



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

Room G/08, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Telephone: 020 7271 0839

Email: [acoba@acoba.gov.uk](mailto:acoba@acoba.gov.uk)

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

April 2022

### **BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS APPLICATION FOR ADVICE: Baroness Sugg CBE, former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for the Overseas Territories and Sustainable Development) at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, appointment with MedAccess Trust**

1. You sought advice from the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (the Committee) under the Government's Business Appointments Rules for former ministers (the Rules) on taking up an appointment with MedAccess Trust as a Trustee. The material information taken into consideration by the Committee is set out in the annex below.
2. The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the government. Under the Rules, the Committee's remit is to consider the risks associated with the actions and decisions made during time in office, alongside the information and influence a former minister may offer MedAccess Trust.
3. 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.
4. It should also be noted that in addition to the conditions imposed on this appointment under the government's Business Appointment Rules, there are separate rules in place with regard to your role as a member of the House of Lords.

#### The Committee's consideration

5. When considering this application, the Committee<sup>1</sup> took into account this role as a Trustee is unpaid. Generally, the Committee's experience is that the risks related to unpaid roles are limited. The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the government by considering the real and perceived risks associated with former ministers using privileged access to contacts and information to the benefit of themselves or those they represent; and to mitigate the risks that individuals may make decisions or take action in office in expectation of rewards, on leaving government. These risks are significantly limited in unpaid cases due to the lack of financial gain to the individual.
6. Though this work with MedAccess Trust has a broad crossover with the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), this unpaid appointment has no direct overlap with your responsibilities in office.

### The Committee's advice

7. The Committee did not consider this appointment raises any particular proprietary concerns under the government's Business Appointment Rules. The standard conditions below, preventing you from drawing on your privileged information and using your contacts to the unfair advantage of their new employer, will sufficiently mitigate the risks in this case.
8. The Committee advises, under the government's Business Appointment Rules, that your appointment with **MedAccess Trust** 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 or its arms' length bodies on behalf of MedAccess Trust (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); nor should you make use, directly or indirectly, of your contacts in the government and/or Crown service to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage MedAccess Trust (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients);

---

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

- for two years from your last day in ministerial office you should not undertake any work with MedAccess Trust (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 arms' length bodies; and
9. The advice and the conditions under the government's Business Appointment Rules relate to your previous role in government only; they are separate to 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.
  10. 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.
  11. 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*'. This Rule is separate and not a replacement for the Rules in the House.
  12. You must inform us as soon as you take up employment with this organisation, or if it is announced that you will do so and we will publish this letter on our website.
  13. Any failure to do so may lead to a false assumption being made about whether you had complied with the Rules.
  14. You must 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.
  15. Once the appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website.

The Rt Hon Lord Pickles

## **Annex - Material information**

### The role

1. You seek to join MedAccess Trust in an unpaid, part-time role as a Trustee.
2. You said MedAccess Trust is a newly established charitable trust related to MedAccess Guarantee Ltd, a social finance company. You said its mission is to make healthcare more affordable and accessible for people living in underserved communities.
3. You said MedAccess was founded by CDC Group Plc, the UK's development finance institution. CDC Group's only shareholder is FCDO, which has an arms-length governance model for its shareholding in the organisation. You said MedAccess is a wholly-owned subsidiary of CDC.
4. You said you would be joining the new charity in a voluntary role as a Trustee.

### Dealings in office

5. You advised the Committee you did not meet with MedAccess Trust, which is a newly established charitable trust. Further, you said you did not have any involvement in any policy development or decisions that would have been specific to MedAccess Trust, and held no commercial or contractual responsibilities relating to the organisation.

### Department Assessment

6. FCDO confirmed the details you provided.
7. FCDO said it has no concerns about this appointment and recommended the standard conditions.