

*From the Chair*



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

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You asked for the Committee's advice about becoming Chair of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, which you launched on 16 September.

The Northern Powerhouse Partnership is a not-for-profit organisation, which you have explained that you created, with the bi-partisan support of local government and fellow MPs, to promote economic development in the North of England. You launched the concept of the Northern Powerhouse as Chancellor.

This is an unpaid role with a not-for-profit organisation, which your former department had no concerns about. Additionally, given its responsibility for local government and devolution (including the Northern Powerhouse) the Committee consulted the Department for Communities and Local Government, which also had no concerns about the appointment.

The Committee noted with concern that you sought advice on this appointment after you had launched the Northern Powerhouse Partnership. The Committee is unable to offer retrospective advice on appointments that have already been announced.

Nonetheless, it would draw your attention to the normal restriction it would impose prohibiting the misuse of privileged information obtained while in public office. The Committee notes that in seeking to promote economic development in the North of England, this role will involve some dealings with Government. However, 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 on behalf of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership. The Committee also notes that with regard to your activities in Parliament you are subject to other rules.

The Committee would also remind you that advice should be sought on all appointments, paid or unpaid, before they are taken up or announced.

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

Rt Hon George Osborne MP