

*From the Chair*



**OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS**

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You asked for the Committee's advice about accepting a part time, unpaid appointment with Future First, a charity that supports schools and colleges by organising and facilitating assemblies or workshops for them, or by providing lesson plans and network-building resources for them to do so themselves.

The Committee noted that you had been invited to take up a role as an Advisory Council Member and, as such, would be required to attend biannual Council meetings, be an advocate for Future First, introduce the charity to potential partners and to respond to occasional requests for advice and guidance.

When considering your application, the Committee took into account that this is an unpaid role. It noted that you met Future First on a number of occasions when you were a minister at the Department for Education but the official information that you had access to as a minister would now be out of date.

The Committee was informed by the Department that Future First was awarded a £250,000 government-funded action grant as part of the Social Action Fund by the Social Investment Business on behalf of the Cabinet Office and announced in April 2012, but this predated you taking up your position as Minister of State in September 2012.

While DfE has an on-going relationship with Future First, the Committee noted that you do not anticipate that the role will require any contact or dealings with your former department or government more generally.

Taking into account the specific facts in this case, the Committee sees no reason why you should not take up the appointment, subject to the following conditions:

- That you should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of yourself or the organisation to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to you as a Minister; and
- For two years from your last day in ministerial office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of Future First or its partners.

The Business Appointment Rules explain that the restriction on lobbying means that former Ministers should not engage in communication with Government – including Ministers, special advisers and officials – with a view to influencing a Government decision or policy [including applications for awards or grants] 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 it is announced that you will do so, either by returning the enclosed form or by emailing the 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 Future First, as depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for you to seek fresh advice.

Once the appointment has 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.

Baroness Browning

Rt Hon David Laws