

PROTECT [IL1]

From the Chairman



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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Dear Mr Neill,

03 June 2014

Ref: 1415/3

You asked for the Committee's advice about undertaking work as an independent strategic business consultant, having left your ministerial position as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Communities and Local Government in September 2012. Your work is likely to involve policy, legal and transactional advice largely relating to infrastructure and real estate.

When considering your application, the Committee took into account that you have not had any prior contact or official dealings with your prospective clients, Kilbride Group and HDG Ltd. The Committee has also taken into account that this is a paid position and that you have declared that you do not expect it to involve any lobbying of Government.

The Committee further noted that the Permanent Secretary at the Department for Communities and Local Government did not see any propriety issues with this application.

Taking into account all the circumstances, the Committee sees no reason why you should not take up the appointment forthwith, subject to the following conditions:

- that you should not draw on any privileged information available to you as a Minister; and
- for two years from your last day in ministerial office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the Government on behalf of your new employer, its parent company or its clients.

It might be helpful if I add that lobbying is defined in the Business Appointment Rules in the following way: "Lobbying in this context means that the former Minister should not engage

in communication with Government – including Ministers, special advisers and officials – with a view to influencing a Government decision or policy in relation to their own interests, or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted.”

I should be grateful if you would inform us as soon as you undertake work as an independent strategic consultant, or if it is announced that you will do so, either by returning the enclosed form or by emailing the office at the above address. We shall otherwise not be able to deal with any enquiries, since we do not release information about appointments which have not been taken up or announced. This could lead to a false assumption being made about whether you had complied with the Ministerial Code.

Once the appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee’s website and include the main details of the applications, together with the Advisory Committee’s advice, in the regularly updated consolidated list on our website and in the next annual report.

Yours sincerely,



Sir Hugh Stevenson

Robert Neill MP