



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

G/7 Ground Floor, 1 Horse Guards Road SW1A 2HQ

Telephone: 020 7271 0839

Email: acoba@acoba.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.gov.uk/acoba>

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BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: The Rt Hon Boris Johnson, former Prime Minister - Paid appointment with GB News

1. You approached the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments the Committee) under the government's Business Appointments Rules for Former Ministers (the Rules) seeking advice on taking up a paid role as Presenter and Contributor for GB News.
2. The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the government. The Committee has considered the risks associated with the actions and decisions made during your time in office, alongside the information and influence you may offer GB News. The material information taken into consideration by the Committee is set out in the annex.
3. The Committee's advice is not an endorsement of the appointment - it imposes a number of conditions to mitigate the potential risks to the government associated with the appointment under the Rules.
4. The Ministerial Code sets out that ministers must abide by the Committee's advice. It is an applicant's personal responsibility to manage the propriety of any appointment. Former ministers of the Crown, and Members of Parliament, are expected to uphold the highest standards of propriety and act in accordance with the 7 Principles of Public Life.

The Committee's consideration of the risks presented

5. As Prime Minister you spoke with many media outlets whilst in office, including GB News. You and the Cabinet office confirmed you made no decisions in office, whether policy, regulatory or commercial, that were

specific to GB News. Therefore, the Committee¹ considered the risk you could be seen to have been offered this role as a reward for, was low.

6. As a former Prime Minister there are inherent risks associated with your privileged access to information and contacts which may be seen to be of general use to any media company. The risk associated with your access to information is limited given the transparent nature of this role.

The Committee's advice

7. The Committee did not consider joining GB News as a presenter to raise any particular concerns under the government's Rules, provided it is subject to the conditions below. However, the Committee would remind you it is your responsibility to manage the propriety of the specific pieces of work undertaken with GB News. In particular, as a former Prime Minister, you must be careful not to offer any unfair insight as a result of your access to information and potential influence in government - which the conditions below seek to mitigate.
8. The government's Rules state that as a former Cabinet Minister, you are subject to a three month waiting period as standard. The Committee notes that this waiting period has now lapsed.
9. Taking into account these factors, in accordance with the government's Business Appointment Rules, the Committee advises this appointment with **GB News** be subject to the following conditions:
 - you should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of yourself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to you from your time in ministerial office;
 - for two years from your last day in ministerial office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK government or its arm's length bodies on behalf of GB News (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); nor should you make use, directly or indirectly, of your contacts in the government and/or ministerial office to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage GB News (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); and
 - for two years from your last day in ministerial office you should not undertake any work with GB News (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 or its arm's length bodies.
10. The advice and the conditions under the government's Business Appointment Rules relate to your previous role in government only; they are separate to

¹ This application for advice was considered by Andrew Cumpsty; Isabel Doverty; Sarah de Gay; The Rt Hon Baroness Jones of Whitchurch; The Rt Hon Lord Eric Pickles; and Mike Weir.

rules administered by other bodies such as the Office of the Registrar of Consultant Lobbyists or the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. It is your personal responsibility to understand any other rules and regulations you may be subject to in parallel with this Committee's advice.

11. 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 Ministerial Code or otherwise.
12. 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".
13. You must inform us as soon as you take up employment with this organisation(s), or if it is announced that you will do so. Please also inform us if you propose to extend or otherwise change the nature of your role as, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for you to make a fresh application.
14. Once the appointment(s) has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website, and where appropriate, refer to it in the relevant annual report.

The Rt Hon Lord Pickles

Annex - Material information

The role

1. You wish to take up a paid part-time role as a presenter and contributor for GB News. GB News is a British TV and radio news channel covering current affairs. You said your role will not involve contact with the government.
2. You noted that you were previously a journalist *'I had various roles as a journalist, including as Editor of the Spectator magazine, before holding Ministerial office, and I was a columnist for the Telegraph before becoming PM'*.

Dealings in office

3. You said that during your time in office you were interviewed by GB News and other media companies though made no relevant policy or commercial decisions; and you did not have access to information that could provide an unfair advantage.

Department Assessment

4. The Cabinet Office has confirmed the details provided in your application.
5. The Cabinet Office noted:
 - a. You had contact with GB news and potential competitors as part of your media obligations in your role as Prime Minister.
 - b. It confirmed that you made no commercial, policy or regulatory decisions specific to GB News.
 - c. It has a departmental relationship with GB News as a media stakeholder.
6. The Cabinet Office stated that you would have had access to a range of policy advice and an in-depth knowledge of government processes. However, it is of the view that *'...given the time passed it is unlikely to offer any unfair advantage to GB News, especially since there have been two administrations since his time in office'*.
7. The department recommended the standard conditions.