

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

Minutes of Committee meeting held on Wednesday 16 May 2018

Present

Baroness Browning (Chair)
Sir Alex Allan
Jonathan Baume
Lord German
Dr Susan Liautaud
Baroness Liddell
Richard Thomas
John Wood

Secretariat

Peter Lawrence
Cat Marshall
Maggie O'Boyle
Sarah Parkington

Chair's update

1. Committee member Terence Jagger sent his apologies.
2. The Chair updated members on her continuing programme of meeting with departments to discuss the Business Appointment Rules (BARs). She noted meetings that have taken place since April, with the MOD Business Appointments Panel and with David Lidington - Minister for the Cabinet Office. The meeting with David Lidington included discussion of the Government making Audit and Risk Committees responsible for BARs governance, in line with the suggestion made by the Committee in its evidence to the PACAC inquiry.
3. The Chair noted that a new Director General for Propriety and Ethics had been appointed and the Secretariat would be inviting them to the autumn Committee meeting.

Minutes of the last meeting

4. The minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 21 March 2018, were approved.

Outcome of discussion at March Committee meeting on the Committee's approach to independent consultancies and commissions

5. The Committee agreed it was important to set the parameters for the terms of a consultancy at the outset; therefore if applicants approach the Committee about establishing a consultancy that is broadly defined (where specifics of the likely commissions may not be clear), the Committee will consider providing early advice -

to indicate the issues and risk factors the Committee will consider under the BARs in relation to any future work.

'Same sector' applications - an overview

6. The Committee discussed the risks associated with applicants moving from public office, to jobs in an area for which they had some responsibility whilst in post. The Committee's approach is to consider applications on a case-by-case basis. This allows the Committee to examine each case on its merits, using precedent to ensure consistency of approach.
7. The Committee also discussed its commitment to transparency, noting the importance of information being available to applicants and the public about its considerations. The Committee's advice letters (published on the website if an appointment is taken up) now include the risks identified under the BARs, in addition to the conditions the Committee has advised to mitigate those risks.

Data handling update

8. The Secretariat provided an update to the Committee on the Cabinet Office guidance on data handling.

Communications

9. The Press Officer, Maggie O'Boyle, updated the Committee on recent press coverage.

Annual report

10. The Secretariat provided an update that it would be publishing ACOBA's Annual Report in July and would be shortly sharing a draft copy with members.

Any Other Business

11. It was confirmed the Committee's Away Day would held on 11 July 2018; and the next Committee meeting would take place on Wednesday 17 October 2018.

**Committee Secretariat
October 2018**