



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

Room G/8, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Telephone: 020 7271 0839

Email: [acoba@acoba.gov.uk](mailto:acoba@acoba.gov.uk)

Website: <http://www.gov.uk/acoba>

Sir Nicholas Macpherson  
HM Treasury  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London  
SW1A 2HQ

2 February 2016

Dear Sir Nicholas,

**BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: RUPERT HARRISON CBE**

The Committee has been asked to consider an application from Rupert Harrison, former senior special adviser to the Chancellor. He proposes to take up a trustee position with the Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships (TCCR), a charity that undertakes training, counselling, psychotherapy and research. The post was offered to him following informal discussions with existing trustees.

In considering the application the Committee noted that this is an unpaid role, which will amount to the equivalent of two day's work per year. It is not likely to include any contact or dealings with government.

The Committee took into account that Mr Harrison had no official dealings with TCCR in his last two years of service. It also considered it to be relevant that Mr Harrison had not been involved in the development or administration of any departmental policy or in policy decisions which have affected (or could affect) TCCR or its parent organisation, Tavistock Institute of Medical Psychology; neither was he involved in any related regulatory work or the award of grants. Furthermore, the Committee noted that while TCCR receives funding from government, this does not come from HM Treasury directly.

The Committee's advice is that it sees no reason why Mr Harrison should not take up this position, subject to the following conditions:

- For two years from his last day of service, he should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships or its parent organisation, Tavistock Institute of Medical Psychology; and
- He should not draw on privileged information available to him from his time in Crown service.

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. Applicants are also reminded that they may be subject to other duties of confidentiality, whether under the Official Secrets Act, the Civil Service Code or otherwise.

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".

As with all Special Advisers, the Committee makes this recommendation on the understanding that, if Mr Harrison has not already done so, he must confirm in writing to the department that he recognises that he continues to be bound by the provisions of the criminal law (including the Official Secrets Act) which protect certain categories of information, and by his duty of confidentiality owed to the Crown.

I should be grateful if you would let us know whether you are content to approve the application in line with the Committee's recommendations, and copy us into the final decision. I should also be grateful if you would ensure that we are informed as soon as Mr Harrison takes up this appointment, 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 about whether Mr Harrison complied with the Business Appointments Rules.

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