



**For immediate release**

## **Next Solace President and new Policy Board announced**

Matt Prosser has been announced as the next President of Solace, the representative body for more than 1,600 chief executives and senior managers working in the public sector in the UK.

The decision was confirmed during Solace's Annual General Meeting at Solace Summit in Birmingham today (13 October).

Matt, who is also Chief Executive at Dorset Council, has been Solace's spokesperson for Leadership & Learning for the last two years and, before that, Digital Leadership spokesperson for four years. He will take over from current President Joanne Roney on 1 January 2023.

However, a refreshed Policy Board, which includes seven new spokespeople, takes effect as of today.

Following his appointment, President-elect Matt said: "It is a huge honour to be the next President of Solace and to represent a membership of such fantastic public servants who are working incredibly hard every day to deliver better lives for residents the length and breadth of the country.

"I have big shoes to fill. Joanne has led Solace brilliantly through tumultuous times and has massively increased Solace's influence both within Government and more widely in the public sphere, and I look forward to continuing her good work when I take over in January.

"While the challenges facing the sector are many and varied, I am determined to ensure the voice of local government professionals continues to be heard loud and clear in Westminster and Whitehall, and that the Government continues to see Solace as a trusted organisation it can work with."

Joanne, who remains Solace President until 31 December 2022 and will then take up a role as a non-executive director on the Solace Group Board, said: "It has been a huge privilege to be Solace President. The past two years have been very challenging for the local government workforce and our communities, but I couldn't be prouder of the performance of Solace members right across the country who have continued to deliver for their residents despite a global pandemic and now a cost-of-living crisis. I hope I have played my part in steering Solace through trying times.

"I am delighted that I and my brilliant colleagues on Policy Board have been able to achieve so much in helping to positively influence Government policy across a range of issues.

"And I know that Matt and the new Policy Board will continue to emphasise how crucial the local public sector is in the drive for growth, and ensure that equalities and skills remain at the top of the agenda.

Solace Business Partner



The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (Solace Group) Ltd; a company registered in England & Wales, number 04053417  
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“While I am sad to be stepping down, I couldn’t be passing on the baton to a safer pair of hands. I look forward to supporting Matt during his time as President in any way I can.”

Spencer Flower, Leader of Dorset Council, said: “I am delighted Matt has been appointed the next President of Solace. Matt is an excellent, forward-thinking chief executive and I am sure he will excel in the role on top of his daily duties in Dorset. This is not only a great opportunity for Matt but it is also a huge compliment for Dorset and helps to promote both the council and the county.”

Graeme McDonald, Solace Managing Director, said: “Joanne has been an amazing President, helping to shine a light on the biggest issues facing the local government sector. Her tireless work behind the scenes has ensured Solace is now seen as a ‘go to’ organisation for senior officials in central Government, while she has also helped to raise our public profile too. But in Matt we have a superb successor along with a new and refreshed Policy Board, bringing renewed energy and a breadth of voice to our work.”

### Notes to editors

Solace is the representative body for more than 1,600 chief executives and senior managers working in the public sector in the UK.

The President and members of Policy Board are elected on two-year terms.

The new and refreshed Policy Board is as follows:

Solace Policy Role	Names
President	Matt Prosser
Health and Social Care	Dwayne Johnson (Lead Spokesperson); Paul Najsarek (Deputy Spokesperson)
Children and Families	Ade Adetosoye (Lead Spokesperson); Susan Parsonage Deputy Spokesperson)
Civil Resilience and Community Safety	Kersten England (Lead Spokesperson); Stephen Gaskell (Deputy Spokesperson)
Elections and Democratic Renewal	Louise Round (Lead Spokesperson); Mark Heath (Deputy Spokesperson)
Digital Leadership	Alison McKenzie-Folan (Lead Spokesperson); Jon McGinty (Deputy Spokesperson)
Leadership and Learning	Ian Thomas (Lead Spokesperson); Kath O’Dwyer (Deputy Spokesperson) Stephen Moir (Deputy Spokesperson)
Finance	Patrick Melia (Lead Spokesperson); Will Benson (Deputy Spokesperson); Becky Hellard (Deputy Spokesperson)



Economic Prosperity	Robin Tuddenham (Lead Spokesperson); Amy Harhoff (Deputy Spokesperson)
Housing and Planning	Pam Smith (Lead Spokesperson); Dave Perry (Deputy Spokesperson) Karen Bradford (Deputy Spokesperson)
Environment and Climate Change	Tom Stannard (Lead Spokesperson); Kathy O'Leary (Deputy Spokesperson); Jess Gibbons (Deputy Spokesperson)

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