

# New chair for Government Property Agency appointed

- Government Property Agency appoints Pat Ritchie, Chief Executive at Newcastle City Council, as its new Chair
- Ms Ritchie will be charged with realising GPA's ambitious target of delivering £1.4bn savings over the next decade
- Launched in 2018, the GPA manages a property portfolio valued at £195m

The government has today announced the appointment of Pat Ritchie for a four-year term as the new Chair of the Government Property Agency (GPA). The appointment has been made with the approval of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Secretary.

The GPA acts as the government's landlord, providing strategic advice on its property estate. Launched in 2018 and managing property assets for over 60 departments and public sector bodies, it has been tasked with delivering savings worth £1.4bn to the public purse over the next 10 years.

Ms Ritchie will take up the position alongside her role as Chief Executive at Newcastle City Council where she has overseen successful regeneration projects in the north-east.

As chair of the GPA, she will drive efficiency and modernisation across a government estate spanning 210,000m<sup>2</sup> and valued at £195m, taking the reins from current Chair Liz Peace on 1 January 2020.

## **On her new role, Pat Ritchie said:**

The GPA is having a real impact already by implementing greater commercial thinking to government property. Through revitalising and modernising the public estate we can help drive regeneration and economic growth.

I am looking forward to joining the GPA as Chair in the new year and would like to thank Liz Peace for her work in establishing the agency. Building on Liz's legacy, I will bring my own background, experience and knowledge to help continue the GPA's mission and create a brilliant Civil Service.

**Minister for Implementation Simon Hart said:**

Pat's knowledge and expertise make her the ideal person to realise the GPA's ambitious agenda.

Through this work we can help spread growth around the UK and free up more money to spend on people's priorities, like schools, the NHS and the police.

A key pillar of Ms Ritchie's new brief will be the Government Hubs Programme. Hubs bring together different departments under one roof – moving civil servants to inner-city sites across the UK located near to transport links, amenities and shops, and will boost the economy through savings, inner-city regeneration and increasing trade for local businesses.

**Mike Parsons, Director General of the Office of Government Property, said:**

I am delighted to welcome Pat to the GPA Board. I am confident that her knowledge and experience will greatly benefit GPA in its important work in managing the property portfolio and ensure civil servants have fit for purpose accommodation that supports smarter working and promotes productivity.

**GPA Chief Executive, Steven Boyd, said:**

This is an exciting time for the GPA and a great moment for Pat to join us as we move into the second phase of our Hubs Programme and continue to grow our portfolio of government assets. Pat brings a wealth of knowledge and experience, and I am looking forward to working with her.

I would also like, on behalf of everyone at GPA, to thank Liz Peace for her contribution as Chair. Under Liz's leadership and guidance, GPA has set a clear strategy and direction of travel, and we look forward to seeing the momentum that we are beginning to build continue when Pat joins us in January.