

# Majorca Daily Bulletin

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## Former Deputy Mayor of Palma in court in police corruption probe: See Page Three



## TALKING BREXIT

Palma—Deputy Head of Mission for Spain, Tim Hemmings, Consul General for north-east Spain and the Balearics, and Lucy Gorman, Vice Consul at the British Consulate in Palma were in Pollensa yesterday to outline what is known about the ramifications of

the UK referendum and to listen to questions, views and concerns from local British residents.

Pollensa town hall made its council chamber available for the meeting, the second in Majorca, following an earlier one in Calvia. Embassy and consulate

staff are to be holding regular gatherings such as yesterday's in keeping British residents as informed as possible with regard to developments. The next meeting in Pollensa is scheduled for six months time.

Tim Hemmings said it is

anticipated that Article 50 will be triggered early next year, at which point the two-year period for the UK exit will commence. He accepted that there is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding Brexit, adding that the UK had not been ready for the exit process

while other European countries had likewise not been prepared.

He stressed that the UK government and Theresa May are making the rights of Britons abroad a priority and also stressed that the whole process for exit is a negotiation for which start-

ing positions have yet to be adopted. There are, he observed, different options for the UK, such as creating a "bespoke" arrangement with the European Union.

He said of the process for exit that he could not think of "an administrative task that is comparable".

## EU FUTURE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**E**UROPEAN Union leaders will talk on 16 Sept. about how to breathe new life into the bloc after Britain leaves, but they will not discuss the divorce terms until London officially declares its will to quit, the chairman of the meeting said.

Britons voted in a referendum in June to leave the 28-nation EU, prompting a drop in the value of the pound and a change of government. But it has yet to submit a formal notification to Brussels for the legal process to start moving.

Prime Minister Theresa May has said she would not send such a formal noti-

cation until next year so that she has time to come up with a negotiating stance.

Diplomats say Britain would prefer to have an idea of the terms of the divorce before filing for it - a sequence EU officials have repeatedly rejected.

EU leaders will meet in Bratislava on 16 Sept. and the political consequences for the EU of the British decision to leave will top the agenda.

"We need to discuss what Brexit means politically for the European Union," Donald Tusk, who chairs the talks, said yesterday in Luxembourg. Tusk made clear the

discussions would focus on the future of the EU, not Britain. "It is not our intention to talk about the UK in Bratislava or our negotiation strategy vis-à-vis the UK. Our position is crystal clear: there will be no negotiations without notification," he said. "Keeping the future of the EU and the negotiating strategy separate was a matter of principle," he said.

"It is there for a reason: to protect the interests of the members of the Union that want to stay together, not the one which decides to leave," he said. May and her ministers said on Wednesday Britain would seek a unique deal with the EU

that would involve controls on immigration as well as a good trade deal. It is a difficult task, because Britain's access to the EU market is conditional on London's acceptance of the EU's four basic freedoms, including the freedom of movement of people -- which London wants curbed to address immigration concerns.

Tusk said tackling irregular immigration remained a problem for all the Union, even though much had been done to address it since last year, when the flow of hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants from the Middle East and Africa reached crisis point.