

Press release: Three new Cabinet Office Non-Executive Board Members announced

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, David Lidington, has today appointed Paula Vennells CBE, Karen Blackett OBE and Anand Aithal as the latest Non-Executive Board Members for the Cabinet Office.

They have been appointed for a three year period, providing independent advice, support and scrutiny. They will work with officials and ministers on official Cabinet Office business including the work on EU Exit and the running of government

They join the existing Non-Executive Board Members, Sir Ian Cheshire, Mike Ashley and Catherine Brown, to help deliver an ambitious agenda in government.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, the Rt Hon David Lidington, said:

Non-Executive Directors offer a wide range of talent and unique perspectives, ensuring that the Civil Service is well placed to deliver the government's ambitious agenda.

I am delighted that Paula Vennells, Karen Blackett and Anand Aithal will be joining the board – they bring a wealth of business expertise and I look forward to working closely with them.

Paula Vennells CBE

Paula Vennells started her career with Unilever and L'Oreal. She became the Chief Executive of Post Office Limited in 2012. She was Group Commercial Director for Whitbread Plc and held directorships in sales and marketing with several of the UK's largest retailers, including Dixons Stores Group and Argos.

She is a Non-Executive Director of Morrisons Plc, a member of the government's Financial Inclusion Policy Forum and of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group for the Church of England. She's been a Trustee for the Hymns Ancient and Modern Group and a member of the Future High Street Forum.

She received her CBE in the 2019 New Year Honours List for services to the Post Office and to charity.

Karen Blackett OBE

Karen Blackett OBE is a business leader with 25 years of experience in the marketing communications industry. As UK Country Manager for WPP, the global creative transformation company based in 112 countries, she oversees WPP's second largest market and the 14,000 people working across its operating brands in the UK. She is Chairwoman of WPP's MediaCom, the largest media agency in the UK with billings over £1.3 billion.

Karen was a DIT Business Ambassador for No.10, is one of four external advisors helping to diversify the Civil Service, and was appointed Race Equality Business Champion by the Prime Minister as part of the Race at Work Charter in October 2018, helping businesses address inequality at all levels.

Karen is also a non-executive for Creative England, The MOBO Trust and The Creative Industry Federation, and in November 2018 she became Chancellor of the University of Portsmouth.

Karen received an OBE in 2014 for services to media and communications, and in 2019 she was honoured by the professional body, IPA, in recognition of her outstanding services to the advertising industry.

Anand Aithal

Anand Aithal is an entrepreneur with expertise in professional services organisation, service delivery, financial technology and the economics of developing countries.

He is a board member of Lifescale Ltd, a financial technology firm. He is a trustee of Restless Development and a trustee of Aldridge Education.

Anand was a co-founder of Amba Investment Services Ltd, a leading provider of data analysis services to the financial services industry. Amba was subsequently sold to Moody's Inc.

Previously, Anand had been a Managing Director at Goldman Sachs.

He has extensive business experience in international and emerging markets, having previously worked in multiple locations in Asia, North America and Central America.