

THE BBRS – YOU CANNOT PUT LIPSTICK ON A PIG

and you shouldn't try

A backbench debate is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 11th July on the BBRS, led by William Wragg MP.

One imagines that this will discuss the numerous failings of the BBRS. More disturbingly, however, might it attempt to suggest to Government and the authorities that the scheme should be re-launched? This would be a truly chilling prospect.

Since 2008, parliamentary debates have taken place on many aspects of economic crime involving HBoS Reading, Connaught & Tiuta, RBS' Global Recovery Group (GRG), Lloyds Recoveries and its associate UK Acorn Finance, as well as the failing FCA. MPs have delivered countless, well-reasoned speeches on wrongdoing involving their constituents and described widespread institutional failure, only for successive administrations to ignore the debates completely.

By the end of this year, more than £50mn is likely to have been spent on the discredited BBRS, while £75mn may have been outlaid on the four unnecessary reviews of the HBoS Reading fraud. The money could have been added to victims' compensation but has, instead, been used to maintain the cover up of bank wrongdoing.

The role of Andrew Bailey and HM Treasury in supervising these moves is now well known and understood.

So, what good could come from resurrecting the BBRS? None, in our view. More valuable time would be wasted finding other senior figures to oversee a revamped scheme, which would be funded once again by – HM Treasury and the major banks, presumably?

Applicants would be considerably more sceptical second time round and after significant further delays, some limited compensation might eventually trickle out. Would it be sufficient for the long-suffering victims? Of course, not - that would never be the intention.

Our view is that support for resuscitating the BBRS would show the victims to be in a weak position, when they are actually more dangerous than they have ever been.

In the run up to the next general election, Government, the authorities and the major banks are confronted by the likelihood of all this wrongdoing coming out into the public domain, despite the fact that the UK press and media remain muzzled.

They are facing the prospect of this major national embarrassment, together with claims running into billions of pounds and dollars. So, true to form, they may try to fob off victims with a few millions at best and cover everything up with non-disclosure agreements.

This would confirm the contempt, which Bailey, HM Treasury and the major banks hold for the victims and enable them to maintain the cover up. However, their record has been far too shameful for this to be allowed to happen, so...

If a re-launch of the BBRS is attempted, we recommend a total boycott