



Lord True CBE  
Minister of State  
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London SW1A 2AS

The Rt Hon Lord Pickles  
Chair, Advisory Committee on Business  
Appointments  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London  
SW1A 2HQ

18th May 2022

Dear Lord Pickles,

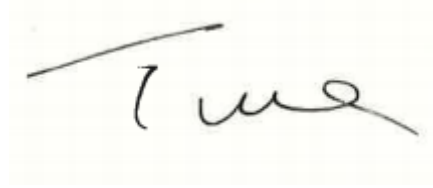
Thank you for your letter of 29 April to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, relating to Matthew Coats' appointment as Chief Executive Officer of the West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust. I have been asked to reply as the Minister with policy responsibility for the Business Appointment Rules.

From the correspondence you enclosed in your letter, I understand that the premature announcement of this appointment was made by the Trust, not Mr Coats himself. Whilst applicants under the Business Appointment Rules have a personal responsibility to manage their compliance with the Civil Service Management Code, and the failure to receive advice before announcing the appointment constitutes a breach of the Rules, it is clear that Mr Coats informed his prospective employer of the Rules and asked them to abide by them.

I therefore agree with the Committee's assessment that this is a minor breach, the fault does not lie with Mr Coats, and further action would be disproportionate in this case. The publication of your correspondence has, in itself, ensured public transparency on this issue and clarity in relation to any future declarations.

I would like to thank the Committee for your ongoing work on these matters.

**Yours sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read 'True'. It consists of a long horizontal stroke at the top, followed by a vertical stroke that curves into a loop, and then a series of connected loops and curves that form the rest of the name.

**Lord True CBE**