

Tim Smith appointed industry chair of Food and Drink Sector Council

News story

Tim Smith takes on the role from outgoing co-chairs Terry Jones and Ian Wright



Tim Smith was appointed as the new industry chair of the Food and Drink Sector Council today (Tuesday 30 August).

He will take up the role immediately and will share the chair with the Government chair, Food Minister Victoria Prentis.

The Food and Drink Sector Council is a formal industry partnership with the Government which works to address challenges faced by the sector and build a more productive and sustainable food and drink system. The Council will also take on the role of delivering some of the measures outlined in the recent Food Strategy for industry and the Government. The co-chair's role is primarily to lead and challenge the Council in order to inspire and create change from within the sector, as well as looking for opportunities for cooperation in the wider Government agenda.

Mr Smith takes on the role from outgoing co-chairs Terry Jones and Ian Wright and will be joined by the Food Minister.

Food Minister Victoria Prentis said:

Tim brings an unrivalled experience of the food and drink sector from his time across a number of different organisations and a fantastic enthusiasm to drive forward the council's agenda of meeting the challenges currently faced by the industry at large.

I want to thank out-going co-chairs Ian Wright and Terry Jones for their expert direction – taking the council through the difficulties of the Covid pandemic and our ongoing recovery.

Tim Smith said:

The food and drink sector is facing challenges which are unprecedented in my time. It is imperative that industry and the Government continue to work in partnership to ensure we have a food system fit for the future.

The Food and Drink Sector Council must help provide the strategic oversight to create that system and I'm delighted to take on the role of industry co-chair. I look forward to working with the Ministerial co-chair to identify the key issues facing the sector and to find practical actions to address them.

Biography

Tim is the Chairman of Cranswick plc. For over three decades Tim had leading roles as CEO with manufacturers in the food sector including Northern Foods, Sara Lee, Express Dairies and latterly Arla Foods where he was plc CEO. In 2008 Tim became Chief Executive of the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

From 2012 until 2017, Tim was Group Quality Director at Tesco. He then acted as a senior adviser to retailers and manufacturers until joining Cranswick.

He has served as a Non-Executive Director at Cranswick plc for three years and since May 2019 has been a Non-Executive Director at Pret A Manager. He sits on the Boards of the University of Leeds, Farm Africa and other charities. Recently he has been the Chairman of the Government's Trade and Agriculture Commission. He was awarded the CBE in January 2022 for services to food and agriculture.

The tenure of the chair is two years and follows an open recruitment process.

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