

News story: Interim National Schools Commissioner appointed

The Department for Education has confirmed that Regional Schools Commissioner Dominic Herrington is to be appointed as the interim National Schools Commissioner from September.

The temporary appointment will provide continuity for academies across the country when Sir David Carter retires from the civil service after four years at the department.

Dominic Herrington has been Regional Schools Commissioner for the South-East of England and South London since being promoted from his role as Director of the Academies Group at the department in 2014 and will continue to oversee this area of work.

He will lead the team of Regional Schools Commissioners and oversee their collaboration with the academy sector to nurture innovation and help improve education for every child.

Dominic Herrington said:

I'm looking forward to working with the Regional Schools Commissioners in seven other areas of England to build on Sir David Carter's achievements by continuing to challenge and support school leaders.

News story: Davie appointed new chair of Creative Industries Council

Tim Davie CBE has been appointed industry chair of the Creative Industries Council (CIC), a joint forum between the sector and government to help make sure the nation's world-leading creative industries continue to thrive. The Council is co-chaired by Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and Greg Clark, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Davie, the CEO of BBC Studios, will succeed Nicola Mendelsohn as industry chair on Tuesday 12 June.

Davie is responsible for the commercial subsidiary of the BBC which produces and distributes content in the UK and around the world and makes significant

financial returns to the BBC – allowing additional investment in content for BBC's audiences. Davie has also acted as co-chair of the Sector Advisory Group which focuses on helping the UK's creative industries grow overseas. He is chair of Comic Relief, a trustee of the Tate and the Royal Television Society, and previously served on a number of boards including Freesat, Digital UK and Children in Need.

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Matt Hancock, said:

I would like to thank Nicola for her outstanding contribution to UK creative industries in this role and welcome Tim Davie who I am sure will continue her fantastic work in the future to maintain Britain's lead in these vibrant sectors. Tim has a wealth of relevant experience and brings first-hand knowledge of running a hugely successful creative business with a global reach.

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Greg Clark, said:

The UK's exceptional creative industries continue to receive global recognition and success, and through our modern Industrial Strategy we are supporting this powerhouse to ensure this legacy continues.

The sector contributes more than £90 billion to the UK economy and I look forward to working closely with Tim Davie to build on our strengths and implement the ambitions we set out in the Creative Industries Sector Deal earlier this year.

The Creative Industries Council first met in July 2011. It has focused on access to finance, intellectual property protection, supporting innovation and skills. It represented industry through the successful negotiation of the recently published [Creative Industries Sector Deal](#) and will now focus on delivery of the deal and building on its progress. Nicola Mendelsohn has been industry chair of the CIC since 2012 and during this time she successfully launched the Sector Deal and championed Createch, an annual celebration which brings together leaders in the technology and creative sectors.

Council members are pioneers from across the creative and digital industries including TV, computer games, fashion, music, arts, publishing and film.

Nicola Mendelsohn, co-chair of the Creative Industries Council, said:

It has been an honour and privilege to serve as co-Chair of the Creative Industries Council over the last six years. I'm deeply proud that during this time we have moved the creative sector to the centre of the government's industrial strategy, marked by the publication of the first sector deal for the creative industries earlier this year. I'd like to congratulate Tim Davie on his

appointment and wish him every success, and I look forward to seeing the important work of the Council thrive and continue.

Tim Davie, Co-Chair Designate of the Creative Industries said:

It is a real privilege to be appointed Co-Chair. The Creative Industries Council has always provided a vital forum for Government and industry to collaborate. Nicola has done a fantastic job of building the recognition the sector so richly deserves for its contribution to the UK economy and steering us through the landmark Sector Deal.

Now is a crucial moment for the UK creative industries to build on their existing strengths and seize the opportunities negotiated within the Sector Deal. I'm delighted to continue delivering this important work and look forward to working closely with Government and industry members.

Speech: Aviation Minister's keynote speech to the British-Irish airports expo

Aviation and global Britain

Thank you Neil. And good morning everyone. It's a real pleasure to join you today. And to have this opportunity to speak to so many airports from across the UK.

