



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: Abigail Tierney, former Registrar General for England and Wales and Director General for HM's Passport Office and UK Visas and Immigration at the Home Office. Paid appointment with the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU).

1. Ms Tierney sought advice from the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (the Committee) under the government's Business Appointments Rules for Former Crown servants (the Rules) on taking up a role with WRU as the Chief Executive.
2. The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the government. The Committee has considered the risks associated with the actions and decisions made during Ms Tierney's time in office, alongside the information and influence a former Director General of the Home Office may offer WRU. The material information taken into consideration by the Committee is set out in the annex.
3. The Committee's advice is not an endorsement of the appointment - it imposes a number of conditions to mitigate the potential risks to the government associated with the appointment under the Rules.
4. The Rules¹ set out that Crown servants must abide by the Committee's advice. It is an applicant's personal responsibility to manage the propriety of any appointment. Former Crown servants are expected to uphold the highest standards of propriety and act in accordance with the 7 Principles of Public Life.

The Committee's consideration of the risk presented

5. Ms Tierney did not have any contact with WRU during her time in government. There is no relationship between WRU and her former

¹ Which apply by virtue of the Civil Service Management Code, The Code of Conduct for Special Advisers, The King's Regulations and the Diplomatic Service Code.

department. The Home Office confirmed she made no decisions specifically impacting WRU. The Committee² therefore considered the risk this appointment could reasonably be perceived as a reward for decisions or actions taken in office is low.

6. There is no overlap between Ms Tierney's role in government and her proposed role with WRU. With all cases there is an inherent risk, as the former Director General at the Home Office, she would have access to general information regarding Immigration and Nationality Rules. However, the department confirmed that this information is in the public domain and Ms Tierney has no access to information that could provide an unfair advantage.
7. There is a risk relating to her network and influence in government which might assist WRU unfairly. Whilst her role will not involve lobbying the government, she noted she may be invited to attend roundtables or other events in her capacity as Chief Executive.

The Committee's advice

8. Whilst WRU will undoubtedly gain from her skills and experience, the risk she could use sensitive information or contacts to unfairly WRU are appropriately mitigated by the conditions below, which seek to prevent the use of privileged information and contacts gained in office.
9. In the circumstances, the Committee did not consider Ms Tierney's proposed contact with government would be improper or contrary to the lobbying ban, given it would be at the request of government. However, the Committee would draw her attention to the conditions below, which make it clear any proposed contact must not reasonably be perceived as lobbying.
10. If Ms Tierney or the department should become aware of any circumstances that would be relevant to his application and this advice, in the gap between receiving this advice and taking up this role, he should revert to the Committee for further advice.
11. The Committee's advice, under the government's Business Appointment Rules, that Abigail Tierney's role with the **Welsh Rugby Union** should be subjected to the following conditions:
 - she should not draw or (disclose or use for the benefit of herself or the persons or organisation to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to her from her time in Crown service;
 - for two years from her last day in Crown service, she should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK government on behalf of the Welsh Rugby Union (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); nor should she make use, directly or indirectly, of

² This application for advice was considered by Isabel Doverty; The Rt Hon Lord Pickles; Mike Weir; Sarah de Gay; and Andrew Cumpsty. Jonathan Baume and Richard Thomas were absent.

her contacts in government and or ministerial contacts to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise to unfairly advantage the Welsh Rugby Union (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); and

- for two years from her last day in Crown service, she should not provide advice to the Welsh Rugby Union (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients) on the terms of, or with regard to the subject matter of, a bid with, or contract relating directly to the work of the UK.

12. By 'privileged information' we mean official information to which a Minister or Crown servant has had access as a consequence of his or her office or employment and which has not been made publicly available. Applicants are also reminded that they may be subject to other duties of confidentiality, whether under the Official Secrets Act, the Civil Service Code or otherwise.

13. The Business Appointment Rules explain that the restriction on lobbying means that the former Crown servant/Minister '*should not engage in communication with Government (Ministers, civil servants, including special advisers, and other relevant officials/public office holders) – wherever it takes place - with a view to influencing a Government decision, policy or contract award/grant in relation to their own interests or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted or with which they hold office*'.

14. You must inform us as soon as Ms Tierney takes up employment with this organisation, or if it is announced that she will do so. Please also inform us if Ms Tierney proposes to extend or otherwise change the nature of her role as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for her to make a fresh application.

15. Once the appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website, and where appropriate, refer to it in the relevant annual report.

Yours sincerely,
Xante Chalwell
Committee Secretariat

Annex - Material information

The role

1. Ms Tierney said that WRU is the governing body for the sport in Wales. It is responsible for the running of rugby in Wales, overseeing 320 member clubs, the Welsh national team and the National Leagues and cups.
2. Ms Tierney said that she applied for the role of Chief Executive at WRU and was subsequently offered the role.
3. She said she would take up a paid, full-time role as the Chief Executive of WRU and her responsibilities are to:
 - Set the direction on issues of strategic visions, financial health, resources and standards of conduct at WRU.
 - Provide managerial oversight of organisational governance and transformational change.
 - Ensure that the statutory and governance duties of the organisation are discharged effectively and that the interests of a wide range of stakeholders are considered.
 - Scrutinise the performance of management in meeting agreed goals and objectives and monitor the reporting of performance.
 - Promote high standards of propriety, behaviour, and practice throughout the organisation.
 - Safeguard WRU's values
4. Ms Tierney said her role will not involve dealings or contact with her former department. However, she noted there may be scenarios where government, namely the Department for Culture, Media & Sport, invites her as Chief Executive of the WRU to attend round tables or events.

Dealings in office

5. Ms Tierney did not have any contact with WRU during her time in office and did not consider her work on policy, decisions made, or had access to information of specific relevance to WRU.

Department Assessment

6. The department confirmed the details provided by Ms Tierney and confirmed that he had no contact with WRU.

7. The department confirmed that there is no overlap between Ms Tierney's responsibilities in office and her proposed role with WRU.
8. The department noted whilst Ms Tierney's understanding of the Immigration and Nationality Rules may be useful, this information is in the public domain, so it would not be considered to be an unfair advantage.
9. The department recommended this appointment be subject to standard conditions.

