

The BRISTOLIAN

"Smiter of the High and Mighty"

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>> THE MARKETS SCANDAL TURNS TOXIC

COUNCIL BOSS DEATH RIDDLE

**EXPOSED IN THE PRESS: ABANDONED BY HIS OWN
BOSSSES. WAS THE TRUTH FINALLY CATCHING-UP?**

TONY HARVEY, the council manager at the heart of a botched effort to cover-up a major financial scandal in Bristol City Council's crisis-hit Markets Service, has KILLED HIMSELF.

It's understood Harvey took his own life early last month soon after being told by bosses he was formally under investigation for his financial management practices.

Harvey was not just responsible for the Markets mess that has been regularly exposed in *THE BRISTOLIAN* over the past year. He was also responsible for the council's security services, which also hit our front page when significant sums of money from its cash-in-transit service went walkabout on Harvey's watch.

Since Harvey's tragic death, *THE BRISTOLIAN* has been handed a large and very detailed file of documents about events of the past

few years at the council's Market Service and we will be publishing substantial amounts of this.

These include a copy of an investigation report by the council's internal audit service into markets dated November 2012.

This demolishes claims by the Mayor and Cabinet Member Sir Gus Hoyty-Toyty - understood to have been based on advice by Harvey and his boss Robert "Spunkface" Orrett, - that there was no evidence of any financial wrongdoing in the markets service was, at best, hugely misleading and at worst, an OUTRIGHT LIE designed to fool senior politicians and the public alike.

THE BRISTOLIAN has also obtained correspondence to the authority's then monitoring officer, Stephen McNamara. A letter dated July 2012 very clearly warns that if Harvey was allowed

by bosses to continue to victimise whistleblowers, through his madcap plan to remove them from their jobs in order to hide his own role in the financial mismanagement of the markets, then this would be PUBLICLY EXPOSED.

This letter was copied to other senior managers and to senior councillors including Geoff Gollop, who now runs the city's finances, Mark Weston (Chair, Audit Committee) and Mark Brain (Chair of the Resources Committee).

It appears they collectively took a gamble to risk public exposure of the facts and let Harvey continue to victimise whistleblowers and continue with his inept cover-up. In retrospect, this looks like a very reckless decision indeed.

And it may prove to have put blood on their hands.

INSIDE:



inside the sicko
culture of city hall

SEE THE SPECIAL
PULLOUT INSIDE

WE ARE
WINNING

EXPOSED! Holmwood House
Bristol's house of horrors features on the BBC and in the Evening Post!

EXPOSED! Horse World
The BRISTOLIAN'S reporting of the basketcase charity creates outcry!

EXPOSED! City Academy
The BRISTOLIAN'S claim last May of institutional racism confirmed!

VICTORY! Wellington Hill
Town Green declared! Council's case collapses after lies are exposed!

SEE BACK PAGE FOR THE GORY DETAILS
ONWARDS AND UPWARDS!

WHAT A GAS

Fan forum user is
a bit see-through!

A regular contributor called 'HENBURY GAS' on the Bristol Rovers Fans Forum seems to be very well informed.

On January 15 he announced to the forum: "Had a chat with my good friend on the planning committee yesterday about the JR [Judicial Review into the proposed Sainsbury's supermarket at the Mem] and he said "All is going well with the Judge" and confirms that we should get good news in March. He also confirmed that South Glos was involved as well. Also keep up the good work on here as they do read this forum!"

Forum user 'BIG DAVE' then replied to him:

"Whilst I don't want to doubt you or your friend, I can't see why (either the prosecution or) the defence can be getting feedback from the judge ahead of the JR hearing..."

To which the knowledgeable and well-connected 'HENBURY GAS' replied: "Think they call it "Discovery" and my friend is the chairman of the planning committee ..."

Entirely coincidentally, the Chairman of Bristol City Council's Development Control (North) Committee responsible for the Sainsbury's development at the Mem is CHRIS WINDOWS, the Tory councillor for, er ... Henbury!

Visit TheBRISTOLIAN.net for the latest smitage!

GEORGE'S MARVELLOUS CATHEDRAL PRIMARY SCHOOL STITCH-UP!

FERGO IGNORES REPORT; HIDES CLOSE LINKS TO SCHOOL; FORCES THROUGH LIBRARY DEAL...WHY?

