



## OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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### **BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: SIR PETER HOUSDEN**

The Committee has been asked to consider an application from Sir Peter Housden, the former Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government. He has applied to set up as an independent consultant, and accept commissions within the scope of this consultancy with: Deloitte and the Centre for Effective Services. Sir Peter was Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government from 2010 until June 2015. His last day in Crown service was 30 June 2015.

When considering the application, the Committee took into account that Sir Peter's consultancy would provide professional services in devolution, service integration, leadership and workforce development to governments, regional and local authorities, and voluntary organisations. The only official dealings that Sir Peter had with any of his potential clients was through speeches he gave at events organised by Deloitte and the Centre for Effective Services. The Committee also noted that, although Deloitte undertook contractual work for the Scottish Government during Sir Peter's time as Permanent Secretary, he had no role or responsibility for this work in relation to dealing with bids, the receipt of tenders or awarding of contracts; administering or monitoring contracts, or advising on them.

The Committee took into account the views of the Countersigning Officer and the Scottish Government, who had no concerns with him undertaking this work.

The Committee's advice to the First Minister is that it can see no reason why he should not set up this independent consultancy, subject to the conditions that:

- for two years from his last day of service, he should not become personally involved in lobbying the Scottish Government on behalf of any of his clients or those he advises;
- he should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of himself or the organisation to which this advice refers) privileged information available to him from his time in Crown service;
- for 12 months from his last day of service he should not undertake any work as a consultant which involves providing advice to any company or organisation on the terms of a bid or contract relating directly to the work of the Scottish Government; and

- for two years from his last day of service, before accepting any new commission he should make a case directly to the Committee to confirm that each individual commission he wishes to undertake would be permissible under the approved terms of the consultancy including any from Deloitte. (If, after enquiry, the Committee takes the view that a commission is, or may be, outside the terms of the consultancy he will be expected to submit a fresh application).

In addition in this case, given Sir Peter's previous senior roles in the UK Government and the level of his continuing interaction with the UK Government while at the Scottish Government, we consider he should not front-up or take part in the initial stage of any negotiations or tendering process with the UK Government with a view to influencing a government decision with regard to the design or award of a contract.

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.

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 would be grateful if you would let us know whether the First Minister is content to approve the application in line with the Committee's recommendation, and copy us into the final decision. I should also be grateful if you would ensure that we are informed as soon as Sir Peter undertakes any of this work, 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. This could lead to a false assumption being made about whether Sir Peter complied with the rules.

Similarly, should Sir Peter wish to extend or otherwise change the nature of this work, he should inform the Committee as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for him to make a fresh application.

Once this work has been taken up or announced we will publish this letter on the Advisory Committee's website and include the main details, together with the Committee's advice, in both the regularly updated consolidated list on the website and in the next annual report.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Millington  
Committee Secretariat