in the UK and Ireland.

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CNG promises to be first net zero supplier to HGVs

EDWARD THICKNESSE

CNG FUELS, the UK’s leading supplier of renewable biomethane, this morning announced plans to become the first supplier of carbon neutral fuels for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

The supplier plans to use manure to produce carbon neutral biomethane which will undercut diesel prices up to 45 per cent by 2021. HGVs are responsible for 4.2 per cent of UK carbon emissions, making decarbonising their emissions central to the UK’s 2050 net zero goal. The proposed move will cut vehicle greenhouse gases up to 85 per cent.

Manure gives off methane, a greenhouse gas which is 28 times more powerful than carbon dioxide. The use of methane as a fuel prevents it from entering the atmosphere.

Chief executive Philip Fjeld said: “We want to help decarbonise freight transport and enable fleet operators to meet net zero targets now, supporting the UK’s climate targets. “Renewable biomethane sourced from manure is currently the best low-carbon solution for HGVs, but we want to be ready to support our customers when other technologies are commercially viable for freight transport.”

Andy Eastman, managing director of the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership, welcomed the news, saying: “With all the focus on electrification, the low carbon combustion fuels might be overlooked. But it is vital to remember that net zero can be delivered in a number of ways.”

He added that companies must now “accelerate the uptake of these fuel solutions”. CNG has become the fuel partner to a number of companies, including John Lewis, Hermes, Asda, Argos and Cadent. John Lewis has made a commitment to replace its 500-strong HGV fleet with CNG vehicles by 2028.

Iceland’s central bank cuts interest rate to new low amid weak exports

NIKOLAJ SKYDSGAARD

ICELAND’s central bank cut its deposit rate for the fifth time this year yesterday, to three per cent from 3.25 per cent, saying it still expects the economy to contract this year but that current rates should support medium-term price stability.

The bank maintained its outlook for Iceland’s economy to contract by 0.2 per cent this year and lowered its growth forecast for next year to 1.6 per cent from an August estimate of 1.9 per cent.

It said the economy would shrink more than previously expected in the second half of this year as goods exports fell in the third quarter and private consumption slowed. Iceland’s economy has grown in recent years, but a slowdown in tourism and a failed fishing season this year have clouded the outlook.

Flights to and from Iceland fell 29 per cent year on year in the third quarter, and tourist spending in Iceland is expected to decline further in the second half of 2019, the bank said in a statement.

The Icelandic economy suffered after budget airline Wow Air collapsed in March, and the grounding of Icelandair’s Boeing 737 Max jets have further curtailed Iceland’s tourism.

Court rules London-wide ban on Extinction Rebellion is unlawful

EDWARD THICKNESSE

THE HIGH Court have ruled that a London-wide police ban against Extinction Rebellion protests was unlawful, it was announced yesterday.

The ban was imposed in the second week of the activist group’s so-called Autumn Rebellion, during which over 1,800 protestors were arrested.

The group appealed the ban on the grounds that it was a “unprecedented and unlawful” curtailment on the public’s right to protest. Extinction Rebellion’s lawyers have suggested that hundreds of those arrested could bring legal action against the Metropolitan Police over their arrests.

Nick Ephgrave, assistant commissioner of the Met said: “After more than a week of serious disruption in London both to communities and across our partner agencies...we firmly believed that the continuation of the situation was untenable.” The Met said it would carefully consider the judgement.
Impact beyond investment

Meet the teams helping growing businesses to thrive

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What does it mean to be inside IR35?

If you’re deemed to be inside IR35 then for tax purposes, HMRC considers you to be an employee of your client and therefore liable to stump up the same pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) tax as a full-time employee. Nigel Morris, employment tax director at BMA MacIntyre Hudson, sets out seven areas that make it likely you’re inside IR35:

1. The nature of the duties being undertaken — is the job one that you would expect to be done by an employee? Does the end user have employees performing similar roles? If so, this makes it more likely the FSC falls under IR35 rules.

2. Substitution — does the provider of services have the right to send a substitute to carry out the role? Numerous court and tribunal cases have established that where a true right of substitution exists the arrangement is unlikely to be one of employment.

