



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

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### **BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: MARK DEARNLEY**

The Committee has been asked to consider an application from Mark Dearnley, Chief Digital & Information Officer at HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) who has sought the Committee's advice on taking up an appointment with Premium Credit Ltd, an insurance premium finance company.

The Committee understands that Mr Dearnley has been Chief Digital & Information Officer at HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) since October 2013, leading HMRC's digital and data strategies. He is also responsible for the running of live IT operations. His contract will come to an end on 30 September 2016, which is also his last day in the Civil Service.

Mark was previously CIO at Vodafone UK. He has also held senior positions with Cable and Wireless and Boots the Chemists.

Mr Dearnley proposes to take up a full-time, paid role as Chief Information Officer – Technology Leadership with Premium Credit Ltd. The appointment will take effect from 1 October 2016.

When considering this application the Committee took into account that the role will not include any contact or dealings with Mr Dearnley's former department or government more generally. It also noted that he has not personally had any direct contractual dealings with his prospective employer over his last two years of service and was not responsible for anyone who did. Neither has he been involved in the development or administration of any departmental policy or in policy or regulatory work that has affected or could affect his prospective employer or its competitors.

The Committee sought the views of the Permanent Secretary for HMRC who raised no concerns about the propriety of the appointment.

The Prime Minister accepted the Committee's advice that there was no reason why Mr Dearnley should not take up the appointment, subject to the following conditions:

- That he should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of himself or the organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to him from his time in Crown service;
- For two years from his last day in Crown service, he should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of Premium Credit Ltd, its clients or its parent company.

By 'privileged information' we mean official information to which a Minister or Crown servant has had access as a consequence of his or her office or employment and which has not been made publicly available. This should include commercially sensitive information in respect of contracts with which Mr Dearnley had any involvement.

The Business Appointment Rules explain that the restriction on lobbying means that the former Crown servant/Minister "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 could ensure that we are informed as soon as Mr Dearnley takes up this position, or if it is announced that he will do so (I enclose a form for this purpose). 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, and this could lead to a false assumption being made about whether he had complied with the rules.

I should also be grateful if you would ask that Mr Dearnley informs us if he proposes to extend or otherwise change the nature of his role as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for him to make a fresh application.

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.

Yours sincerely

Nicola Richardson  
**Committee Secretariat**