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From the Chairman



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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You asked for the Committee's advice about taking up three part-time, unpaid, appointments with Civitas's advisory council to steer its Curriculum Project; The David Ross Education Trust; and the Mayor of London's Expert Advisory Group for the London Schools Excellence Fund.

The Committee noted that, whilst in Government, you had dealings with each of the organisations you are seeking to work with, and – with reference to the Civitas appointment – your responsibilities as a Minister included the implementation of the Curriculum Review. It also noted that you had contact with a number of other think tanks and academy chains whilst in office but had no access to commercially sensitive information about them. Given the nature of your ministerial role, the Committee recognises that such contacts are to be expected and, particularly as none of the appointments would be paid, does not consider that any could reasonably be perceived as a reward. Furthermore, the Committee took into account the fact that it is now almost five months since you left Government.

Our advice is that, on the understanding that you would not draw on any privileged information from your time in Government, we see no reason why you should not take up these appointments forthwith, subject to the condition that, for two years from the date of your leaving office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of Civitas or its clients, The David Ross Education Trust, or the Mayor of London's office.

It might be helpful if I add that lobbying is defined in the Business Appointment Rules in the following way: "Lobbying in this context means that the former civil servant should not engage in communication with Government - including Ministers, special advisers and officials - with a view to influencing a Government decision or policy in relation to their own

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interests, or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted”.

I should be grateful if you would inform us as soon as you take up the appointments or, if earlier, when it is announced that you will do so, either by returning the enclosed form or by emailing this office at the above address. We shall otherwise not be able to deal with any enquiries, since we do not release information about appointments which have not been taken up or announced. This could lead to a false assumption being made about whether you had complied with the Ministerial Code. Similarly, I should be grateful if you would inform us if you propose to extend or otherwise change any of these roles as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for you to seek fresh advice.

Once the appointments have been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee’s website and include the main details of the application, together with the Advisory Committee’s advice, in the regularly updated consolidated list on our website and in the next annual report.

Lord Lang of Monkton

Mr Nick Gibb MP