



## OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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### **BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: RICHARD DOUGLAS**

The Committee has been asked to consider an application from Richard Douglas, former Director General for Finance and NHS in the Department of Health. He has applied to take up a position as an Adviser to the Government Faculty of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

The Committee noted that this role will involve developing and supporting the Government Faculty, along with other teams across CIPFA, to support the Institute's three year strategy. They took into account that, given Mr Douglas's background as a finance professional, while in post he met with all the major accountancy institutes roughly once a quarter. However, he had no contractual dealings with CIPFA, no access to any relevant commercially sensitive information, and no involvement in policy that could have affected them.

The Committee took into account the views of Mr Douglas's former department, which had no concerns about this appointment and did not believe that CIPFA could gain any unfair advantage by employing Mr Douglas, especially given that relevant thinking in the department and wider Government Finance Profession is routinely shared with and shaped by all accountancy bodies, and that Mr Douglas's knowledge from the department is now a year out of date.

The Prime Minister accepted the Committee's advice that there was no reason why Mr Douglas should not accept 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 CIPFA, its partners or members; and
- He should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of himself or the organisations to which this advice refers) 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".

I would be grateful if you could ensure that we are informed as soon as Mr Douglas takes up this position, 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, and this could lead to a false assumption being made about whether he had complied with the rules.

I should also be grateful if you would ask that Mr Douglas informs us if he proposes to extend or otherwise change the nature of his role as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for him to make a fresh application.

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

Catherine Millington  
Committee Secretariat