



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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You asked for the Committee's advice about taking up an appointment as a Trustee at the Summer Camps Trust (the Trust).

The Committee's remit

As you will be aware, it is the Committee's role to advise on any conditions that should apply to appointments or employment under the Government's Business Appointments Rules for Former Ministers (the Rules), which apply to former Ministers for two years after they leave office.

The Rules seek to counter suspicion that:

- a) the decisions and statements of a serving Minister might be influenced by the hope or expectation of future employment with a particular firm or organisation; or
- b) an employer could make improper use of official information to which a former Minister has had access; or
- c) there may be cause for concern about the appointment in some other particular respect.

When the Committee considers applications it must have in mind that Government has judged that it is in the public interest that former Ministers with experience in Government should be able to move into business or into other areas of public life, and to be able to start a new career or resume a former one. It is equally important that when a former Minister takes up a particular appointment or employment, there should be no cause for any suspicion of impropriety.

Committee's consideration

I must register the Committee's concern that you sought advice on this appointment with the Trust, several months after taking up the post.

As you are aware, retrospective applications will not normally be accepted, as set out in the Rules, because it is impossible to consider applications fully and freely; and in a manner that

will command public confidence if an appointment has already been announced and/or taken up.

The Committee notes this is not the first retrospective application it has received from you; and it is regrettable that the Committee again finds itself in a position where it is unable to provide advice. The Committee would like to reiterate that while you are subject to the Rules you must seek advice on all appointments or employment whether paid or unpaid. We would also expressly record that you have now informed the Committee that you have made it aware of all your current appointments which require an application to the Committee under the Rules.

The Committee is unwilling to provide advice on your appointment with the Trust, as you have already taken up the position.

However, it would like to put in the public domain that:

- You became a Trustee at the Trust in 2017.
- You confirmed this is an unpaid, part-time role.
- The Trust, which works with several other organisations including the National Citizens' Service, promotes outdoor residential camps for children and young people, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- You noted that it is possible this role will include future contact with Government, but that you have not had any thus far and that there are no plans to at present.
- The Trust was not in existence whilst you were in ministerial office and you noted the appointment is not connected to your role as a Minister.

The Committee would also like to draw your attention to the normal restriction it would impose on appointments, prohibiting the misuse of privileged information obtained while in public office. Further, as it is possible you could have contact with Government in this role, the Committee would like to remind you that it would expect you to refrain from making use, directly or indirectly, of privileged access derived from your role as a Minister, to influence government policy or secure funding, on behalf of Summer Camps Trust or its partners.

We will publish this letter on the Advisory Committee's website, and include the main details in both the regularly consolidated list on the website and in the next annual report.

The Baroness Browning

Sir Julian Brazier TD