3. Mutually obligation — is the provider of services obliged to accept work offered by the end user? Where the individual has the right to turn down work offered by the end user this is more indicative of self-employment, though HMRC is currently disputing this generally-accepted interpretation.

4. Supervision, direction and control — how much control does the end user have over the manner in which the work is carried out? If the level of control is considerable this means the providers are more like employees and makes it more likely you’ll fall under IR35.

5. Integration into the business — to what extent is the role an integral part of the business? Does the provider present themselves to customers as representing the business? Does the provider have managerial responsibilities within the business? Again, if they do, the individuals working through limited companies are behaving more like employees.

6. The worker in business on their own account — does the worker bear financial risk in the performance of the duties? Who supplies any equipment required for the role? If they do bear financial risk, or provide their own equipment, they are less likely to fall under the scope of these new tax requirements.

WHAT IS IR35?

The Intermediaries Legislation — or IR35, as it is now known — first came into force in April 2000 to prevent workers from ‘disinguishing’ themselves as freelance contractors in order to pay less tax. Former chancellor Philip Hammond resuscitated the legislation in November 2016, as a way to generate extra HMRC income by introducing it in the public sector.

The anti-avoidance legislation targets contractors providing services through a limited company, when in practice they are doing the same work as employees. In HMRC’s eyes, if a service provided by a contractor resembles full-time employment, the contractor falls under IR35 and should therefore pay tax like a full-time employee.

However, it does not recognise the loss of full-time employment benefits a contractor must account for such as sick pay, parental leave, and holidays.

A FREE rolling out to the public sector in April 2017, HMRC’s controversial IR35 tax is set to hit private sector contractors in 2020. And it promises to cost workers a big chunk of change: one estimate suggests contractors could pay 25 per cent more in tax.

Self-employed contractors are now grappling with the legislation, which is to roll out next year regardless of the General Election and a delayed Budget if the Tories win a majority.

With so many changes, there’s plenty you need to bear in mind to avoid being stung by IR35.

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WHAT ARE THE IR35 CHANGES?

In 2017 the government made changes to IR35 for public sector contracts to make the employer responsible for determining whether a contractor falls under IR35 or not.

For private sector contracts, up until now the contractor was responsible for determining whether they fall within IR35.

However, the off-payroll working rules will also be extended to include the private and voluntary sectors in just six months’ time.

Under the latest IR35 reforms, private sector employers will now be responsible for assessing whether or not contractors need to pay income tax and national insurance contributions.

Is the provider entitled to employee benefits such as pension contributions, paid holidays, sick pay? Obviously, if they are, they are being treated like employees and are more likely to fall under IR35 rules as a result.

When will IR35 come to the private sector?

From 6 April 2020 how the rules are applied will change.

“As things stand, the changes are still set to take effect from April 2020. The legislation is currently in draft form and some guidance has been provided,” says Stephanie Wilson, national head of employment tax at BDO.

She adds: “Royal assent is likely to take place when we have a Budget and Finance Bill, which is unlikely to happen until the year after.”

However, Dave Chaplin, boss and founder of Contractor Calculator, which provides advice for self-employed workers, says: “With the Budget cancelled and an election on the horizon we simply don’t know what will happen. It depends who gets into power. It’s not popular.”

Why is it controversial?

“Is a nutshell, from next April, contractors will not be able to set their own tax status unless they are engaged by a ‘small’ private sector company. This duty will fall on the medium or large business they are engaged by,” says Seb Maley, the chief executive of IR35 adviser and insurance company Qdos Contractor.

Maley adds: “This has left contractors fearing the worst. They worry that private sector businesses – like many public sector bodies – will take a risk-averse approach to IR35 reform and unfairly place them inside IR35.”

Last month recruitment giant Hays found that a third of private sector organisations that engage temporary contractors were unaware of the changes to IR35. It also found less than half (43 per cent) of medium and large private sector organisations who engage contractors have begun preparing for the changes.

Andy Chamberlain, deputy director of policy at the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed, says: “It is clear the government has done nowhere near enough to prepare businesses.”
BT shares falter as Virgin ditches it for Vodafone

ANNA MENIN

VIRGIN Media is leaving BT’s mobile network for rival Vodafone from late 2021, in a five-year deal that will give its customers access to new services including 5G.

