

Simon Case
Cabinet Secretary
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Rt Hon Lord Pickles
Advisory Committee on Business Appointments
Room G/8 1
Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

Letter sent via email to:
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Thursday 10th February 2022

Dear Simon and Eric,

I am writing to you both following multiple media reports highlighting the private interests of political appointees to No.10 Downing Street, or the soon to be Office of the Prime Minister. It is vital that there is transparency around the interests of those closest to the highest office in the country to ensure their advice is untainted by outside influence.

As I am sure you are aware, Guto Harri has very recently been appointed the Director of Communications to the Prime Minister, based at No.10 Downing Street. I understand Mr Harri is set to leave his current role as Board Director at Hawthorn Advisers, a communications company listed with the Registrar of Consultant Lobbyists, to take up this post. Hawthorn Advisers' list of clients includes Huawei, the Chinese technology company which the government banned from involvement with the UK's 5G network. It is imperative that the contacts Mr Harri would have had when working as lobbyist must be made public, including those working in Downing Street. **Have you asked Mr Harri to provide details of who in Government he was in discussion with and how often he had engagements with them? Will you be releasing the minutes of those meetings?**

Noting the serious national security issues that came to light when Huawei first bid to be involved in the UK's 5G network, it is vital to ensure that Mr Harri is not able to have any influence over issues which involve his former client. **Can you confirm that Mr Harri will not have access to information or be involved with any further decisions to be made on Huawei or any of his former clients?**

Further to this, it is vital that information in Government is treated with the upmost seriousness. The public must feel confident security is taken seriously at the heart of Government. **Will newly appointed Government advisers go through the Developed Vetting process, to an enhanced level if required?**

Mr Harri also holds an active directorship of a business called Hydro Industries, which describes its activity as it using technology to clean up industrial waste. **What advice has been provided to Mr Harri from the propriety and ethics unit in the Cabinet Office about his outside interests?**

The Labour Party


Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP
Deputy Leader, Shadow First Secretary of State, Shadow Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Shadow Secretary of State for the Future of Work


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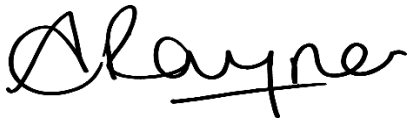
Since the original media reports, Mr Harri confirmed that he would be permanently leaving his employment at Hawthorn Advisers to take up his new role. However, Ministers refused to deny that Mr Harri could return to his role at Hawthorn Advisers immediately following his employment in Downing Street when directly asked the question in Parliament. **Can you confirm that, as per Section 24 of the Special Advisers Code of Conduct, Guto Harri will be subject to the Business Appointment Rules when he leaves his service? Will you clarify in writing that he has permanently left his employment with Hawthorn Advisers, there no arrangement for him to return after a sabbatical, and can you categorically rule out his returning to Hawthorn Advisers in any capacity?**

Finally, in her register of interests the Deputy Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister, Baroness Finn, maintains a shareholding of between 25% and 50% and remains an active director of the consultancy Francis Maude Associates. Francis Maude Associates now operates under FMAP Ltd (trading as FMA) where Baroness Finn is a Director. Clients of this business include a number of foreign Governments. Media reports suggest that this was signed off by the Cabinet Office. **Can you confirm who within the Cabinet Office signed off her continued private interest when Baroness Finn took up her role as Deputy Chief of Staff? Was this approved by you or the Prime Minister? Was this approved by the Advisory Committee of Business Appointments? What information was provided by Baroness Finn before this decision was made? Has any assessment been done of any national security risk posed by her involvement with foreign Governments?**

The Prime Minister said he made these changes to "improve how No 10 operates". While that it is his prerogative, it is vital that there is no impropriety or lax application of the rules which exist to ensure fairness and transparency around appointments, in the rush to fill these positions.

I look forward to your swift response.

Yours sincerely,



**Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP
Shadow Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
Deputy Leader of the Labour Party**