

*From the Chair*



**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](mailto:acoba@acoba.gov.uk)

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

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**BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Unpaid appointment with the Blavatnik School of Government, the University of Oxford.**

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 an appointment as a Member of the World Leaders' Circle with the Blavatnik School of Government, the University of Oxford (the Blavatnik School of Government).
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 the Blavatnik School of Government. The material information taken into consideration by the Committee is set out in the annex below.
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. When considering this application, the Committee<sup>1</sup> took into account this appointment as a Member of the World Leaders' Circle is unpaid.<sup>2</sup> 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 joining outside organisations. Those risks include: using privileged access to contacts and information to the benefit of themselves or those they represent. The Rules also seek to mitigate the risk that, on leaving government, individuals may make decisions or take action in office in expectation of rewards. These risks are significantly limited in unpaid cases due to the lack of financial gain to the individual.
6. The Cabinet Office did not consider you to possess sensitive information that may confer an unfair advantage to the Blavatnik School of Government. The unpaid nature of this appointment limits the real and perceived risk of you making improper use of information or contact you had access to while in office for your personal benefit.

#### The Committee's advice

7. The Committee does not consider taking up an unpaid, academic role to raise any particular concerns under the government's Business Appointment Rules, provided it is subject to standard conditions which prevent improper use of information and influence.
8. It is an individual's responsibility to manage the propriety of the specific pieces of work undertaken. In particular, as the 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.
9. Taking into account these factors, in accordance with the government's Business Appointment Rules, the Committee advises this appointment with the **Blavatnik School of Government, the University of Oxford** 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;

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<sup>1</sup> This application for advice was considered by Andrew Cumpsty; Isabel Doverty; Hedley Finn OBE; Sarah de Gay; Dawid Konotey-Ahulu CBE DL; The Rt Hon Lord Eric Pickles; Michael Prescott; and Mike Weir. Baroness Thornton was unavailable.

<sup>2</sup>By unpaid the Committee means that no remuneration of any kind is received for the role. Applicants must declare where it is agreed or anticipated they may receive remuneration or some other compensation at some stage in the future.

- 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 the Blavatnik School of Government, the University of Oxford (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 the Blavatnik School of Government, the University of Oxford (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 the Blavatnik School of Government, the University of Oxford (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 from rules administered by other bodies such as the Office of the Registrar of Consultant Lobbyists, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and the Registrar of Lords' Interests.<sup>3</sup> It is an applicant's personal responsibility to understand any other rules and regulations they 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 Civil Service 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,

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<sup>3</sup> All Peers and Members of Parliament are prevented from paid lobbying under the House of Commons Code of Conduct and the Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Lords. Advice on obligations under the Code can be sought from the Parliamentary Commissioners for Standards, in the case of MPs, or the Registrar of Lords' Interests, in the case of peers.

depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary for you to make a fresh application.

14. Once the appointment 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 informed the Committee you wish to take up an unpaid, part-time role as a Member of the World Leaders' Circle with the Blavatnik School of Government- the school of public policy of the University of Oxford. You stated your role involves contributing to the school's academic research and public policy programme.
2. You confirmed your role would not involve contact with government.

### Dealings in office

3. You did not meet with the Blavatnik School of Government while in office and there is no relationship between the Blavatnik School of Government and your former department. You also confirmed you did not have any involvement in policy, nor did you make any decisions relevant to the Blavatnik School of Government while in office.

### Department assessment

4. The Cabinet Office confirmed the details in your application and recommended the standard conditions.