Under the deal, Vodafone will supply wholesale mobile services including voice and data to over 3m Virgin Mobile and Virgin Media Business customers until 2026.

“This agreement with Vodafone will bring a host of fantastic benefits and experiences to our customers, including 5G services in the near future,” said Virgin Media chief executive Lutz Schuler.

Virgin pioneered the mobile virtual network operator (MVNO) model, including 5G.

“Twenty years ago Virgin Mobile became the world’s first virtual operator and this new agreement builds on that heritage,” Schuler said. “We’ve worked with BT to provide mobile services for many years and will continue to work together in a number of areas. We want our customers to have a limitless experience — it’s now the right time to take a leap forward with Vodafone to grow further and faster,” he added.

BT’s share price dipped 4.7 per cent yesterday to 193.9p following news of the deal.

New York Times smashes profit forecast on digital subscriptions

NEHA MALARA

THE NEW York Times beat third-quarter profit estimates yesterday, as more people signed up for the newspaper’s digital subscription, priced as low as $2 (£1.55) a week.

Paid digital-only subscriptions in the third quarter rose 273,000 from the preceding quarter, taking the total subscribers to about 4m. Of the additions, 209,000 came purely from its new-only products. Total revenue rose to $428.5m (£332.7m) from $417.3m a year earlier, marginally falling short of analysts’ estimates.

Newspapers are offering huge discounts for their digital editions as they lose online advertising revenue to Google and Facebook.

Unicredit kicks off sale of stake in Mediobanca

SILVIA ALOISI

ITALY’s largest bank Unicredit said on Tuesday it had started the sale of its 8.4 per cent stake in investment bank Mediobanca, in a move that could shake up the country’s financial landscape.

Unicredit has been a long-time shareholder in the venerable merchant bank, which for most of Italy’s post-war history was at the centre of a web of cross-shareholdings allowing it to call the shots at Italy Inc.

Though Mediobanca has in recent years exited many of its investments in other companies, it remains the biggest shareholder in Europe’s third-largest insurer Generali.

Credito Italiano, the bank that Unicredit grew out of, was among the founders of Mediobanca back in 1946. Unicredit, which was Mediobanca’s largest shareholder prior to the sale, is selling the stake at an average price of €10.53 per share, according to one of the bookrunners for the sale, for an overall value of around €780m (£671.8m).

Unicredit shares rose just over one per cent yesterday.

Syria Emergency

Will you help a refugee mother protect her children this winter?

Right now, Syrian refugee families like Khitam’s are terrified by the prospect of another winter. Living in terrible conditions, they will feel every blast of icy wind and their children are incredibly vulnerable to lethal respiratory conditions.

After eight years of war, Syrian refugee families are trapped in desperate poverty and face a battle to survive the winter.

Will you help protect a refugee family from the freezing winter cold?

£75

PROVIDES A WINTER SURVIVAL KIT CONTAINING ESSENTIALS SUCH AS A STOVE, BLANKETS, WARM CLOTHES AND A TARPALIN FOR INSULATION.
FTSE gains for fourth day amid trade optimism

LONDON’s FTSE 100 edged up yesterday, adding to a two per cent gain over the past three sessions, as investors waited for news on US-China trade talks before making further bets. The FTSE 100, which had been holding at a near one-month high this week, rose 0.1 per cent, while the FTSE 250 dipped 0.4 per cent as the pound weakened slightly ahead of a Bank of England’s interest rate decision today.

The drop in the currency, however, boosted exporters British American Tobacco, Unilever and Diageo, which excelled on the main bourse.

A standout loser in the wider London market was smallcap shopping centre owner Intu, which shed 37.1 per cent after saying it may need to raise additional cash.

That came along with a warning that letting activity slowed in the third quarter as some customers delayed decisions due to Brexit uncertainty. The company also forecast a drop in annual rental income.

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Mothercare shares leapt 17.1 per cent after saying it needed more cash, 33 per cent on their best day in nearly two decades. The baby products retailer shut all its UK stores and laid out plans to return the rest of the company to profitability by Fiscal 2021. Yesterday’s rally helped Mothercare claw back all the losses that followed its notice of intent to appoint administrators for its UK operations.

