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| **News** |  |
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| 3 June 2021 |  |

**CHAIR REAPPOINTED TO THE NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND BOARD**

The Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development, Jenny Gilruth today announced the reappointment of Benny Higgins as Chair of the National Galleries of Scotland Board.

**CHAIR**

**Benny Higgins** began his career at Standard Life in 1983 where he joined as an actuarial student and went on to become a member of the Standard Life Group Executive Committee in 1996. In 1997 he moved to the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) to become Chief Executive of Retail Banking. He remained with RBS until 2005, during which time he led the successful integration of NatWest Retail Banking - one of the largest takeovers ever undertaken in banking. He became Chief Executive, Retail HBOS in 2006 before joining Tesco Bank as Chief Executive in 2008, a position he held until February 2018. In September 2017 Benny was asked by the Scottish Government to develop an implementation plan for the creation of a Scottish National Investment Bank. Subsequently he was appointed as Strategic Adviser to the First Minister on the building of the Scottish National Investment Bank and Chair of Scottish Government’s Advisory Group on Economic Recovery post COVID-19.

Benny is Executive Chair of the Buccleuch Group and holds a number of Chairmanships including Sistema Scotland, Markerstudy and The Fine Art Society (London & Edinburgh). He is a Fellow of the Faculty of Actuaries, a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Bankers in Scotland, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He is an Honorary Professor at the University of Glasgow, Honorary Professor at Edinburgh University, Visiting Professor at Strathclyde University, Honorary Professor at Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University, Doctor of University, University of Glasgow and University of Glasgow, Court member of Finance Committee.

**REAPPOINTMENT**

This reappointment will be for four years and will run from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2025.

This reappointment is regulated by the **Ethical Standards Commissioner.**

**REMUNERATION**

This reappointment is part-time for a time commitment of up to four days per month. Appointments to the National Galleries of Scotland Board are not remunerated.

**OTHER MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS**

Benny Higgins does not hold any other public appointments.

**POLITICAL ACTIVITY**

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees’ political activity within the last five years (if there is any to be declared) to be made public.

Benny Higgins has had no political activity in the last five years.

**BACKGROUND**

**The Organisation**

NGS fulfils a statutory role as one of the nation’s most significant cultural organisations. It operates within the context of the Scottish Government’s national outcomes and strategic objectives, including public service reform.

NGS is a vibrant organisation, employing around 390 staff at its three Edinburgh sites. Its mission is to care for, develop, research and display the national collection of Scottish and international art. This includes a lively and innovative programme of activities, exhibitions, education and publications, which aims to engage, inform and inspire the broadest possible public.

Today, NGS’s mission is based on the drive to make the greatest art available, free of charge, to a wide national and international public. NGS is one of Scotland’s most popular cultural destinations, ranking within the top thirty most visited museums anywhere in the world.

Core funded by the Scottish Government, like all public bodies, it operates within a challenging financial climate and must make the most of opportunities to collaborate with other key national and international institutions from a range of sectors and to generate income from a range of sources.

The organisation is governed by a Board of Trustees which is accountable to the public through Ministers and the Scottish Parliament for the discharging of the functions defined in the **National Heritage (Scotland) Act 1906 (as amended in 1985)**.<http://origin-www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/16/contents>

**Find out more** about the **National Galleries** at <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/>