

*From the Chair*



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

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June 2015

You asked for the Committee's advice about taking up appointments with Low Associates, UK Active and Dod's Training in June 2015.

**Dod's Training** provides political data, news on trends and immediate political headlines; and organises events and development programmes offering skills for effective public service. In your proposed role, you will occasionally attend these events and programmes as a guest speaker, averaging one engagement a month, and will be remunerated for this role. You did not have any official dealings with Dod's Training or their competitors for the last two years whilst in office, neither are you aware of any relationship between Dod's Training and Department of Health or the Cabinet Office.

**UK Active** is a not-for-profit organisation promoting an active lifestyle through events and surveys, the results of which are published to raise awareness. Your proposed role is to be paid and part time, offering advice to the Chair, Baroness Grey-Thompson, and the Chief Executive, David Stalker. You have also stated that you will chair a Strategic Advisory Group, work with the team on policies that promote physical activity and contact leading decision makers in industry, the health sector, central and local government. As Secretary of State for Health, you initiated the Responsibility Deal, a voluntary partnership between Government, the health sector and industry. A strand of this was the promotion of physical activity and UK Active joined this in March 2011. Your contact with UK Active, as Secretary of State, was in the wider context of the health programme. For the last three years you have not had official dealings either UK Active or with their competitors.

**Low Associates** is a consultancy, founded by your wife, Sally Low, specialising in strategic communication, managing complex programmes, PR and marketing; and EU related public affairs. The company also organises conferences and events. You have been an associate with Low Associates since before becoming a Minister and, although you did not do any work for the company while holding Ministerial office, your position was declared throughout the time you were a Minister. You now propose to resume active involvement

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in the company, occasionally speaking or making presentations at conferences and events as well as provide consultancy expertise on competition, economic regulation, health and social care, local government and the communications industry. You have offered to approach the Committee for advice prior to taking up individual commissions from Low Associates.

Taking into account all the circumstances, including the views of your former Departments, the Committee sees no reason why you should not take up these appointments, subject to the following conditions:

- you should not draw on privileged information available to you from your time in Government;
- for two years from your last day in Ministerial office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government; and
- before accepting any commissions from Low Associates, you should seek the Committee's advice on each commission you wish to undertake.

It might be helpful if I add that lobbying is defined in the Business Appointment Rules in the following way – "Lobbying in this context means that the former Minister should not engage in communication with Government – including Ministers, special advisers and officials – with a view to influencing a Government decision or policy 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 appointments, 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 roles with Low Associates, UK Active or Dod's Training as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for you to seek fresh advice.

Once the appointments have 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

The Rt Hon Andrew Lansley