In the same sector, Marks & Spencer ended marginally lower after jumping nearly eight per cent earlier in the session, after reporting a plunge in first-half earnings.

TOP RISERS
1. Imperial Brands Up 1.87 per cent
2. Unilever Up 1.90 per cent
3. BAT Up 1.83 per cent

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2. JD Sports Down 2.61 per cent
3. British Land Down 2.45 per cent

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**Thursday 7 November 2019**

**Markets**

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**FORUM**

**EDITED BY LUKE GRAHAM**

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Office culture needs a cleanup

[Re: Insurance industry must improve corporate culture, Bank of England]

This week’s recommendation from the Bank of England reinforces how important workplace culture is for the insurance industry and beyond. For companies which fail to get this right, culture in the workplace can quickly become toxic. The recent report from Lloyd’s of London detailing sexual harassment claims is a true reflection of this. Crucially, the cost of bad culture in the workplace is estimated to be £23bn every year, as a third of Brits quit their job because of this. Culture is not a soft option to be skipped on. Of changing and establishing a strong company culture in the workplace is by no means easy. For these insurance firms, it won’t be ‘quick wins’ – data exists to develop a positive culture which can flourish. For this, commitment from the top is needed — chief executives must take time to ensure that company culture is aligned with values, mission and strategy. Jonathan Richards, chief executive and co-founder, Breathe

An Uber gamble

[Re: Can Uber Money succeed?]

While Uber’s move may appear bold, it is hardly a ringing endorsement of the Uber model. There has been a surge of new technology companies following the “one-stop shop” philosophy, but Uber is simply the latest to take this leap. It has a captive audience in its drivers, so leveraging that relationship to sell financial services, such as banking or loans, is a natural next step. Non-banks, such as Karna, have already begun to successfully offer “at purchase” lending, showing how tech companies are broadening their customer relationships to move into the banks’ traditional territory. The real challenge for these companies, however, will be demonstrating how they will be regulated, and ensuring that they can offer consumers protection that rivals the traditional banks. If not, they are unlikely to survive in the long run. Michael Gill, specialist payments partner, iBe

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The FCA is proposing a radical change to the UK’s regulations

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS

The FCA is proposing a radical change to the UK’s regulations.

When you think of Marks & Spencer, you think of food. And not just any food, but top-quality food. In fact, food is so important to M&S that it now accounts for 55% of the group revenue – nearly double the amount that its clothing and home division makes.

At the same time, the UK’s online grocery market is forecast to grow 60% per year to nearly £2bn by 2023. Therefore, M&S’s foray into the world of online groceries is of vital importance if it is to cement and grow its place in the market.

The joint venture with Ocado – which has the best technology in the business – not only does just that, it will also allow M&S to cut costs and bolster its finances in the long run. Of course, both companies will have to win over the sceptics, but if they get things right there is every possibility that M&S’s new online shopping presence can offset the poor performance of its failing clothing and home division.

Will Marks & Spencer’s joint venture with Ocado turn around the struggling retailer’s fortunes?

**YES**

**NO**

**DEBATE**

Henry Groundes-Peace

This could be one of the biggest changes in the last decade to reshape the sector

Henry Groundes-Peace is a director of financial services at H+K Strategies.

We believe that this is a positive opportunity for years to come.

The UK can’t sit back and rely on other markets to overregulate and stifle their own developments. We need to present our visions, and use the new focus on customers and solutions as a great starting point.

The UK’s most successful financial services challengers haven’t waited for others to define them when it comes to regulation.

This has come with the acknowledgement that, for too long, financial conduct regulation has been focused on narrow compliance.

The UK can’t sit back and rely on other markets to overregulate and stifle their own developments. We need to present our visions, and use the new focus on customers and solutions as a great starting point.

This could be one of the biggest changes in the last decade to reshape the sector – let’s not waste it.

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CITYAM.COM/EMAIL
Childcare is the root cause of the gender pension gap, says Katherine Denham

The average monthly cost of childcare in the UK is more than the cost of the average mortgage, which serves as a stark reminder of the financial burden facing many families.

