



*Designers, developers and international distributor of toys, games and giftware*

Friday, 22 January 2016

**The Character Group plc**  
("Company", "Group" or "Character")

### **Appointment of Directors**

The Character Group plc (AIM: CCT) the designer, developer and international distributor of branded toys, games and giftware, announces the appointment of three new Board directors and changes to the duties and responsibilities of certain of the existing executive directors of the Company.

The Group has seen considerable growth over recent years both in the UK and internationally. To further strengthen the Group's expanding and growing operations and to allow for an orderly succession, Character is making the following changes at Main Board level:

**Richard King**, one of the founders and the Executive Chairman since the Company's flotation in 1995 has informed the Board that he intends to relinquish his executive role on the Board with effect from 1 February 2016. He will remain in office as a non-executive director and Chairman of the Board.

**Kiran Shah** is currently Group Finance Director and Joint Managing Director of the Group and **Jon Diver** is Group Marketing Director and Joint Managing Director. Kiran and Jon will remain Joint Managing Directors of the Group, however, they will relinquish their respective roles as Group Finance Director and Group Marketing Director with effect from 1 February 2016.

The Board is pleased to announce that **Mark Dowding**, the Group's current Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary, is to be promoted to the position of Group Finance Director on the Board with effect from 1 February 2016. Mark holds a Master of Business Administration degree, is a Member of The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants and also a Member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. He qualified in 1991 with a leading firm of accountants and, prior to joining the Company in 2012 he was a partner with a Top 20, UK accountancy firm. Mark brings extensive knowledge and experience in financial management, legal, accounting and corporate finance work.

The Board is also pleased to announce that, with effect from 1 February 2016, **Jerry Healy**, currently the Marketing Director of the Group's principal subsidiary (Character Options Limited), will be appointed to the Board and promoted to the position of Group Marketing Director. Jerry joined Character Options Limited as Head of Marketing in 2004 and brought with him a wealth of experience having worked with a number of companies in the toy and computer games industries. Prior to joining Character Options he worked for Hornby Hobbies, Matchbox and Mattel both in the UK and Europe and at Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. In 2006 he was promoted to Character Options' Marketing Director. He has been integral to the development of the marketing function within the Group.

Following the sad passing of Lord Birdwood in July last year, David Harris has been the sole non-executive director of the Company. The Board has been seeking a suitable candidate to augment the Board since that time. It is therefore pleased to announce that **Clive Crouch** has agreed to accept an appointment as an independent non-executive director of the Company and join the Board with effect from 1 February 2016. Clive has had a successful 35-year career involved in broadcasting. He was a member of the senior team that launched GMTV, successfully developing its positioning within television and licensing. He held the roles of Sales & Marketing Director (1992-2007) and subsequently Chief Operating Officer (2007-2010) before moving on to establish his own media consultancy business. He is also actively involved in the Toy industry and is a Fellow of its children's charity The Fence Club.

Executive Directors **Joe Kissane** (Managing Director, Character Options Limited) and **Michael Hyde** (Managing Director, Far East Operations) continue in their current Board positions.

**Richard King, Executive Chairman of Character commented:**

*"It is with great pride that I am able to relinquish my executive role whilst the Company is in a period of strong commercial and financial growth. I thank everyone who has helped Character develop into one of the leading UK toy companies. On behalf of all stakeholders and colleagues around the Group, I congratulate and welcome the new directors. I believe that these appointments will further strengthen the Board and I look forward to working with them."*

**In accordance with the Listing Rules, the following disclosures are required in respect of Mark Dowding, Jerry Healy and Clive Crouch:**

**Mark Timothy Dowding** (aged 50) currently holds, and has held during the last five years immediately preceding the date of this announcement the following directorships or partnerships:

<i>Current</i>	None
<i>Previous</i>	Macintyre Hudson LLP Genesis2010 Limited

Mark has a beneficial interest in 73,841 issued ordinary shares of 5 pence each ("Ordinary Shares") in the Company, representing approximately 0.34 per cent. of the current issued share capital (excluding shares held in treasury) (the "Total Voting Rights"), and he holds an options over 36,000 unissued Ordinary Shares.

**Jeremiah ("Jerry") Healy** (aged 54) currently holds, and has held during the last five years immediately preceding the date of this announcement the following directorships or partnerships:

<i>Current</i>	Character Options Limited
<i>Previous</i>	None

Jerry holds options over 184,000 unissued Ordinary Shares.

**Clive William Crouch** (aged 63) currently holds, and has held during the last five years immediately preceding the date of this announcement the following directorships or partnerships:

<i>Current</i>	Clive Crouch Media Insight Limited Total Practice Management Limited Total Practice Investments Limited Lisle International LLP
<i>Previous</i>	None

Clive holds 5,555 issued Ordinary Shares, representing approximately 0.03 per cent. of the Total Voting Rights.

There is no further information to disclose in respect of these appointments under Schedule 2 paragraph (g) of the AIM Rules.

**Enquiries:**

**The Character Group plc**

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Mark Dowding, Chief Financial Officer & Company Secretary

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**FTSE sector:** leisure: **FTSE AIM All-share:** symbol: CCT.L:

**Market cap:** £103 million

Copies of this statement can be viewed at [www.thecharacter.com](http://www.thecharacter.com).

Product ranges can be viewed at [www.character-online.co.uk](http://www.character-online.co.uk).