

Press release: Prime Minister appoints Lord Evans of Weardale as Chair of the Committee on Standards in Public Life

The Prime Minister has today appointed Lord Evans of Weardale as Chair of the Committee on Standards in Public life, following pre-appointment scrutiny by the [House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee](#).

The independent Committee on Standards in Public Life advises the Prime Minister on ethical standards across the whole of public life in the UK. It monitors and reports on issues relating to the standards of conduct of all public office holders.

Lord Evans has been appointed for a five-year term following open competition under the [Cabinet Office Governance code](#). He replaces Lord (Paul) Bew, who has chaired the Committee since August 2013.

Jonathan Evans of Weardale spent 33 years in the UK Security Service, six as Director General. During his career he has worked on counter-espionage and counter-terrorism, both international and domestic, including initiatives against cyber threats. He retired from the Security Service in April 2013. He was appointed as a crossbench peer for his contribution to public service by the Prime Minister in 2014 and was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath in the 2013 New Year Honours List.

He is a non-executive Director of HSBC Holdings plc, a Director of Ark Data Centres Ltd and a member of the Public Interest Committee of KPMG UK. He advises a number of private sector boards involved in cyber security and technology. Lord Evans is also a school governor of a state secondary school, Chair of the Kent Search and Rescue charity and is a Deputy Lieutenant of Kent.

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News story: Free satellite data to

help tackle public sector challenges

The UK Space Agency's Space for [Smarter Government Programme \(SSGP\)](#) will provide access to archives of images and radar data for research and development projects.

This will stimulate further growth in the UK's world-leading space industry, which already employs around 40,000 people, while benefitting the public sector in areas such as planning and development.

The images will provide an unprecedented level of detail of major British cities, transport networks, national parks and energy infrastructure.

This type of satellite data is already being used in a number of pilot projects. It has been combined with machine learning techniques to help Bournemouth Borough Council identify the best locations for electric vehicle charge points across the city. While the Environment Agency has trialled satellite images as a tool to monitor plastic pollution off Britain's shoreline to support clean-up operations and protect wildlife.

With a vast amount of new images now available for free, there is significant potential for further innovations.

Science Minister Sam Gyimah said:

From monitoring plastic pollution to supporting the next generation of electric vehicles, satellite imaging is transforming our society from the skies.

This is a great example of how our modern Industrial Strategy's support for our thriving space sector is spurring innovation, driving growth and further strengthening public services.

There is expected to be high demand for the images which offer sub 5m resolution with less than 15% cloud cover, for public sector research and development.

Sara Huntingdon, the UK Space Agency's SSGP Manager, said:

Until now there has been a perceived financial barrier to the public sector, academics and start-ups accessing high resolution data from satellites, so this is great news for the UK space sector.

We hope it will break down barriers, enable rapid prototyping and stimulate the next wave of satellite enabled application development. We are trying something that has not been done before across the whole UK Government, and I am really excited to see the

results.

The images have been procured from Airbus Defence and Space and Telespazio-Vega UK Ltd. Airbus are providing high resolution optical imagery, effectively a colour camera in space, from its Spot and Pleiades satellites.

Phil Brownnett of Airbus, Intelligence (UK) said:

Airbus is delighted to be working with the Space Agency to provide access to our accurate, up to date satellite imagery of the UK. We fully believe that this initiative will stimulate growth in space services and applications across government.

Telespazio VEGA UK are providing high resolution Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) data collected by the four-satellite COSMO-SkyMed constellation. Imaging radars on board the satellites transmit and then receive radar signals that are able to penetrate cloud cover and provide images of the Earth's surface day and night.

Michael Lawrence, Head of Marketing and Sales at Telespazio VEGA UK, said:

Analysis of the additional information provided by high resolution SAR data will allow the measurement of ground displacements and identify the precise location of changes to both the urban and natural environment.

The data will be available for up to three years to explore what role high resolution satellite data could have in public sector delivery. The project will also feed in to the recently established Geospatial Commission, set up by the government to maximise the value of all UK government data linked to location, and to create jobs and growth.

Simon Agass, from the Satellite Applications Catapult, which is working with the UK Space Agency to deliver this project, said:

This could be transformational for government services in the UK and ultimately provide a platform for the export of satellite derived services for governments across the globe

Providing the public sector with this satellite data is an example of the government fully exploiting the power of technology and data to deliver world-class services. The #SmarterGov campaign has been launched to drive

innovation, savings and public service improvement across the public sector.

Press release: Advocate General for Northern Ireland, Geoffrey Cox QC MP called to the Bar

Advocate General for Northern Ireland, Geoffrey Cox QC MP, will be called to the Bar of Northern Ireland on Friday 26 October.

The call ceremony will be presided over by the Lord Chief Justice. The Advocate General will host a reception at the Royal Courts of Justice after the ceremony for key figures from the legal world.

While in Northern Ireland the Advocate General will hold separate meetings with key legal figures including Attorney General for Northern Ireland, John Larkin QC, Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, Sir Charles Declan Morgan QC PC, Chair of the Bar Council in Northern Ireland, Sarah Ramsey, Director of Public Prosecutions, Stephen Herron and his deputy Michael Agnew. These will be closed meetings to discuss legal issues in Northern Ireland.

Advocate General for Northern Ireland, Geoffrey Cox QC MP said:

It is a privilege to be called to the Bar of Northern Ireland. I am looking forward to the ceremony and to meeting members of judiciary and the legal professions.

The Call ceremony will take place on Friday 26 October at the Royal Courts of Justice.

The position of Advocate General for Northern Ireland is held by the Attorney General for England and Wales by virtue of that office.

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News story: Attorney General reappoints Chief Inspector

The Attorney General, Rt Hon Geoffrey Cox QC MP, has announced the reappointment of Kevin McGinty CBE as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of the Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate.

Mr McGinty's term was due to finish on 31 March 2019 but the Attorney General has extended his appointment for a further 2 years.

The role is subject to scrutiny by the Justice Select Committee, and the Committee has been consulted and fully supports the reappointment.

Commenting on the announcement, Attorney General, Rt Hon Geoffrey Cox QC MP said:

I am pleased to announce the reappointment of Mr McGinty as Chief Inspector. Kevin McGinty has proven himself as a strong leader and Chief Inspector during his four years in the role, who has tackled important and difficult issues, such as disclosure of evidence by the police and prosecutors. I look forward to working with him over the next couple of years.

Commenting on the announcement, Kevin McGinty said:

I'd like to thank the Attorney General for supporting my mandate to tackle important issues such as CPS performance, and for extending my appointment for a further two years. I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as inspector of the prosecutors, so I am delighted to be continuing as Chief Inspector. HMCPSI's work is crucial to ensuring the quality of our criminal justice system and I will continue to ensure my team delivers a high quality inspection programme.

Kevin McGinty CBE was appointed in April 2015 by the previous Attorney General, Jeremy Wright, on a fixed four year term. His current tenure was due to end on 31 March 2019.

Mr McGinty's tenure will now last until March 2021. At this point, it is expected that an external recruitment process to select a new Chief Inspector would be launched by the Attorney General's Office.