Childcare costs can be so enormous that it often makes financial sense for one parent to take a career break or work part-time to care for the kids. More often than not, this caring responsibility falls to women.

While the proportion of women in employment is at a record high of 71.4 per cent, a staggering 41 per cent work part-time, compared to 13 per cent of men. The gender pay gap is both the cause of this, because men tend to earn more than women, and also the effect, as women are more likely than men to work part-time to take care of the kids, which therefore reduces their earnings.

But while the notable inequalities around pay are well-documented, there is a lesser known knock-on effect: the gender pension gap.

By the time that women reach the age of 60, they typically have £156,500 saved into a pension, which is just a third of an average man’s £556,500 pot, according to figures from Now Pensions. And this is exacerbated by the fact that women tend to live longer than men, meaning that their money has to stretch further.

Of course, women who reduce their hours to care for children will inevitably contribute less into their pensions, and for some, this means that they no longer meet the £10,000 annual earnings threshold needed to trigger auto-enrolment. For women on long career breaks, they may have no pension contributions at all.

And while you could argue that people can sign up to a private pension scheme, many new parents simply don’t have the kind of income that allows them to set savings aside each month.

PwC’s Jane Portas points out that the gender pay gap isn’t expected to close until 2050. This means that women in the workplace today can still expect a gender pension gap in 30-odd years time, so that’s something we need to take action on.

So what’s the answer to this issue? Business Deborah Stedman Scott, minister at the Department for Work and Pensions, says that progress relies on partnerships between government, financial services, and employers. “None of us are as clever as all of us – everyone needs to get involved,” she adds.

There’s clearly scope for businesses to do more by helping women who are returning to work after taking time out to care for children, partly by ensuring that they are able to progress in their careers. Portas highlights that when women are making a decision about whether to return to work, the loss of pension wealth is rarely a factor they consider. “At this pivotal time, women are not thinking about their pensions. So there is a really important role for the workplace in prompting employees to think about their financial lives during these key moments, because they can have long-term implications.” In fact, as a result of this pension deficit, the PwC partner points out that women often struggle to pay for their own care in retirement.

Input from the government is also needed to close the gap. While policies like shared parental leave and 30 hours free childcare have been introduced, these initiatives haven’t taken off as hoped. In fact, just over one per cent of new parents took shared parental leave in 2017-18, according to the University of Birmingham.

Portas says that sharing childcare responsibilities more equally between men and women will be key to closing the gap.

This in turn is about changing social attitudes, particularly the stigma around stay-at-home fatherhood. For it to become more normalised, organisations should do more to encourage men to take up shared parental leave.

There are also calls to scrap the auto-enrolment threshold. Speaking to City AM, Jonathan Bland from Pension Geeks suggested that the minimum earnings level should be removed, so that workers can pay into their pensions from the first £1 they earn. “Both men and women tend to be on similar pay in their twenties and early thirties, but the gender pay gap widens after this age when women tend to have children, or reduce their hours or work part-time,” he says. “So if we can encourage women to save more at the start of their careers, it will alleviate this problem to some extent.”

Meanwhile, Now Pensions has suggested that, for those women who take time out of work, the government make up for the lack of employer contributions by topping up their pension pots. At National Living Wage level, this top-up would boost women’s pension outcomes by 20 per cent and close around half of the pension wealth gap.

Childcare is clearly the crux of this issue. It’s a cost that has been rising above wage growth and inflation, increasing by a staggering seven per cent between 2017 and 2018. Figures from Royal London highlighted that a full-time nursery place for a child under two typically costs £1,105 a month, while the average monthly mortgage repayment is £1,040. With this in mind, giving parents access to affordable childcare would help to close the pension gap by allowing both parents to keep working.

With women facing persistent barriers to accumulating wealth throughout their lives, closing the pension gap needs a multifaceted approach. We certainly need to move away from a system where women are financially punished for raising children.
**TECHNOLOGY**

**GADGET**

**GOOGLE NEST MINI** £49; STORE.GOOGLE.COM

Launched in 2017, the Google Home Mini smart speaker was the easiest and cheapest way to get a virtual assistant into your home. Now rebranded as the Google Nest Mini, the second generation of helpful robot do-nut chained in a fiercely infant improvement. The fabric covers are now made from recycled plastic bottles. The device detects when you're near and illuminates the LED lights to help you find the volume controls. It can be wall-mounted, and it's a piece of cake to move around - but before - the original Mini was never truly intended for playing music, but now, while it obviously doesn't compare to Google's larger speakers, it does the job. The Nest Mini can also be synchronised with other Google speakers for Sonos-style, flat-filling sound. The underlying Google Assistant works as usual: she can control tens of thousands of smart devices from bulbs and thermostats to TVs and locks, stream music, make free phone calls and act as an intercom.

