



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

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**BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: Mr Mayank Prakash**

The Committee was asked to consider an application from Mr Mayank Prakash, Director General, Digital, at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to take up a position at Centrica plc.

Mr Prakash has been Director General at DWP since November 2014 and his last day in Crown service will be 31 December 2018. Mr Prakash is responsible for leading the digitisation of services provided by DWP to the public.

Mr Prakash has had several technology related roles, including as a CIO, over the past 25 years, across various sectors.

Appointment details

Mr Prakash proposes to take up a full-time role as Chief Information Officer (CIO), Consumer Business, at Centrica Plc, the British multinational energy and services company. Centrica is the parent company of energy providers such as British Gas and Scottish Gas.

Mr Prakash stated that as CIO, he will be responsible for leading the digitisation of Centrica's global consumer energy and services business. He said he does not expect to have contact with Government.

Mr Prakash confirmed he had no dealings, contractual or otherwise with Centrica, or its competitors, whilst he was in office; and that he had no access to commercially sensitive information about competitors of Centrica. He also confirmed he has not been involved in the development or administration of any departmental policy or decisions, nor has he been involved in any other work, such as regulatory work or the award of grants, which have affected (or could affect) Centrica or its competitors.

DWP confirmed it has no commercial or business relationship with Centrica; that Mr Prakash had no previous involvement with the organisation; that he had no access to information relating to competitors which could be regarded as commercially valuable or sensitive; and that he had no access to policy or departmental information, knowledge of which could provide Centrica with an unfair advantage. In addition, the Department stated that whilst at DWP, neither Mr Prakash, nor his staff, had any dealings with Centrica or any of its

competitors; and that Mr Prakash has not had access to commercially sensitive information relevant to the energy sector.

DWP raised no concerns about this appointment.

#### The Committee's consideration

DWP confirmed Mr Prakash had no official dealings with Centrica during his time in office; and that he made no decisions that affected (or could affect) Centrica or its competitors. The Committee also recognised that this role is in keeping with Mr Prakash's career prior to joining DWP. This role is unrelated to the work of DWP and there is no evidence to suggest Mr Prakash could reasonably be seen to have been offered this role due to his time in office.

The Committee took into account that DWP confirmed Mr Prakash had no access to commercially valuable or sensitive information relating to competitors of Centrica; and that he had no access to policy or departmental information, knowledge of which could provide Centrica with an unfair advantage. The Committee also took into account that Mr Prakash stated he does not expect to have contact with Government in his new role; and that DWP stated it has no commercial or business relationship with Centrica.

The Committee considered the risk that Centrica would gain an unfair advantage as a result of employing Mr Prakash is low and adequately mitigated by imposing the conditions set out below.

The Prime Minister accepted the Committee's advice that, in accordance with the Government's Business Appointment Rules, this appointment be subject to the following conditions:

- that he should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of himself or the organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to him from his time in Crown service; and
- for two years from his last day in Crown service, he should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of Centrica plc or its subsidiaries.

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to remind DWP and Mr Prakash to appropriately manage any potential conflicts of interest, that may arise in relation to this appointment, during his remaining time in office; whilst recognising the potential for risk is low in these circumstances.

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 (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 ensure that we are informed as soon as Mr Prakash 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 Prakash 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 this appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website and, if appropriate, refer to it in the relevant annual report.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Parkington  
Committee Secretariat

