

Sir Jonathan Thompson to step down as HMRC Chief Executive in the Autumn

Sir Jonathan Thompson has announced today that he is to leave HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in the Autumn after more than three years as Chief Executive and First Permanent Secretary to take on a new role as Chief Executive of the Financial Reporting Council (FRC).

Sir Jonathan joined HMRC in April 2016 and led the organisation through a period of change and significant performance improvements, including:

- Successive, record-breaking increases in the collection of tax revenues due and compliance revenues
- A general downward trend in the tax gap – the gap between tax owed and tax paid
- An overall recovery in customer service levels
- The introduction of Making Tax Digital – online business tax accounts
- Opening HMRC's first regional centre with two more due this year
- Preparing for the challenges and opportunities of Brexit

Sir Jonathan will, along with the other new members of the FRC leadership team, take the organisation through its transformation to the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority.

This new enhanced regulator was announced by Business Secretary Greg Clark in response to the comprehensive Independent Review led by Sir John Kingman. The new regulator will have a new mandate and stronger powers set down in law.

Sir Jonathan will take up his new role in the Autumn.

Sir Jonathan said:

It's been a tremendous privilege to lead HMRC for more than three years, so to leave now has not been an easy decision for me to make. However, to have the opportunity to lead the Financial Reporting Council, as it turns into the Audit, Governance and Reporting Authority, and to promote public trust in doing business in the UK, at a point when we're about to forge new alliances across the world, is too exciting to turn down.

I'm immensely proud to have led HMRC as we delivered year-on-year increases in the collection of revenues due for public services; prepared for Brexit and the challenges it will bring; and oversaw a recovery in customer service levels making dealing with their tax affairs easier for everyone.

Sir Mark Sedwill, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service, said:

I am grateful for the enormous contribution Sir Jonathan has made during his time at HMRC.

Jon has shown himself to be an exceptional leader as the Chief Executive and First Permanent Secretary at HM Revenue and Customs, as well as Head of the Government's Operational Delivery Profession. During his tenure, we've seen year-on-year increases in the revenue collected, which critically goes into funding our public services.

Particular credit goes to Jon's work to diversify the workforce: appointing a diverse and gender balanced executive committee, and opening HMRC's first regional centre, with two more due this year.

I wish Jon all the best in his new role, and I am sure he will be an invaluable asset to the new Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority.

Sir Jonathan's announcement comes on the day that HMRC publishes its Annual Report and Accounts showing a challenging but successful year across a range of areas. The highlights for the 2018/19 report include:

- Collecting more money than ever before to pay for the UK's public services – a record £627.9 billion in total revenue, representing a 3.6% increase on last year.
- Generating £34.1 billion than could have been lost by tackling avoidance, evasion and non-compliance, including more than £2.9 billion from tackling offshore tax initiatives – and we've kept the tax gap low.
- Helping more customers than ever to pay their taxes quickly and easily online – 19 million people have signed up to Personal Tax Accounts and 93.5% of Self Assessment returns were completed online.
- Taking a major step forward in Making Tax Digital for Business, launching our new mandated service for digital record keeping and for filing VAT returns online. More than 93,000 businesses signed up for the pilot – and this has grown to over 500,000 since the full launch on 1 April 2019.
- Transforming and modernising the way we operate while also delivering the huge, complex task of preparing for the UK to leave the EU. Around 5,400 full-time equivalent employees are working on EU exit, building the customs, VAT and excise systems the UK will need and preparing our customers for leaving the EU, with or without a deal.
- Taking further action to tackle bullying, harassment and discrimination at work wherever we find it, including a full review of our policies, processes and standards following an independent report into what it's like to work at HMRC.

Sir Jonathan will take up this new role in the Autumn. The recruitment process will begin shortly and an announcement about a successor will be made in due course. Jim Harra, Deputy Chief Executive and Second Permanent Secretary at HMRC, continues to be the department's lead for exiting the EU, as has been the case since he took over this role in January 2018.