The **SCANDAL** over how vital space in Bristol's publicly-owned and much-used Central Library has been given over to what until recently was a fee-paying private school continues, after Mayor George Ferguson's Cabinet decision to rubber-stamp the move was confirmed in a 'calling in' council meeting in January. This followed Fergo ignoring a December scrutiny report which was highly critical of the deal on almost every count.

This means Cathedral Primary School (CPS), a new 'free school' set up by the formerly fee-paying Bristol Cathedral Choir School (BCCS), could take over two basement floors of the library from September 2015 if central government approves it. CPS opened the doors to its first intake this past September, and currently occupies the Abbey House building alongside BCCS's administrative block, the Deanery.

But exactly how did this behind-closed-doors deal get to be hammered out? And what can be done now?

The **PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES CRISIS** in Bristol is real - current estimates show that Bristol needs an additional 30% on top of current primary school places over the next five years - but the most acute shortages are in north and south Bristol, which this school will not address.

Since 2008 a state-funded but independently managed academy (thanks to severe financial problems forcing it to go cap-in-hand for government cash), BCCS has only been open to all children for 36 of its 873 years of continuous operation. In other words, it has been a **BASTION OF PRIVILEGE** and closed doors - and is judged to be in the bottom 1% nationally for social inclusion. Like its parent school, CPS will most directly benefit middle and upper class families in Clifton - whilst the school boasts of appealing to similarly affluent parents in South Gloucestershire and North Somerset!

Relocating the primary school into the library will mean two floors-worth of books - many in regular use - will now be shipped over to the B Bond warehouse on Cumberland Basin, where they will be **MAROONED** along with unwilling staff (minus convenient 'wastage' or 'rationalisation' - which will help Fergo trim down his wages bill). Bristolians wanting to access those books will likely have to wait days instead of minutes, and even face fees for the inconvenience.

So how did it all come to this?

George Ferguson has been careful to trying to appear neutral on the issue, but no matter how hard he tries, he can't hide the facts.

As a longtime member of that smug, self-satisfied band of local sub-Freemasons, the Society of Merchant Venturers, ex-private schoolboy Ferguson has been kept abreast of the plans from the outset. Ferguson resigned from the MVs in 2012 - only *after* announcing his candidacy for Mayor - much as he stopped paying dues to the Lib Dems: because it was politically expedient.

A fellow MV is Stephen Parsons. As well as being Chair of Trustees at both the Bristol Cathedral Trust and Cathedral Primary School, as well as Chair of Governors at BCCS and CPS, *and* Vice-Chair of Trustees at BCCS *and* an honorary Canon at the Cathedral, Parsons also runs the Quartet Community Foundation. A way for **RICH BASTARDS** to feel good about themselves by doling out a few grants here and there, Quartet just so happens to administer Fergo's own 'Mayor's Fund for Bristol'. Parsons is also - alongside George Ferguson, of course - a board member at the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership quango. Perhaps he needs a hobby?

Fergo's Cabinet chum, Lib Dem councillor Simon 'Casualty' Cook, has been another key driver behind the annexation of the library. Not himself a Merchant Venturer, Cook is however a member of the MV-linked 'Antient Society of St Stephen's Ringers'. He also went to school (in Norwich) with former BCCS head Kevin Riley. It is thought that this close friendship with Riley brought Cook into **PARSONS' INNER CIRCLE**.

Grabber George's own close connections to BCCS, and the cathedral to which it is linked, stretches back for years. His ex-wife Lavinia Ferguson was for the best part of a decade a director of Bristol Cathedral Concerts Ltd, seven years as company secretary. In the 90s he himself worked directly with the Cathedral's Dean to block any harbour-side development that didn't put money in his **RED TROUSERED POCKETS**.

But not all the pressure has been from a clique within Shitty Hall. Considerable resources have been put at the disposal of BCCS Principal Neil Blundell - the man widely seen as driving the project from the Cathedral side - from ideologically-driven quarters.

Consider the Centre for Market Reform



The CPS Dream Team: making the magic happen. But would you want them looking after your kids?

of Education (CMRE), a champion of 'free schools' which whilst nominally independent shares its premises and some personnel with the Institute for Economic Affairs. (Yes, that's right, Margaret Thatcher's very own **BATSHIT CRAZY** right-wing thinktank is also in the picture!) CMRE appears to have been used to channel funds into the marketing effort to 'sell' the CPS library snatch to Bristolians - not because it's a good deal for the city, but because it fits a certain agenda.

