

# New Permanent Secretary at the Cabinet Office and Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service

The Cabinet Secretary Sir Mark Sedwill, with the agreement of the Prime Minister, has today announced the appointment of Alex Chisholm as the new Permanent Secretary at the Cabinet Office and Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service.

Alex will succeed Sir John Manzoni, whose departure from the Civil Service has been long-planned but who has agreed to stay on to support the Government's response to coronavirus over the next few months.

Alex is currently serving as Permanent Secretary at the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, and was previously Chief Executive of the Competition & Markets Authority.

The Chancellor for the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office Michael Gove said:

I am delighted Alex has been chosen as the Cabinet Office's new Permanent Secretary, and Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service. He is an outstanding public servant who has also had a successful career in business and regulation. I look forward to working with him.

In the medium term, much of Alex's work will necessarily be coronavirus response related. But Alex will be responsible for supporting ministers to develop and then drive forward a reform programme for the Civil Service, building on the Government's existing efficiency programme. He will also supervise all the Cabinet Office's various work programmes including on preparing for the end of the transition period, strengthening the union, and defending our democracy.

I want to add my thanks to Sir John Manzoni for his service. Over the last few years, the cross-departmental functional governance programme has become embedded as part of Whitehall's machinery, leading to significant savings for the public purse and improved performance. I wish Sir John all the very best for the future.

Welcoming Alex's appointment, the Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service, Sir Mark Sedwill, said:

I have asked Alex to lead the ongoing transformation of the Civil Service to further enhance its efficiency, effectiveness and

agility, creating the high-performance, innovative and digitally powered service we need for the times we are in. He will also bring proven leadership skills to help guide and support the 7,000 talented staff who work across the Cabinet Office and its Arm's Length Bodies.

I would also like to place on record my sincere thanks and appreciation for all that my colleague Sir John Manzoni has accomplished over the last five years in the role. This includes his leadership on Civil Service modernisation, in particular embedding our functional approach and improving our digital and commercial capability, which has been a significant contribution to effective government. I wish him well in the next phase of his career.

Commenting on his appointment, Alex Chisholm said:

I am truly thrilled to be asked to lead the Cabinet Office and Civil Service reform at this time. The present emergency is a powerful reminder of how important the work of Government is to the whole country.

I look forward to working with Ministers, colleagues in the Cabinet Office, Permanent Secretaries across government and public service leaders, to deliver for the government and the public together.

Sir John Manzoni, who has been CEO of the Civil Service since 2014, said:

I wish Alex every success in his new roles. He will benefit from the fact – as I have done – that the UK Civil Service is truly world-class, with brilliantly talented people at every level of the organisation.

It has been a privilege to work alongside so many of them in the Cabinet Office and beyond. Civil servants do extraordinary things every day to serve and support their fellow citizens. We are seeing this demonstrated more than ever as we manage the coronavirus pandemic.

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# New Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

The Cabinet Secretary, with the approval of the Prime Minister, has approved the appointment of Jeremy Pocklington as the new Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Jeremy succeeds Dame Melanie Dawes who left the Civil Service in February, and has been acting Permanent Secretary since her departure.

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Jeremy's appointment as Permanent Secretary at MHCLG is excellent news for the department and the government.

He is a highly talented and dedicated senior civil servant who has been a great support to me since I became Secretary of State and most recently as we work intensively to respond to Covid.

I look forward to working with him in the months ahead to deliver on the Department's priorities.

The Cabinet Secretary, Sir Mark Sedwill, said:

I am delighted that Jeremy has been appointed as the new Permanent Secretary at MHCLG. He has done an excellent job as Acting Permanent Secretary and will provide much needed leadership continuity to the Department as we support the government in navigating the challenges ahead.

Commenting on his appointment, Jeremy Pocklington said:

I am delighted to have been appointed as the new Permanent Secretary at MHCLG.

It's an honour to be leading the Department as we respond to the nation's current challenges and support those who need our help most.

MHCLG has a critically important agenda to level up all parts of our country, support local government and deliver the homes the country needs.

I look forward to building on the Department's welcoming and inclusive culture and working closely with all our stakeholders to deliver for the government and the public.

Jeremy will take up his post with immediate effect.

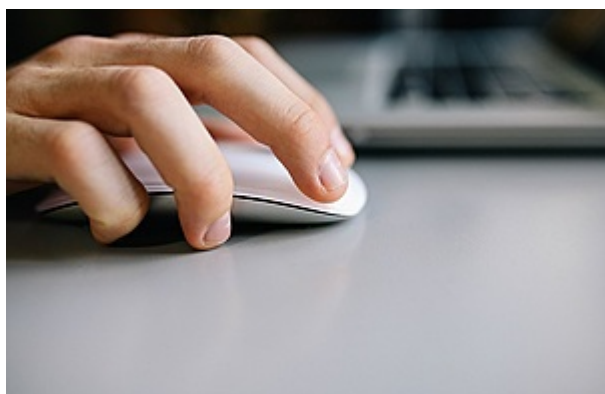
Jeremy became MHCLG's Director General for Housing in August 2018.

He has been Acting Permanent Secretary since his predecessor, Melanie Dawes, left the Civil Service in February.

Before that he was Director General, Energy and Security at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Prior to this he was Director General of Markets and Infrastructure Group at the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC).

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## [Ofsted seeks views on proposals to revise post-inspection arrangements](#)



### **About this consultation**

This is a consultation on our proposals for revisions to our post-inspection arrangements, including how we handle complaints about our work. These proposals, if agreed, will enhance our current arrangements to deal with any queries or concerns about an inspection quickly and before an inspection report is finalised.

