



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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Dear Lt Gen Bashall,

You sought the Committee's advice on taking up a commission under your independent consultancy.

Commission details

You wish to take up a commission with British Military Fitness (BMF) as a Senior Adviser.

BMF runs outdoor group fitness classes in public parks and outdoor spaces across the UK: the classes are run by former or serving members of the British Armed Forces. BMF has recently been acquired by NM Capital (a company which focuses on domestic and international venture capital and growth equity investments.)

You stated your role will be to help lead a dispersed workforce - an appointment which will have leadership at its core. You said the Board at BMF wishes to employ your services to conduct two tasks: attend at least five promotional events, including delivery of speeches (to employees of BMF), lectures or presentations as appropriate; and attend at least four Board or Advisory Board meetings a year. You do not expect to have contact with Government in this role.

You confirmed:

- you had no contact with BMF whilst you were in post, but that you did meet the CEO of its new parent company whilst in post. You said the CEO is heavily involved in supporting Army Cricket; and you met him at the launch of the new cricket season event in April 2018;
- you had no contact with BMF's competitors, nor those of its new parent company whilst in post;
- you made no decisions which related to BMF whilst in post; and
- you have no sensitive information specific to BMF from your time in post.

The Committee's consideration

The Committee considers this commission is consistent with the description of your independent consultancy, which you described as providing leadership training, as well as

using your knowledge, skills and experience as a Commander at various ranks, to advise boards with leadership and policy issues.

The Committee took into account your confirmation that you had no contact with BMF whilst in post; and that although you had contact with the CEO of the company which has just acquired BMF (NM Capital), this was as a result of your role as President of Armed Forces Cricket. You told the Committee you made no decisions whilst in post which affected BMF, which it noted is in keeping with the description of your role at the MOD. The Committee also considered information previously provided by the MOD, which confirmed you had no official contact with commercial companies in the past two years; and that you had no access to commercially sensitive information.

Based on the specific details provided, the Committee concluded there is no basis for perceiving this work as a reward for your time in post; nor that there is any particular risk of unfair advantage. It considers this appointment is consistent with the terms of your independent consultancy.

The conditions that apply to your consultancy are:

- you should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of yourself or the organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to you from your time in Crown service;
- for two years from your last day in Crown service, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of your clients, or their partners or subsidiaries. You should not make use, directly or indirectly, of your contacts in Government and/ or Crown service to influence government policy, or secure business or funding on their behalf;
- for two years from your last day in Crown service, you should not undertake any work as a consultant that involves providing advice to any company organisation on the terms of, or with regard to the subject matter of, a bid or contract relating directly to the work of the UK Ministry of Defence or its trading funds; and
- for two years from your last day in Crown service, before accepting any commissions and/ or before extending or otherwise changing the nature of any commission, he should seek advice from the Committee. The Committee will decide whether each commission is consistent with the terms of the consultancy and consider any relevant factors under the Business appointment Rules.

Given your previous senior role in the MOD, and that you will have a promotional role at BMF, the Committee also considered it appropriate to impose the following condition to your commission:

- you should make clear that any endorsement you give of BMF is your own professional and personal endorsement and not an endorsement in any way deriving from the UK Ministry of Defence.

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 *"should not engage in communication with Government (Ministers, civil servants, including special advisers, and other relevant officials/public office holders) – wherever it takes place - with a view to influencing a Government decision, policy or contract award/grant in relation to their own interests or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted or with which they hold office."*

I should be grateful if you would let me know when you take up this commission, or if it is announced that you are to do so. This will enable the Committee to publish this letter on the Committee's website, and where appropriate, refer to it in the relevant annual report.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Parkington
Committee Secretariat

