



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

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**BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: John Loughhead CB OBE FReng,  
Elsevier.**

1. The Committee has been asked to consider an application for John Loughhead, former Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) between September 2016 - 30 November 2020 and Chair of Mission Innovation between June 2019 and November 2020.
2. His last day in service was 30 November 2020.

Application details

3. Professor Loughhead sought advice on taking up a paid, part-time role as a member of Climate Action Steering Group for Elsevier. Elsevier is a Netherlands-based information and analytics company specialising in scientific, technical, and medical content. The website states '*[It] help[s] institutions and professionals advance healthcare, open science and improve performance for the benefit of humanity. Combining content with technology, supported by operational efficiency, [it] turn[s] information into actionable knowledge*'.
4. Professor Loughhead said he will be a member of an external international advisory group advising management and board on changes in company business processes to effect greenhouse gas emissions from both company operation and users as part of a net zero emissions ambition. Professor Loughhead said Elsevier are seeking advice from individuals with knowledge of emissions sources, mitigation technologies, and process modifications to reduce emissions in order to assist their planning of changes in company practices to meet net zero targets. He said his professional background and previous roles as Executive Director of the UK Energy Research Centre, Chair of the Royal Academy of Engineering Energy Panel, and Chair of the Institution of Engineering & Technology Energy Executive matches the

profile Elsevier seeks. He does not expect his role to involve contact with the Government.

5. Professor Loughhead informed the Committee he had no contact with Elsevier during his time in government; nor had any involvement in any decisions affecting Elsevier and was not involved in policy work regarding the company during his time in government. Further, there is no relationship between his former department, BEIS and Elsevier.

6. BEIS confirmed the details provided above, but said as the former BEIS Chief Scientific Adviser, there are inherent risks given the broad scientific crossover. Notwithstanding this, BEIS recommended standard restrictions which prevent Professor Loughhead from drawing on privileged information available to him from his time in Crown service. Additionally, in his post as Chief Scientific Adviser there may be a risk that he may offer unfair advantage to Elsevier in relation to access to contacts he gained whilst in Crown Service and was satisfied that these were sufficient to address any such risks in this case. Professor Loughhead has indicated that his new role will not include contact with BEIS or wider Government and the Department recommended the standard lobbying ban restriction should be applied.

7. BEIS has no concerns with Professor Loughhead taking up this appointment.

#### The Committee's Consideration

8. The Committee<sup>1</sup> noted that Professor Loughhead had no dealings with the organisation whilst in office and it is aware of no reason it might be perceived this appointment is a reward for decisions or actions taken in office.

9. The Committee noted and agreed with BIES that this role overlaps with his time in office and as such Professor Loughhead may have general access to policy and information that could be perceived to unfairly benefit Elsevier. However, as BEIS notes this is general rather than specific to any particular sensitive information and over four months has passed since he was in office. The Committee considered the risk he could offer an unfair advantage to Elsevier through his access to sensitive information is low, particularly in light of the conditions below which prevent him from using privileged information from his time in office.

10. Additionally, there is an inherent risk Professor Loughhead may offer an unfair advantage to the organisation in relation to access to the contacts he gained while in service. The lobbying restriction imposed below makes clear that it would be

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<sup>1</sup> This application for advice was considered by Jonathan Baume; Andrew Cumpsty; Isabel Doverty; Sarah de Gay; The Rt Hon Lord Pickles; Richard Thomas; Mike Weir; and Lord Larry Whitty. Dr Susan Liataud was unavailable.

inappropriate for him to use his contacts to the unfair advantage of the organisation. Further, he is prevented from providing advice on bids and contracts with the UK Government, mitigating the risk of impropriety in relation to Professor Loughhead's contacts and influence across the Government. The Committee noted this was in keeping with his role as described.

11. The Committee's advice to the Prime Minister, that under the Government's Business Appointment Rules, this appointment with **Elsevier** should be subject to the following conditions:

- he should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of himself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to him from his time in Crown service;
- for two years from his last day in Crown service, he should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK Government on behalf of Elsevier (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); nor should he make use, directly or indirectly, of his contacts in the Government and/or Crown service to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage Elsevier (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); and
- for two years from his last day in Crown service he should not undertake any work with Elsevier (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients) that involves providing advice on the terms of, or with regard to the subject matter of a bid with, or contract relating directly to the work of, the UK Government.

12. 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.

13. 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.*"

14. I should be grateful if you would inform us as soon as Professor Loughhead takes up this appointment, or if it is announced that he 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 he has complied with the Rules.

15. Please also inform us if Professor Loughhead proposes to extend or otherwise change the nature of appointment as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for him to make a fresh application.

16. Once the appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website.

Yours Sincerely,

Isabella Wynn  
**Committee Secretariat**