Key to implementing this has been Wotton-based communications agency Edge Media, which has worked for the Cathedral and BCCS for a number of years, and is now additionally contracted to CPS. Certainly the amount of work Edge has put into the **P.R. OFFENSIVE** far outstrips the £6,961 that CPS itself directly spent on communications, or the £2,084 BCCS spends with them annually. But then it is unusual for Edge to represent what is nominally a state school: virtually all its clients are private schools or organisations connected to them.

These include the School Proprietors' Association, for owners of private schools; the Tutors' Association, for private tutors; the Society of Education Consultants; and iSbi, a search site for private schools. It's almost as though Edge Media doesn't really like mixing with us ordinary folk!

But it's not all bad news. The push to relocate CPS into the library building is not unanimously popular within BCCS - either with staff or governors - or even with the Cathedral. It seems that many consider it a vanity project of Parsons, Ferguson, Blundell and Cook. Sources say even Blundell was surprised that Cook managed to get Cabinet approval for the **DODGY** library deal.

Meanwhile, the murkiness of the whole sordid affair has attracted the interest of both the Department for Education and the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

So watch this space...

The BRISTOLIAN says...

A big **THANK YOU** to all of the whistleblowers, well-placed sources and tipsters. Without **YOUR** inside information we would not be able to expose Bristol's bent bosses, incompetent council chiefs or hypocrites in high office. Together we **CAN** make a difference and build a better city for all!

Tweet us your juicy titbits! @BristolianNews

'PINOCCHIOWEN' MUST GO!

LONG-SUFFERING HORSEWORLD STAFF THREATEN MUTINY OVER SPIV BOSS MARK OWEN'S FAILURES

Angry workers at the Whitchurch equine charity HorseWorld are **FIGHTING BACK** against incompetent bosses, with large numbers joining unions to combat threatened job losses.

It comes in the wake of the **COLLAPSE** in December of the financial house of cards built by Mark 'Not That One' Owen in December, when his ludicrous plan to demolish the charity's visitor centre and flog the land to developers was knocked back by Bath & North East Somerset Council.

Since then managing director Owen - dubbed '**PINOCCHIOWEN**' for his at times tenuous connection to the full truth - has been pursuing a grim 'Plan B': sacking up to 60% of HorseWorld staff (28 **REDUNDANCY NOTICES** went out in January) and closing the visitor centre at the end of February.

It is understood that amongst these was one sent to popular equine welfare officer Jerry Watkins, the most senior member of HorseWorld's management team with any practical experience of animal husbandry. In post since 1997, Watkins was sent his marching orders whilst he was in Egypt competing in an international Tent-Pegging competition as captain of the UK team. Thanks, Mark!

Meanwhile, despite having previously promised to resign if his development wheeze didn't come off, Pinocchiowen brazenly continues to cling to control.

It should be no surprise to anyone following the saga in the pages of *The BRISTOLLIAN* or on our website, where for months we have detailed the failures of Pinocchiowen and his **SMALL CLIQUE OF LACKEYS**.

In just six years Owen has presided over the financial meltdown of a previously healthy organisation.

Cash reserves have been frittered away, cushy consultancies have been doled out to chums, and tens of thousands wasted on a development scheme which would have seen 125 new luxury homes built in a green belt village of just 460 dwellings. Estimates of the scale of HorseWorld's financial collapse under Pinocchiowen's regime point towards £2m **SQUANDERED** in three years.

Yet it's ordinary workers, both paid staff and unpaid volunteers - those who have tirelessly toiled to help neglected horses and donkeys throughout all this - who Owen thinks should foot the bill for



"So, is this a diesel or a four-star shire horse?"

his own sheer **INCOMPETENCE**.

True, it may have been down to him that bodged figures found their way into the submissions to BANES; him driving the development-or-nothing strategy; and him that the board of trustees was stuffed with construction professionals rather than people who care for and know about horses.

But never let it be said that Mark Owen isn't prepared to put the effort in when it comes to saving Mark Owen. After all, having started out in 2008 on a not-to-be-sniffed-at £60,000 salary, which since then has reputedly risen by one-third to £80k (plus a £28,000 Audi), he's still getting paid - regardless of performance.

Perhaps that is why he hasn't resigned. Perhaps that's why instead of getting together with staff to come up with a practical plan for the survival of a venerable animal welfare charity he chose to go on an expensive skiing holiday and mail out redundancy notices. Perhaps that's why he is refusing to recognise unions, even though more than half his workforce are now members. Perhaps he really is that **SHAMELESS**.

