

Press release: PM Theresa May and Sir Mark Sedwill's statement on Jeremy Heywood

Jeremy Heywood, Lord Heywood of Whitehall, died this morning. Lord Heywood was until recently the Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service, retiring on 24 October 2018.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

This is extremely sad news and all of my thoughts are with Jeremy's family and friends.

The many retirement tributes paid to Jeremy from across the political spectrum in recent weeks demonstrated his extraordinary talent supporting and advising Prime Ministers and Ministers, and leading the Civil Service with distinction.

He worked tirelessly to serve our country in the finest traditions of the Civil Service and he is a huge loss to British public life.

I will always be grateful for the support which he gave me personally and will remember his achievements across his career as we regret that he did not have the chance to offer his talents for longer in retirement.

Jeremy will be sorely missed and I send my deepest condolences to Suzanne and the children and to all his family and many friends.

Sir Mark Sedwill, Lord Heywood's successor as Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service, said:

Jeremy made an immense contribution to public life, serving four Prime Ministers with distinction. He joined the Civil Service in 1983, advising and supporting governments through some of the most challenging episodes of the last 30 years. Jeremy was the exemplary public servant.

We will miss him more than we can say, and will be the poorer without his advice, leadership and extraordinary insight. He set the highest standards and challenged us to meet them. Jeremy was always looking to move difficult problems forward, restlessly confident to deliver a better way. He was a champion of innovation and embraced change while consolidating and protecting the best of history. He promoted a diverse and inclusive Civil Service, fit to meet the digital, commercial and policy challenges of the future.

Jeremy also considered it a privilege to lead the hundreds of thousands of civil servants up and down the country, and across the world, who work day after day to make people's lives better.

We offer our condolences and best wishes to Jeremy's wife Suzanne, his three children, the rest of his family and their friends.

Notes

Lord Heywood was appointed Cabinet Secretary in January 2012 and Head of the Civil Service in September 2014. Prior to that, he was Permanent Secretary at Number 10 and held a range of senior roles including Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, Head of Corporate and Management Change at HM Treasury, and Principal Private Secretary to Chancellors Norman Lamont and Kenneth Clarke. He also spent time at the International Monetary Fund and at Morgan Stanley. Lord Heywood's first job in the Civil Service was as an Economic Adviser at the Health and Safety Executive. Lord Heywood retired as Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service on 24 October 2018. He died on 4 November aged 56.