A tidy little refresh for Google's puck-shaped speaker, the Nest Mini continues to be the simplest way to kickstart a smart home.

**GADGET**

**GOOGLE NEST WIFI** £239; STORE.GOOGLE.COM

How do you make wifi sexier? You can't, but you can at least make it look good. Google Nest Wifi is a powerful internet router that – unlike the messy boxes with ugly antennas most broadband providers send you – actually looks at home in a living room shelf. A second, smaller and similarly designed puck acts as a wifi booster, and when placed in another room creates a reliable mesh network that ensures total coverage for the average sized London house or flat. Slowly invisibly tunes your internet to keep speeds up, and Google makes the bold promise that you'll never have to "turn it on and off again". Setup is effortless, and is achieved through the Google Home app. There you can also set up special guest networks and parental controls to restrict certain devices on the network, blocking mucky websites or setting time limits. You can even ask the Assistant to "pause wi-fi for the kids" if you suspect they're playing Fortnite under the covers. The secondary booster 'point' acts as its own smart speaker too. Sex? Not quite. But about as sexy as wifi will ever get.

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**AirPods Pro improve in every way**

*Why these noise cancelling buds are a must-have.* By Steve Dinneen

**APPLE AIRPODS PRO £249; APPLE.COM/UK**

Apple’s regular AirPods leave me cold. They look daft, with their unguessed-on-toothbrush heads – and have such poor sound quality you’re listening to music in an hermetically sealed room, everything sounds distanced and muted. Google joined the AirPods with a similarly designed Apple to the design and audio quality, which rivals the market on the best of the market. Up to the most significant improvement is the addition of active noise cancellation (ANC), which uses witchcraft to keep your ears out of the environment around you. Where once there was the clatter of trains and the wailing of babes, suddenly there is only blissful silence. It’s just you and your playlist, alone in the void.

The quality of ANC varies wildly from brand to brand, and Apple comes out somewhere near the top, deadening ambient sound (especially persistent noises like the hum of a jet engine or the rumble of air conditioning) without degrading audio quality. Compare this to the Bose QC20is, whose more pronounced ANC has a detrimental effect on audio quality.

The flip-side to ANC is Transparency Mode, which leaves yet more witchcraft to continue to filter out background noise, while highlighting things like human voices and the squealing tyres of the van that’s bearing down upon you. It’s like having a very mild superpower, allowing you to hear people uncannily clearly from further away.

The AirPods also look better. Like, much better. Those lumpy stands have been shortened, with the oblong buds now following the contours of your ear. They’re incredibly light, by far the most comfortable earphones I’ve tried, and the new silicone tips form a neat seal in your ears (something products from Beats and Jaybird have failed to do). This makes them ideal for working out – they didn’t come loose during a long run, which is a first for me.

Your fellow commuters will be pleased to hear they are pretty well insulated. In a quiet office at full volume mode, which uses yet more witchcraft, you could make out some muffled percussion, while at a more comfortable listening volume he couldn’t hear anything. Compare this to the earphones Apple gives away with its iPhones, which are so noisy people in adjacent offices can sing karaoke to your playlist.

The other slight issue is the lack of a volume button on the stalk. You can play/pause, skip/rewind, switch between noise cancellation and transparency, and summon Siri, but you can’t make the Beach Boys play any louder. What you could do, if you don’t feel like doing it every time, is say “Hey Siri, louder!”, which I now do fairly regularly, hating every way in which this action-puzzle adventure runs the more powerful hardware of the Nintendo Switch also allows for way more clutter about the place. Luigi’s hoover is his main tool and sucks up everything, in an endlessly satisfying way, making this a game as much about tidying up as it is about catching ghosts.

