

# New Permanent Secretary appointed to The Scottish Government

As Leslie Evans steps down from her position at the head of the Civil Service in Scotland her replacement has been named.

John-Paul (JP) Marks has been appointed as the new Permanent Secretary to The Scottish Government.



John-Paul Marks

JP, who is currently Director General, Work and Health Services at the Department for Work and Pensions was chosen following an open competition. The appointment has been made by the First Minister of Scotland in agreement with the Cabinet Secretary. JP will take up his new post on 5 January 2022.

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, said: "I am grateful to Leslie Evans for her leadership of the Civil Service over over almost seven years. The expertise and insight that Leslie has applied in leading the organisation through the notable and

significant challenges of our day – such as EU Exit and the COVID-19 pandemic – has been admirable. I join with so many across the Scottish public sector and beyond in wishing Leslie every success for the chapter ahead.

“I am delighted to agree the appointment of John-Paul Marks as Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government. JP brings a wealth of experience to this senior leadership role from his career in the civil service working across a range of policy and delivery priorities. I look forward to working with him over the years ahead as we recover from COVID-19 and deliver on the government’s ambition to build a fairer, greener Scotland.”

The Cabinet Secretary, Simon Case, said: “I would like to congratulate JP on his appointment. His experience at Senior Civil Service level in building teams, delivering complex system reforms, major projects and improving services at scale in the public sector will be invaluable in his new role. I very much look forward to working with him as part of the senior leadership of the UK Civil Service.

“I would also like to thank Leslie for her leadership of the Civil Service in Scotland over almost seven years, and for her significant contribution to the leadership of the UK Civil Service. I wish her all the best for the future.”

Commenting on his new role, JP Marks said: “I am delighted to take up the role of Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government. I am grateful to the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for this exciting opportunity. I would like to thank all the teams at the Department for Work & Pensions for their support and public service over the years. I look forward to joining the team in Scotland in the New Year as we do our very best for Scotland in these important years ahead.”

Mr Marks has also worked in the Department of Work and Pensions as Operations Director of the Universal Credit

Programme.

There was controversy around Ms Evans and the way she conducted the enquiry into alleged sexual harassment by former First Minister, Alex Salmond, including the expense of pursuing a civil case brought by Mr Salmond against The Scottish Government.

Mr Salmond won the civil suit or judicial review against The Scottish Government including a £500,000 claim of expenses. Lord Pentland said then that the investigation had been unlawful and 'tainted with apparent bias'. Mr Salmond was also found not guilty of 13 charges of sexual assault in March 2020 at the High Court in Edinburgh.

Nicola Sturgeon supported the Permanent Secretary in the face of calls by Mr Salmond and others for Ms Evans to resign.