

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

Website: www.gov.uk/acoba

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BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: The Rt Hon Humza Yousaf MSP, former First Minister of Scotland. Paid appointment with the Muslim Impact Forum.

1. You approached the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (the Committee) under the government's Business Appointment Rules for Former Ministers (the Rules) seeking advice on taking up an appointment as a Global Strategic Advisor for the Muslim Impact Forum (the Forum).
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 taken during your time in office, alongside the information and influence you may offer the Forum as the former First Minister of Scotland. 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. The Forum aims to bring together philanthropists, CEOs, NGOs and strategic thinkers from the global Muslim community, to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges. You said that your role will involve advising on how to maximise its global reach, strategic input on its overall vision, and maximising sponsorship and participation.
6. The Scottish Government confirmed that you did not meet with the Forum, nor did you make any decisions specific to it. Therefore, the Committee¹ considered that the risk this appointment could reasonably be perceived as a reward for decisions or actions taken in office is low.
7. There is limited subject matter overlap between your role as First Minister and your proposed role at the Forum. You had access to a range of sensitive information from across the Scottish Government that could be beneficial to any organisation. The risk is limited given you left office 16 months ago and the Scottish Government said that you did not have access to any specific sensitive information that could grant an unfair advantage.
8. There are risks associated with your influence and network of contacts gained while in government. This would arise, for example, were the Forum to seek to use your contacts to engage policymakers in government to further its aims. You have confirmed your role will not involve contact with the UK government or devolved governments.
9. It is likely that as the former First Minister, you developed a network of contacts in external organisations and other governments. As your role involves maximising the Forum's sponsorship, there is a risk you may be seen to draw on these contacts to unfairly gain sponsorship and/or funding for the Forum.

The Committee's advice

10. The Committee determined that the risks identified in this application can be appropriately mitigated by the conditions below. These make it clear that you cannot make use of privileged contact, information or influence gained from your time in ministerial service to the unfair advantage of the Forum.
11. Taking into account these factors, in accordance with the government's Business Appointment Rules, the Committee advises this appointment with the **Muslim Impact Forum** be subject to the following conditions:

¹ This application for advice was considered by Isabel Doverty; Hedley Finn OBE; Sarah de Gay; Michael Prescott; and The Baroness Thornton. Dawid Konotey-Ahulu CBE DL was unavailable.

- 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 Scottish Government or its arms' length bodies on behalf of the Muslim Impact Forum (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 Muslim Impact Forum (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients);
- for two years from your last day in ministerial office you should not undertake any work with the Muslim Impact Forum (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 Scottish Government or its arms' length bodies; and
- for two years since your last day in ministerial office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying contacts you developed during your time in office in other governments and organisations for the purpose of securing business, investment and/or funding for the Muslim Impact Forum.

12. The advice and the conditions under the government's Business Appointment Rules relate to your previous role in government only; they are separate rules administered by other bodies such as the Standards Commission for Scotland² and the lobbying register in Scotland. You are reminded that as a Member of the Scottish Parliament you have a separate ban on paid lobbying under the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament. 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.

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*

² All Members of Scottish Parliament are prevented from paid lobbying under the Code of Conduct for MSP.

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. You must inform us as soon as you take up employment with this organisation, 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.
15. Once the appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, this advice letter will be published.

Isabel Doverty

**Interim Chair
ACOB**

Annex – material information

The role

1. The Muslim Impact Forum is a platform that convenes global changemakers to discuss grass-roots initiatives, designed to unite institutions, and thought leaders to tackle challenges through collaborative, values-driven action. It was previously known as the Global Donors Forum.
2. In your paid, part-time role as Global Strategic Advisor, you stated your role would involve:
 - advising the Forum on how to maximise its global reach;
 - giving strategic input regarding its overall vision;
 - maximising its media exposure, sponsorship and high-level participation; and
 - no contact with government.

Dealings in office

3. You stated that:
 - You did not meet with the Forum in office. After you left office you spoke at the Global Donors Forum in April 2025 – when you met the Forum’s team.
 - You did not make any policy, regulatory or commercial decisions specific to the Forum.
 - You had no access to any sensitive information that could grant an unfair advantage.

Departmental Assessment

4. The Scottish Government confirmed the details you provided. It added that, while you had access to some broad sensitive information in office, there is nothing specific that could grant an unfair advantage. Further, you left office over a year ago.
5. The Scottish Government recommended the standard conditions.