The haunted hotel is split across a dozen or so distinctly themed and imaginative floors. And the puzzles, while never quite stopping you in your tracks, are interesting and will prompt you to think laterally. Perhaps the weirdest tool in Luigi’s box is a semi-sentient doppelganger made of green goo, who can slip through grates to reach areas regular Luigi can’t. In coop, the goo-double can be controlled by a second player.

Nintendo franchises don’t grow up with their players, which is precisely why they feel so timeless. Luigi’s Mansion 3 is as fun and odd a ghoul-chaser as it’s ever been.
Can business models like WeWork really work?

It’s clear that even companies which are built around flexibility can run into trouble

Flexible businesses can, by their very nature, roll with the punches and evolve as their customers do. But the recent pace of change at WeWork has shown that even the most flexible of businesses can be at risk.

Those of us in the property industry cannot fail to have noticed how WeWork has become central London’s largest office tenant in less than 10 years. It reportedly occupies 808 offices in 123 cities worldwide, while also losing $1.9bn on turnover of $1.8bn in the 2018 financial year.

But this growth has been brought into question as of late. Within the last month, WeWork pulled its plans to proceed with an initial public offering, from which it hoped to raise $3.5bn, its founder and chief executive Adam Neumann stood down, and it also had its credit rating downgraded two levels by Fitch from B to triple C.

Last week, it was reported that WeWork received an early payment of $1.5bn from SoftBank, with the coworking company weeks away from running out of money. WeWork was valued as high as $47bn in January this year, but is now thought to be worth closer to $15bn.

But while WeWork is clearly struggling, that’s not to say that the trend towards flexible office accommodation is going to reverse anytime soon. It is sometimes hard to believe that in the 1980s and early 90s, 25-year leases were the norm, whereas today, it is unusual to find an office tenant signing up for more than a 10-year commitment, and frequently less.

Fast forward to today, and we have a new model for flexible working. Flexible leases suit the dynamic nature of the businesses undertaken by many office occupiers in the twenty-first century, and even large global businesses such as HSBC use flexible WeWork accommodation. This model has real value for both young and established businesses.

Part of the problem is that WeWork appears to have been valued more like a tech than a property business, even though its business model is to arbitrage the rent it pays for office accommodation. But there is scope for other similar-style businesses to really use technology to their advantage, utilising the information on tenants to optimise the use of accommodation and the services provided.

The growing trend of large businesses using such models has spawned the growth of a number of flexible office providers, not least Regus. In London, there are several up-and-coming competitors, including FORA, backed by property specialists Delaney.

The new players are embracing the trend for coworking where traditional serviced office operators haven’t, allowing individuals to rent a desk and benefit from the social interaction of working alongside others. It is an evolution of the serviced office model.

So while WeWork’s issues have shaken up the market, coworking offices are here to stay. There is real value in this sector, but it can also be easy to get wrong. Done well, flexible businesses offer an opportunity for the few who can get it right. It’s a question of who will dominate market share in the coming months.

Robert Stokely is real estate director at Sandaire.

WOMBLING FREE

Tube Map Free
Transport for London (TfL) has been mining your wifi data since June. This might sound dodgy but it’s actually going to improve travel time estimates. And this in turn means that TfL can update its Journey Planner app. Tube Map is a navigation app that gives you step-by-step directions to find your way around the Big Smoke. It even works offline so that you can figure out your journey and avoid delays while you’re underground.
The World Cup was a hit, so what now? Felix Keith asks what it means for rugby and Japan

NEW ZEALAND TO HOST T20I SERIES

England’s experienced players need to step up in T20Is

THINK England’s inexperience has shown as they have lost the last two Twenty20 internationals in New Zealand to slip 2-1 behind in a three-match T20 series. Six players went on the tour without a cap to their name and all of them played the most recent game on Tuesday, which England conspired to lose when it seemed they were in complete control of the chase.

T20 can be a cruel format for bowlers and I feel for Saqib Mahmood, who has received some tap across the three matches. The Worcestershire bowler’s variations are very effective on the slower wickets back home but on truer pitches and against batsmen who have done their homework on his deliveries he can go the distance.

