

# Press release: New interim Chief Executive announced for the Rural Payments Agency

Paul Caldwell has been announced as the incoming Interim Chief Executive of the Rural Payments Agency following the news that Chief Executive Mark Grimshaw has decided to stand down after more than six years.

Paul Caldwell, who is the Basic Payment Scheme Operational Delivery Director has held a number of senior positions within the RPA since 2001 including becoming the Operations Director in 2010.

Environment Secretary, Andrea Leadsom said:

In the six months that I have worked with Mark I have been grateful for his clear commitment to resolving outstanding BPS issues. Both he and Paul Caldwell have worked hard to achieve a strong recovery from the challenges of the first year of this new system.

The agency remains fully focussed on paying all remaining eligible claims as quickly as possible including those outstanding from 2015.

Clare Moriarty, Defra Permanent Secretary, said:

Mark Grimshaw has achieved a huge amount at the Rural Payments Agency and helped deliver substantial improvements in performance for the benefit of our farmers and rural communities.

Under Mark's leadership, the RPA has come through a significant transformation including the challenge of introducing the Rural Payments online service and the new Basic Payment Scheme.

Paul will ensure that the focus continues to be on delivering remaining payments to all eligible claimants as soon as possible. The RPA has a very experienced leadership team in place who will continue to lead the Agency after Mark's departure and provide continuity for everyone who uses the Agency's services.

Mark Grimshaw, Chief Executive of the RPA, said:

It has been a great privilege to have led the RPA and its exceptional people through some major changes.

Together we created and delivered an ambitious Five Year plan, getting the Agency in the great shape it is today. After six years at the helm I have decided now is the time to stand down and hand over the reins to a new leader to take the organisation through the next phase of its development as part of the Defra Group.

Paul Caldwell, Interim Chief Executive of the RPA, said:

I am proud to have the opportunity to lead the Agency and recognise how important our work is to support our world-leading food and farming industry.

That is why our priority is to ensure that remaining BPS payments are made to all eligible farmers as soon as possible and that we continue to deliver the other 40-plus schemes and services we administer.

## Notes

1. Paul Caldwell has been with the Rural Payments Agency since 2001. Paul has worked in operations, communications and strategy, and was made Operations Director in 2010. He was appointed in late 2016 as the BPS Operational Delivery Director.
2. Paul was previously manager at the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) and occupied various roles within the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (now Defra).