THE LORD PRIVY SEAL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE
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RT HON. THE BARONESS STOWELL OF BEESTON MBE *psleaderofthelords@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk*

The Rt Hon. the Baroness Royall of Blaisdon
The Rt Hon. the Lord Wallace of Tankerness QC
The Rt Hon. the Lord Laming CBE DL
The Rt Rev. the Lord Bishop of Leicester
The Rt Hon. the Baroness D'Souza CMG
The Lord Sewel CBE

Our Ref: PEER326213

22nd July 2014

My Lords,

Leader of the House of Lords - Salary

I am writing to inform you that I have decided not to accept a top-up to my ministerial salary from Conservative Party funds and to explain why.

As you know, all Prime Ministers are bound by the Ministerial and other Salaries Act 1975 in relation to the number of paid Cabinet posts at his or her discretion and last week, for the first time this Parliament, the Leader of the House of Commons became a full Cabinet post. David Cameron is committed to restoring the Leader of the House of Lords to a full Cabinet member with full Cabinet pay at the earliest opportunity. Until then and whilst this anomaly is a temporary necessity, he has decided to ensure the equality of my pay with that of my predecessor by topping up my ministerial salary from Conservative Party funds.

This proposal has been studied by the House of Lords' Registrar who has confirmed it is consistent with the House of Lords' Code of Conduct, subject to appropriate disclosure in the Register of Lords' Interests. The Director-General, Propriety and Ethics in the Cabinet Office has also found there was no incompatibility with the Ministerial Code.

All that said, I have decided not to accept this addition to my ministerial salary. Even though additional pay from Conservative Party funds would not break the House of Lords' Code of Conduct for Members or the Ministerial Code, I am a firm believer that when it comes to potential conflicts of interest and especially where money is involved, it is essential that all interested parties feel the right thing is not only done but is also seen to be done. I am all too aware that my responsibilities as Leader of the House of Lords extend beyond the Conservative benches to all parts of the Chamber and to the House as a whole. I feel it only right therefore that my salary comes from a single source and that source should be the public purse consistent with my role as a public servant.

It is a huge honour for me to have been appointed Leader of the House of Lords by the Prime Minister. As I have made clear on the floor of the House, I am concerned to be judged on what I do and how I conduct myself in this role. I was offered the position as a Minister of State and I am privileged to accept it on those terms until such time as it is possible for that to change.

I am copying this letter to the Clerk of the Parliaments. I am also depositing a copy in the House of Lords Library, but in the meantime you would be welcome to circulate it to members of your group.

Yours ever,

Nicola Stowell

STOWELL OF BEESTON

cc Mr David Beamish, Clerk of the Parliaments