Shameless or not doesn't change the facts, though. Today's shambles is one of his making, and everyone at Staunton Manor Farm knows it. By working together with each other and with the support of union reps and people across Bristol and beyond, HorseWorld's staff can turn things around.

But not with a hobbled nag like Pinocchiowen in charge.

BRISTOLIANBITES

TIGHT MAYOR: 'NO MORE MOOR FEES FOR ME!'

When Plimsoll Bridge on Cumberland Basin got stuck open in December, Mayor Fergo claimed that it would cost "**MILLIONS**" TO FIX - and made ominous sounds about the need to lay off yet more workers to offset the bill.

As ever, the privately-educated berk was way off-beam in his predictions - thanks to the graft of the very workers he wants to 'streamline' into redundancy, the actual cost of repairs is now thought to be closer to £5-10,000.

Of course, whilst the millionaire Mayor is always keen to pay lip service to Bristol's maritime heritage, and has made a pretty penny or two out of his business involvements in various **COUNCIL-SUBSIDISED** ferry companies, Fergo is a little less hands-on with the nitty-gritty.

That might explain why Fat Fingered Fergo is demanding a rise in mooring fees for boats in the docks - but **HASN'T COUGHED UP** for the full licence for his own boat!

Pay your dues, George - or one day you'll find your floating crib has been scuttled by disgruntled scurvy seadogs...

FARUK GETS HIS PIPES CLEANED - AT YOUR EXPENSE!

It's not all austerity doom-and-gloom in Bristol - at least not if you are **LORD MAYOR FARUK CHOUDHURY**.

The Easton councillor has enjoyed swanning around in his expensive red robes and fancy tricorne hat since being voted in by his Shitty Hall pals last May.

But with his term as Mayor coming to a close in a few months, it seems that the sword-wielding ceremonial head of Bristol has let the outdated trappings of office go to his head, even as hundreds of council staff wait to learn whether they're getting the chop under the £90 million-worth of budget cuts expected soon from the *real* Mayor, Fat-Fingered Fergo.

Yes, Lord Mayor Choudhury has greenlit the **£112,000** cleaning of organ pipes at his own personal church, the council-owned St. Mark's Chapel at the bottom of Park Street!

Whether people in his ward think that's a good use of the salaries of three or four workers will be clearer when he faces reelection next year.

"RACIST BOSSES" SCANDAL RUMBLES ON AT ACADEMY...

Following our exclusive exposé in May of the institutional racism scandal rocking east Bristol's City Academy, an employment tribunal in December backed up everything we said back in *The BRISTOLLIAN* #4.3.

However, despite the official findings showing that major improvements need to be made in management, it seems that old habits die hard: staff were kept in the dark until 23 January, shortly before the media storm hit. Completely coincidentally, Gill Kelly has so far kept her job as Principal... But has been **DUMPED** as head of the One World Learning Trust.

Whether that's due to white supremacist attitudes of the school's bosses or poorer exam results than expected isn't yet clear...

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GRASSROOTS SOCCER BLOW

How come councillors love big footie stadiums for pros but hate real grassroots footballers?

AT *THE BRISTOLIAN* we take pride in getting to the bottom of stories the *Nazi Post* just skims.

In their December 10 issue the *Nazi Post* ran a story about a local football club, AFC Stapleton, being driven off pitches on Begbrook Green Park by the council because "they were using it too much"(!), apparently after complaints from local residents.

Local Tory Councillor, Lesley Alexander, opposed the use of three of the eighteen acres in the park twice a week by the local football club as it supposedly interfered with "family activities".

Alexander and BCC have already forced AFC Stapleton to move some of their games to Eastville Park, nearly two miles from its clubhouse!

Shitty Hall scribbler Ian 'Copy Typist' Onions, the *Post* reporter responsible for the article, failed to mention a couple of vital bits

of information in his biased story.

First, there was only one local resident who had actually complained about football in the park, while respondents to the council's own survey of residents showed 85% support for the sports club.

Second, the complaining "local resident" is a close friend of Councillor "Posh-Girl" Alexander. What a surprise ... A couple of Tory nimbies ganging up together to keep hundreds of youngsters and adults from having fun and keeping fit.

