



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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You asked for the Committee's advice about an unpaid appointment as a Trustee of the Social Mobility Foundation (SMF), a charity with aims to make a practical improvement in social mobility for young people from low-income backgrounds.

When considering this application the Committee noted that you had no dealings with SMF while in ministerial office and that the role will be unpaid and involve attending about four or five meetings a year, as well as occasional events. They also noted your statement that social mobility is an area that you are particularly interested in, and that your former department has no concerns about you taking up the post.

Taking into account the factors, the Committee sees no reason why you should not take up this position, subject to the following conditions:

- You should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of yourself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to you from your time 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 the Social Mobility Foundation.

By 'privileged information' we mean official information to which a Minister 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.

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 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 application, together with the Advisory Committee's advice, in the regularly updated consolidated list on our website and in the next annual report.

The Baroness Browning

Helen Grant MP