



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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INDEPENDENT CONSULTANCY – NEW COMMISSIONS

Dear Ms Swinson,

The Committee has considered your request to undertake work for Eversheds, the British multinational law firm. You will contribute to workshops run by Eversheds for HR professionals and others around the impact of transparency and reporting obligations on the profession, and what direction it might take in future. The work is paid and part-time and will begin in the autumn of 2016. The Committee noted that you had some engagement with Eversheds as a Minister at the department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) when you spoke at various events organised by the firm.

The Committee has also considered your proposal to take up an unpaid role on the Advisory Committee of the Involvement & Participation Association (IPA). This will involve you attending two meetings a year and providing ad hoc advice by email.

The Committee sought the advice of the permanent secretary of your former department, BIS, who had no concerns about either of the applications, given the time elapsed since you left Government and the consultancy constraints set out below.

The Committee agrees that these commissions are permissible within the terms of your independent consultancy.

The conditions that apply to your independent consultancy are:

- you should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of yourself or the organisation to which this advice refers) 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 on behalf of your clients or those you advise;
- once you have received approval to set up as an independent consultant, you must seek confirmation from the **Committee directly** that each subsequent individual commission is permissible under the terms of your consultancy before taking it up. If, after enquiry, the Committee takes the view that a commission is, or may be, outside the terms of the consultancy you will be expected to submit a fresh application.

As you know, 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 let me know when you take up these commissions, or if it is announced that you are to do so. Once the commissions have been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee’s website and include the main details of the commissions, 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