

Pro-Chancellor,

Trevor Watkins first came to national prominence when he led a consortium of fans to save a troubled AFC Bournemouth in 1997, and in so doing pioneered the supporters' ownership model for football clubs. He has since become one of the world's leading sports lawyers and is recognised for his strategic and business advice to clients all over the world.

Trevor grew up and was educated in Bournemouth. He recalls his father first taking him to watch AFC Bournemouth play in 1974. By January 1997 the club was in serious financial difficulties and Trevor - who was then working as a lawyer in the City - offered to provide some free assistance. He was quickly invited to a crunch meeting and challenged to raise over £500,000 within five days, or else the club faced extinction. Trevor put out a call via BBC local radio to galvanise Bournemouth's fans into action. The next week he took a day off work, formed a supporters' trust and held a public meeting which attracted over 3,000 people.

Trevor persuaded the bank to back a supporter-led rescue and the club's investors to back a new vision. The club was saved and Trevor was asked to become its Chairman. Trevor's achievements led to him being named Sports Personality of the Year by BBC South - the only time a non-sportsperson has received the accolade. He served as a director and Chairman of AFC Bournemouth for almost five years, during which time the club opened a new stadium and got to Wembley for the first time in its history.

Trevor went on to combine his football and legal experience to become the first of a new breed of specialist sports lawyer in the UK. Two decades on, he remains at the forefront of the industry, as well as being a successful author and regular media contributor. As Global Head of Sport for Pinsent Masons, he heads a team of over 100 lawyers working for clients including many of the world's top football clubs, sports governing bodies, the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup. He has been recognised as one of the world's top 20 sports lawyers and is consistently listed by his peers as a leader in the sector.

Trevor acknowledges that his entrepreneurial spirit makes him an atypical lawyer. He believes that with vision, anything is possible, and that businesses - like sports teams - need a blend of skills to be successful. He is also immensely proud of Bournemouth, as somewhere that has played such a key part in his life.

Pro-Chancellor, I have the honour to present Trevor Watkins, and I ask you to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.