

From the Chair



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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You asked for the Committee's advice about accepting part-time, paid appointment as non-executive director of Square, Inc. a US technology business in the financial services industry, which provides payment processing, and other related services.

You confirmed that the appointment is not likely to include any contact or dealings with your former department (HM Treasury) or with Government more generally.

The Committee sought the views of HM Treasury, who had no concerns about the appointment.

When considering your application the Committee took into account that you did not have any official dealings with Square, Inc., competitors of the company or the sector in which they operate during your last two years in office; neither did you have access to commercially sensitive information or unannounced policy that could give Square, Inc. an unfair advantage.

The Committee was also mindful that your long career in the financial services industry (in investment banking) predates your Ministerial role.

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 Square, Inc. or its subsidiaries or make use, directly or indirectly, of your contacts within Government and/or Crown service to influence policy or secure business on behalf of Square, Inc. or its subsidiaries.

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 that 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 Square, Inc. as depending on the circumstances, it might 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

Lord Deighton KBE