

From the Chair



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

G/7 Ground Floor, 1 Horse Guards Road SW1A 2HQ

Telephone: 020 7271 0839

Email: acoba@acoba.gov.uk

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

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You asked for the Committee's advice about becoming a consultant with LionTree Europe, an investment bank specialising in mergers and acquisitions in the telecommunications, media and technology sectors.

The Committee noted that this is a paid, part-time role. You will work with LionTree to understand emerging trends and developments in the UK and European technology, media and telecommunications sectors. This will involve hosting or attending seminars, events and conferences, as well as writing articles for LionTree publications. Your role will not involve any contact with your former Departments or with Government more generally.

When considering your application, the Committee took into account that as Minister for Culture and Digital you worked with the telecommunications, technology and media sectors and had occasional meetings with city analysts from the banking sector to discuss telecommunications. You have met LionTree three times this year on official business, in January, February and June.

The Committee consulted the Department for Culture Media and Sport and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Industrial Strategy about the appointment. They confirmed that you have not been involved in any wider mergers and takeovers discussions that would have included commercially sensitive information that could give LionTree an advantage.

However, given that you were involved in the development of Government policy on broadband and digital, the Committee considers that it would be appropriate for you to observe a three-month waiting period before taking up this role.

The Committee sees no reason why you should not take up the appointment, subject to the following conditions:

- A three-month waiting period from your last day in Ministerial office;
- You should not draw on any privileged information available to you as a Minister;

- For two years from your last day in service, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of LionTree Europe or its parent company LionTree LLC.

By 'privileged information' we mean official information to which a Minister 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 or otherwise.

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 inform us as soon as you take up employment with LionTree, 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 that 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.

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.

The Baroness Browning

Rt Hon Ed Vaizey MP

cc Louis Kenna, LionTree Europe