For years now, successive city councils have sold off our public playing fields and recreation grounds, leaving public green spaces for sport at a premium in the city. The last thing Bristol needs is Tory councillors kicking sports clubs off our remaining public parks.

THE BRISTOLIAN says, "Kick Tory Twats Out Of Football ..."

BRISTOLIAN bites

GREEN SPACE SELL-OFF?

OPEN space campaigners tell us that part-time council property boss, Robert "Spunkface" Orrett has openly admitted that he sees his role as obtaining the maximum cash sale value of all council land in Bristol, including any local green or open space.

This was why Spunkface endlessly delayed voluntarily registering council-owned open space such as Wellington Hill as Town Greens.

Locals should therefore be on alert to protect their green and open spaces not protected by Town Green law, as the man in charge considers it all up for sale for development and he doesn't care what you think. This applies to all parkland and allotments.

At least what we have always suspected is now confirmed— that *Bristol City Council officers see open spaces primarily as financial assets for itself and not as spaces of value for Bristolians.*

MONKEY TENNIS

ANOTHER fine example of exceptional diplomatic skills from our soft-handed Mayor, who was born with a silver spoon and has never done a hard day's graft done in his entire over-privileged life.

During one of his regular morning appearances on Radio Bristol's Alan Partridge and Friends Show (*surely you mean the hard-hitting Steve Le Fevre at Breakfast Show? Ed.*) on 16 January, Fergo was asked about his madcap plans to make an eighth of his workforce redundant on a random basis

"Well," blustered the Mayor unable to explain coherently what he's doing and the effect it

may have on the city's public services, "the council isn't an employment charity."

No doubt this vote of mayoral confidence in his hardworking staff and his view on the workings of the city's public services will go down a storm with a demoralised workforce? *Because it's always nice to be told by some wealthy, idle tosser that you're just sat on your backside doing sweet EA for a living isn't it?*

JOBS NEWS

INTERESTING news from the third floor of the Counts Louse where the architects of mass redundancies and the slash and burn of frontline council services conduct do business.

Having spent £1m refurbishing their upstairs eyrie to recreate the look of a crap European boutique hotel, the big spenders (on themselves) are at it again. For we find the bosses are further featherbedding themselves by creating seven jobs (at a cost of well over £200k a year) to employ people to do their work for them!

Three of the posts are Director's Assistants who will "make sure the Mayor/Assistant Mayor or senior Director is fully prepared for meetings, their diaries are up to date and they have everything they need to trash our city". The other four posts are Executive Assistants who will "be responsible for ensuring the Mayor and Assistant Mayors, and City Director and senior officers are fully briefed and prepared for meetings, speeches, events and talking bollocks on Radio Bristol".

If you fancy working for a bunch of lazy tossers on six-figure salaries and helping them destroy Bristolians' lives apply online now!

WE ARE WINNING

IT'S been a bumper few months here at *The BRISTOLIAN* as we've set the city's news agenda. Telling you the stories no one else would. Our successes include:

HORSEWORLD: we originally exposed Horse World's £80k a year boss Mark "Not That One" Owen's madcap plans to fund his ailing charity by building on the greenbelt back in May. We've subsequently reported how his plans were rejected by a BANES planning committee and how the overpaid and unperforming charity boss now plans to stay put - despite his disastrous management - to make his animal welfare staff redundant!

CITY ACADEMY: we told you in May that an institutional racism row was breaking out at the city's most multicultural school. This was confirmed in January when an Employment Tribunal concurred and found that a black member of staff had been refused a management post for a project to raise attainment among black kids at the school due to institutional racism. The £43k a year job instead went to a white female PE teacher. Thus maintaining an all-white management team at a school, which has 70% black pupils.

HOLMWOOD HOUSE: we exposed the "Home of Horrors" back in December. Since then the care home's multiple problems have been reported by the BBC, the *Nazi Post* and *Bristol 24/7*.

WELLINGTON HILL PLAYING FIELDS: following our report in November of council managers using outright lies to attempt to prevent the open space in Bishopston becoming a Town Green, the council has executed a rapid u-turn and registered the land as a Town Green. Clearly senior council bosses decided that sending junior managers in to a quasi-judicial setting to tell outright lies for them was not going to work any longer. We also learn that hold-ups in the voluntary registration of land at Laundry Fields in Fishponds have vanished since *The BRISTOLIAN* highlighted them.

The BRISTOLIAN

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The BRISTOLIAN: "the home of smiteous anger"