We are seeking the widest possible range of views to ensure that our revised procedures are closely matched to the needs of inspected providers and those making complaints. The consultation will be open from 3 March at 9:30am to 30 April at 11:45pm.

We will publish a report on the outcome of the consultation on our website in May and use the responses to inform the new arrangements we aim to introduce from September 2020.

# Proposals

Building on the strength of our existing post-inspection and complaints-handling arrangements, we propose to:

- implementing new and consistent post-inspection timelines that will apply across all inspection remits
- allow all inspected providers 5 working days to review their draft report and submit any comments about issues of factual accuracy and the inspection process for us to consider before we finalise the report
- consider and respond to formal complaints from inspected providers before we publish their inspection report, if these complaints are submitted promptly
- retain current arrangements for internal reviews into complaints handling, including the scrutiny panel

## Respond to the consultation

You can read the [consultation proposals in full and respond online](#).

Published 3 March 2020

Last updated 30 March 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

### 1. 30 March 2020

Updated end date of consultation to 30 April 2020 (4 week extension).

### 2. 3 March 2020

First published.

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## [Merger of retail investment software firms raises competition concerns](#)

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is concerned that the loss of competition brought about by the merger could result in UK investors losing out as a result of higher prices, fewer options and less innovation.

FNZ purchased GBST in November 2019. Both companies have a significant presence in the UK. They are 2 of the leading suppliers of solutions involving software and/or servicing to retail investment platforms in the UK.

After completing its initial Phase 1 investigation, the CMA found that FNZ and GBST are close competitors in what is a concentrated market with few other significant suppliers. Smaller or less well-established firms find it

difficult to enter or scale up because of the risks and reluctance of customers to change suppliers.

As part of its investigation, the CMA undertook extensive market testing and looked at evidence from a number of third-party stakeholders including investment platforms, external consultants, competitors and industry bodies. It also examined the companies' internal documents and assessed the extent of competition in recent tenders in this sector.

Joel Bamford, Senior Director of Mergers at the CMA, said:

Investment software is critical to the operation of retail investment platforms which are used by many investors in the UK.

FNZ is already the largest supplier and has purchased an established rival who is trusted by many platforms, with few remaining competitors left in the market. We are therefore concerned that this transaction could lead to customers losing out.

FNZ must now address the CMA's concerns within 5 working days. If it is unable to do so, the deal will be referred for an in-depth (Phase 2) investigation.

For more information, visit the [case page](#).

For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or [press@cma.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gov.uk).

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## [Alterations to services – patents](#)



### **New patent applications and subsequently filed documents**

For new patent applications and certain subsequently filed documents, you

should use our online systems. Delays should be expected for any other form of filing.

## **Time periods for reply**

We have now reverted to 2 month time periods to respond to first examination reports where the first examination report is issued 3½ years or more after the earliest date of the application. This will apply to reports issued from 9 November 2020 onwards. We will be flexible when it comes to allowing extensions if Covid-19 has caused you difficulties. There is no fee for requesting more time.

## **Patent applications and national security**

All new patent applications where directions under section 22 of the Act (National Security) applies or could apply, are now being processed. While we continue to have limited access to our offices, these will take longer than normal.

We are aware that the process for transmitting applications abroad via the diplomatic bag service is likely to be disrupted. Applicants are encouraged to plan ahead wherever possible.

## **International applications (PCT)**

If you have filed or are thinking of filing a new PCT application, we are doing the following to help:

- waiving the late surcharge fee if you do not pay your fees when filing your PCT application
- using existing PCT regulations to excuse delays in meeting deadlines due to the impact of COVID-19, e.g. rule 82 quater
- corresponding digitally where possible as we know that many of you are working from home. WIPO are also no longer using postal services as a means of communication during this period
- we are speaking to WIPO and other IP Offices about ways we can help customers during this difficult time.

## **Requests to the IPO**

For some services, we have dedicated email accounts to deal with certain requests:

## **IPO correspondence**

Patent related correspondence, both before and after publication of the patent application, continues to be emailed. It also covers correspondence relating to supplementary protection certificates. The only exception is to patent applications made subject to directions under section 22 ('national security') and to applications where we do not have an email address.

We will use the email address provided on the patent forms submitted with the particular application or otherwise communicated to the IPO for the purpose of receiving correspondence by email. Any queries on this should be sent to [information@ipo.gov.uk](mailto:information@ipo.gov.uk)

The following documents cannot be emailed out and will instead be sent out by post:

- Grant Certificates and Late Grant letters
- Some letters and reports, intended for someone other than the registered address for service
- Non-patent literature (NPL) citations, where copyright and commercial agreements allow us to do so.

We are not emailing or posting published patent citations. You can get these from [Espacenet](#), or directly from the websites of national patent offices.

## **Journal and publication**

Publishing and granting of new patent applications will continue within usual time frames. However, customers are encouraged to view [IPSUM](#) to check the status and access post publication information on their patent applications.

The searchable journal will continue to be updated each week advertising newly filed patent applications, A Publications and Granted applications.

We will continue to update this page with any changes to services, as well as providing more details as they develop.

Published 27 March 2020

Last updated 15 January 2021 [+ show all updates](#)

### 1. 15 January 2021

A paragraph added on reverting to a 2 month period to reply to a first examination report

### 2. 30 July 2020

Updated because of the end of interrupted days

### 3. 4 May 2020

Updated information regarding new patent applications and subsequently



filed documents, patent applications under section 22 of the National Security Act, international applications, time periods for reply, requests, correspondence and journal and publication.

4. 30 March 2020

Patent applications and national security paragraph added.

5. 27 March 2020

First published.