I've just had a very interesting tour of the expo. With over 150 exhibitors and 3,000 visitors expected. This week's show is clear evidence that the airports industry is looking to the future with confidence.

Which is something I've been delighted to see many times over as I've visited airports across the UK since becoming Aviation Minister 7 months ago.

And the government is right behind you. Because we need all our airports to thrive. And every region of the UK to benefit from improved air links. And the economic benefits they bring.

Aviation strategy

It is a pleasure – and a privilege – to be Minister for such a world leading and successful industry, the third largest aviation sector in the world. An industry that has seen incredible growth, with an increase of 27% since 2010 in the number of passengers flying from and to UK airports to almost 270 million passengers now handled by UK airports.

And it's against this background of growth that we announced last week that we want to see airports make best use of existing capacity, provided environmental concerns are addressed.

And it is why we are preparing our new [aviation strategy](#). A comprehensive, wide-ranging blueprint. To develop the capacity and connections we need up to 2050 and beyond. And to allow aviation to grow in a safe, secure and sustainable way. Rooted in partnership between government and industry.

The strategy will be relevant to airports of every size. Because we know that many of the challenges facing the sector impact on smaller airports in different ways. Particularly those with fewer resources. And less scope to invest in new facilities or technologies.

So I'm determined that the final strategy will be just as applicable to RABA members as it is to Heathrow, Gatwick or Manchester.

Let me give you a couple of examples that are also being discussed at this week's expo.

Disabled passengers

First, improving the travel experience for disabled passengers.

Airports have a good record in this area. Following new Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) guidance in 2015 which helped many airports improve assistance.

I'm delighted that here, this week, the CAA is launching their report on how airports are meeting their guidance on hidden disabilities. To help passengers with hidden disabilities, such as autism and dementia.

Some airports have already taken a lead. For example, Bristol and Birmingham are among those to roll out a lanyard scheme. As a way for airport staff to easily identify more vulnerable passengers who may not wish to show details of their disability.

But for different reasons, many disabled people still choose not to fly. Just under 1 in 5 don't know who to contact to arrange assistance. And many are unaware that such help has to be provided by law, free of charge.

So – as part of the aviation strategy – we're going to work on measures to raise levels of awareness. While also making sure all airports are equipped to handle them. And in early July I'll be hosting a roundtable with the

industry to discuss how this can be achieved.

Security

Another issue being discussed this week is airport security.

Consistently delivered checks are of course critical. Yet implementing them can present a logistical challenge to smaller airports. So the new aviation strategy' will outline measures to work more collaboratively with airports to address security.

We are moving to a more flexible approach giving industry options on how to implement security. And take more local decisions based on risk. We will analyse the regulatory burden on airports by reviewing 'More Stringent Measures'. And our approach to impact assessments. And we will focus efforts on airports that most need support to achieve the highest standards of compliance. To maintain strong resilience, while also responding practically and proportionately.

Heathrow and the National Policy Statement

But while work on the aviation strategy continues ahead of launch early next year, there's an even more pressing matter which has implications for the whole industry. Parliament's imminent vote on the proposed [north-west runway at Heathrow](#).

With no spare runway capacity, Heathrow's growth is constrained and new global routes can only come with reduced connections to other destinations. Over many decades, successive governments have wrestled with the problem. Despite countless consultations, inquiries and commissions, the key question of how we secure our long-term hub capacity has remained unanswered.

But today, following the Cabinet's recent backing for the new runway, we are closer than ever before to providing that answer. And delivering the capacity that passengers need, businesses need, and other UK airports need.

One of the key benefits from expanding Heathrow will be the increase in connectivity to the nations and regions of the UK the importance of regional connectivity.

I saw this in Inverness a couple of weeks ago, where I discussed the potential for improving domestic routes with the airport and business leaders. Like other regional airports, Inverness wants a third runway at Heathrow to be built as soon as possible.

Just today we have seen EasyJet confirming that the expansion of Heathrow Airport would allow the entry of low cost carriers to the airport at scale for the first time.

