

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Burberry adds to leadership changes with new chairman

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Burberry photo series by Rosie Marks. Image credit: Burberry

By STAFF REPORTS

British fashion house Burberry has appointed Gerry Murphy to its board of directors as chairman designate.

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Mr. Murphy, will start at the company on May 17 and will takeover as chairman on July 12. He succeeds Sir John Peace, who is stepping down after 16 years as chairman.

"I am honored to take up this role and to succeed Sir John as chairman," Mr. Murphy said in a statement. "Burberry is a unique British brand that I have admired for a long time and I am looking forward to working with Marco Gobbetti and the board to guide the company through its next phase of growth."

Chairman change

Mr. Murphy is currently chairman of agribusiness Tate and Lyle plc. He is also senior managing director and chairman of financial and strategic advisory The Blackstone Group International Partners LLP.

His rsum also includes CEO positions at Kingfisher plc, Carlton Communications, Exel plc and Greencore Group plc.

In addition to his executive roles, Mr. Murphy has also held a number of senior board member positions as the non-executive director of British American Tobacco plc, Merlin Entertainments plc and Reckitt Benckiser plc.



Burberry is getting a new chairman. Image credit: Burberry, photo by Rosie Marks

"We are delighted to welcome Gerry to the board," said Jeremy Darroch, senior independent director at Burberry, in a statement. "His substantial U.K. plc and global business experience will be a great asset to Burberry as we continue to focus on delivering long-term shareholder value.

"On behalf of the board, I would like to thank Sir John for his immense contribution to Burberry over the past 16 years," he said. "Sir John has presided over a period of extraordinary change, during which Burberry has enjoyed strong growth and evolved into one of the most valuable luxury brands in the world."

According to the Financial Times, Sir John had shown signs that he was prepping to leave two years ago, as shareholders showed their dislike of then-CEO Christopher Bailey's leadership style. Burberry says that it started the process to find a successor for the chairman last June, looking to name a replacement by the end of this year. Mr. Darroch led the search for a new chairman.

As of the annual shareholder meeting on July 12, Mr. Murphy will take over as chairman, and Sir John will step down.

"I would like to thank current and past board members for their partnership over the past 16 years and Jeremy Darroch for leading the process to find Burberry's next chairman," Sir John said in a statement.

"In Gerry Murphy, we have found a superb candidate with extensive experience in the consumer and retail industries," he said. "I am confident he is the right choice to lead the Board as Burberry embarks on a new chapter."

Burberry is also undergoing a creative change, as Mr. Bailey exited his design role. Riccardo Tisci recently took over as chief creative officer ([see story](#)).

Burberry's executive leadership also saw a shift, as Marco Gobbetti became CEO last year ([see story](#)).