

**12 January 2022**

**Mark Foster appointed to succeed Sir William Castell as Chair of Chichester Festival Theatre from March 2022**

Mark Foster will succeed Sir William Castell as Chair of Chichester Festival Theatre from March 2022. Formerly a Board member of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Mark has until recently been Senior Vice President, IBM Services & Global Business Services, a role he exchanged for Chairman IBM Consulting from 1 January 2022.

**Sir William Castell** said: 'As Chichester Festival Theatre prepares to celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, I am delighted to hand on the Chair to Mark Foster. After a rigorous recruitment process, it is clear that Mark's extensive experience in both the private and voluntary sectors and his knowledge and acumen in cutting-edge digital technology, alongside his enormous enthusiasm for theatre and commitment to education, make him the standout candidate for the role.'

'It has been a privilege to serve as Chair of CFT's Board for 11 years, over which time the Theatre has gone from strength to strength – notwithstanding the particular challenges posed by the pandemic in the past two years. I am grateful to the many Board members who have served alongside me, and to the Artistic and Executive Directors and the entire CFT team. I know that Mark will relish their expertise and dedication as much as I have.'

**Kathy Bourne and Daniel Evans**, Executive and Artistic Directors respectively, added: 'We warmly welcome Mark Foster as our new Chair, succeeding Bill Castell who has served CFT with such huge dedication, wisdom and skill. Mark brings a wealth of international experience, particularly in the digital field, and we look forward to working with him.'

**Mark Foster** responded: 'I am excited and honoured to be building on the strong foundations of the Chichester Festival Theatre which have been reinforced during Bill Castell's remarkable tenure as Chair. This is a really important moment in the cultural life of our nation and I am looking forward to working with Daniel, Kathy and the rest of the CFT team to continue the important contribution of this amazing institution.'

Prior to joining IBM, Mark Foster had a 27-year career at Accenture, from which he retired in 2011 as Group Chief Executive Global Markets & Management Consulting. While at Accenture, he chaired the World Economic Forum Global Health Initiative Against AIDS, TB and Malaria. From 2011 to 2015, Mark served the UK Government as a founding Commissioner for the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI); he was also Chair of the International Business Leaders Forum.

Mark has had a long-standing passion for the world of theatre, starting from his time as stage lighting director at his school, through his study of Classics at Oxford and served for nine years on the Board of the Royal Shakespeare Company. He remains a member of the RSC Artists Circle and Americas Board. He is also passionate about education and aside from serving in the past as a Governor of Cranleigh School, has operated and chaired Peaslake Free School, a community-based school in Surrey, for over 25 years.

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