Brown’s confidence will have been boosted, however, by the news this week that he has been picked up by Melbourne Stars for the upcoming Big Bash season. As Jofra Archer showed at Hobart Hurricanes, it only takes one brilliant season in T20 cricket to become hot property. I think he’s a smart buy from the Stars as the size of the MCG outfield should suit Brown’s signature slower ball nicely.

JORDAN SHINING

It hasn’t just been about new faces in New Zealand. Having not been involved in the World Cup, Chris Jordan has perhaps been forgiven about his touch, but his performances in the first two games when he returned 2-28 and 3-22 reminded us of his talents. Jordan has slipped behind the likes of the Curran brothers, Chris Woakes, David Willey and Liam Plunkett in the white-ball bowling ranks, but I think he would be a good selection for the T20 World Cup in Australia next year. He is a brilliant death bowler, useful lower-order batsman and athletic fielder with a lot of experience of playing franchise cricket around the world.
AST month’s seven-goal thrashing by Bayern Munich suddenly feels a long time ago for Tottenham. Back-to-back Champions League wins over Red Star with an aggregate score line of 9-0 has gone a long way to banishing the ghosts of Bayern, leaving Spurs four points clear of the Serbian side in Group B’s second place.

A trip to Belgrade shouldn’t be a walk in the park, and it wasn’t unexpected. But after giving him two more than presentable chances to the hosts, Spurs moved through the gears to quell the famous atmosphere and run out comfortable winners.

Lo Celso takes his chance
Spurs fans have been calling for it ever since the 34-year-old’s arrival. Finally, Mauricio Pochettino responded, starting summer signing Giovani Lo Celso for the first time.

With Erik Lamela out injured and Christian Eriksen enduring a prolonged spell of disappointing form, Lo Celso has a great opportunity to establish himself. He took it last night.

His goal was memorable for all the wrong reasons – a coming-after-a-comedic-interlude in which Harry Kane hit the post. Son Heung-min in the bar and Dele Alli fluffed an overhead kick but it was an important one which got Tottenham under way.

Soft Centre
Pochettino tried out a new centre-back combination in Belgrade, with互通 Sanchez partnering not by Toby Alderweireld or Jan Vertonghen but by Victor Wanyama.

With Juan Foyth at right-back it appeared a nod to the future of Spurs, and although they kept a clean sheet there were signs of weakness. Milan Pavkov should have put Red Star ahead in the 23rd minute, but Paolo Gazzaniga kept his attempt out with an outstretched leg. Rajiv van La Parra also struck the post before Sanchez inadvertently hit his own bar from the rebound. Spurs were not punished but they had a soft centre.

Sming Son
Son led the pitch distraught on Sunday afternoon following his involvement in the serious injury to Everton’s Andre Gomes.

After having his red card overturned on appeal, it was pleasing for Spurs fans to see one of their key players back doing what he does best. While his two goals owed more to their creators, they were still finished expertly. Tanguy Ndombele retrieved possession, charged forward and found Alli, who fed Son to smash his first into the roof of the net.

Next Kane slipped Danny Rose in on the overlap and the left-back squared for another emphatic Son finish – his fifth in just four Champions League games this season. Substitute Eriksen’s deflected effort from another Rose cross added a fourth and sent Spurs home happy.

Champions League

Red Star
Lo Celso 34’, Son (57’, 61’), Eriksen 85’

Spurs
Son scored his sixth and seventh goals of the season to see Spurs home comfortably
It’s not over yet...

2016

Unprecedented presidency

The Dow Jones fluctuates 6.7% on the day of Donald Trump’s election, before entering a pronounced rally. To date, the US index has gained around 50% – over 9000 points.

2017

Global relief rally

With Emanuel Macron looking likely to win the French presidency over Marine Le Pen, France’s CAC 40 index closes nearly 4% up on 24 April – a ripple of positivity felt as far away as Wall Street.

2017

Strong and stable?

Sterling gains a huge 2.27% against the dollar on the day the election is announced. It then loses 1.19% on polling day, as Theresa May clings to power.

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- Trade exclusive round-the-clock GBP/USD and FTSE 100
- Seize opportunity on a leading-edge platform
- Stay one step ahead with our online election hub

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