

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 the following appointment:

- a part-time, paid role as an independent consultant to the National Fostering Agency (NFA); and

The NFA

The Committee noted that the NFA is the second largest independent child fostering agency in the United Kingdom with over 1,500 foster carers looking after more than 2,000 foster children. The Committee also noted that your role as independent consultant to the NFA will not include any lobbying of Government.

The Committee took into account that you had had official dealings with your prospective employer previously. The Committee noted that you first met representatives from the company whilst in opposition as Shadow Minister for Children. The Committee also noted that you met a great many other similar companies and inevitably the connection continued, on a modest scale, whilst you were in Government. You spoke at one of the NFA's conferences in your capacity as Minister for Children and they also came to your office once to lobby on behalf of independent fostering agencies to input into the work the Department was doing around children in care.

The Committee took into account that you had official dealings with the NFA's competitors and clients. Whilst developing policy, you met a number of independent fostering agencies (commercial and charitable) who all had various amounts of input into the Department's work on children in care.

Taking into account all the circumstances, and noting that it is now six months since you left office, our advice is that you can accept both appointment forthwith, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) you should not draw on any privileged information from your time in Government; and
- 2) for two years from the date of your leaving office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of your new employers, their parent companies or their clients.

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 Minister 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 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 appointment 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 your role with the NFA 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 applications, 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

Tim Loughton Esq MP