



KYRLE PROBUS CLUB – 6 July 2017

A plea for the British government to avoid ‘grandstanding’ and prepare the public for what lies ahead in the Brexit negotiations with the EU was made by an eminent retired immigration judge at the Kyrle Probus Club meeting on Thursday 6 July.

John Boyd Q.C., who live in Upton Bishop, warned that the length of the talks – estimated at between five and ten years – is “enough to send shivers down the spine of any negotiator”.

He pointed out that “time isn’t on our side”. If there isn’t agreement by April 2019 – just 21 month away – “we face leaving the EU without a trade agreement and possibly without even an agreement on divorce terms.”

John said the negotiations are expected to be “bloody, bitter and twisted”, according to the recent ambassador to the EU, Sir Ivan Roger. But the UK would be advised to take a “friendly, constructive and flexible approach”, John believes.

“The UK needs to come up fast with a detailed plan of what it wants. All it has announced so far are the negatives.”

As for the UK’s exit bill, EU negotiator Michel Barnier has put forward a figure of about £90 billion – a sum described as “absurd” by David Davis, the Secretary of State for the Department of Exiting the EU.

John said “We can expect the argument over the exit bill to give rise to outrage in Parliament and excited headlines in the press. It’s unfortunate that the Prime Minister hasn’t prepared the British public for an exit bill, or failed to warn us of the difficulties that may lie ahead.”

John told the meeting that some of the tasks ahead may appear formidable. “But all of them, given flexibility, goodwill and time – and time particularly – should be capable of resolution.”

John’s talk to Kyrle Probus is the latest in a series on the subject of Brexit, which started last September. As the situation has developed, the talks have been constantly updated.