Passengers would benefit from the increased competition and lower fares on routes to existing UK and European destinations. New entrants would also launch flights to UK and European airports not currently served by Heathrow

providing important economic connections to the UK's only hub airport. And we want up to 15% of additional slots from a new runway to be used for domestic routes. We expect the majority of these routes to be commercially viable.

While these are a commercial decision for airlines, we also expect the airport operator to work constructively to boost UK connectivity. I'm pleased Heathrow has made a number of pledges. For example providing financial support for new routes. And providing discounts for domestic passengers through a restructuring of charges. But if necessary, we can take action to secure routes through the use of Public Service Obligations. And we'll consider ring-fencing slots for their use.

Of course the new runway would also provide huge opportunities for UK suppliers. Many of whom are here this week. Heathrow has set out a detailed procurement programme. To spread the benefits of the project around the country.

All told, the runway would provide benefits of up to £74 billion to passengers and the wider economy. Almost doubling Heathrow's freight capacity. Adding 16 million more long-haul seats in 2040. And delivering a huge boost for tourism, investment and jobs.

So with the vote in Parliament looming, the next few weeks are crucial. We must continue to build support for the project. Continue articulating the case for the runway. And continue getting our messages across to those who may be unaware of the huge economic implications, if Parliament fails to back Heathrow expansion.

So I urge the industry to speak up in support. To make the case for expansion. And to help send out a message that Britain is open for business, and ready to embrace a global future after Brexit.

Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, a thriving aviation sector is fundamental to our national interests. And to the interests of every UK region. With progress on Heathrow, and a new comprehensive aviation strategy we have a great opportunity to help the industry continue in its success.

As your Aviation Minister, I'm committed to working alongside you to ensure that our aviation strategy delivers for every part of the aviation sector, and for every part of the UK.

Thank you.

News story: Improvements to Countryside Productivity Small Grants scheme

The popular productivity funding scheme, which help farmers to buy the equipment they need to boost productivity, save time and increase yields.

The scheme has proved popular so far, with more than 3,500 grants worth £23.5 million being awarded to successful applicants.

However, Defra is aware that some farmers are experiencing issues with the delivery of their items in the first round of funding within the scheme's 150 day deadline.

From today, farmers who purchase their equipment and submit their claims within the 150 day deadline can take delivery of their equipment after the 150 days and will receive payment once the item has been delivered.

Defra will also be opening a second round of funding, due to open in the Autumn, giving farmers who withdrew their applications, the option to have it reinstated now or in the next round. The Rural Payments Agency will be contacting grant recipients who have an offer for livestock handling equipment but have withdrawn because of issues with livestock handling equipment, to inform them of this option. Any other supply issues should be discussed with the RPA separately.

Most of the items offered through the scheme are readily available from different stockists, so applicants are encouraged to shop around when looking for items so that they can claim as quickly as possible.

More detail on the second round of grants will follow in the coming months. For more detail on the Countryside Productivity Scheme please see [here](#).

News story: More police and crime commissioners to be given fire authority voting rights

Under the changes coming into force in the autumn, it will be possible for all police and crime commissioners (PCCs) to be represented on their local fire and rescue authority (FRA), subject to the consent of the FRA.

This means PCCs can have voting rights on important decisions made in relation to their local fire and rescue services. This could include matters such as finances and staffing.

It is for individual FRAs to decide whether to grant membership if a PCC makes a request. In interests of transparency FRAs will be required to publish their decisions.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, Nick Hurd, said:

By working closer together, police and fire and rescue services can share best practice and innovative thinking to improve the services provided to local people.

These changes mean that all locally elected police and crime commissioners can be given a seat at the table of their local fire and rescue authority – meaning every area in England is able to reap the rewards of collaboration.

Voting rights provisions already apply to county and metropolitan FRAs and the government believes that the same level of transparency should be extended to the 23 combined FRAs across England, which cover more than one local authority area.

The move follows a consultation launched in 27 November on the proposals. The [responses](#) showed 91% of affected fire authorities backed the move.

Two FRAs were found to have objections, and the government is exploring their specific concerns to determine whether the representation model can be applied to them.