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7 February 2018

During our recent exchange in the House on 25 January on the issue of employee or trade union representatives being appointed to public bodies, I undertook to look at the issue further and to come back to you.

You raised a number of appointments to bodies including the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council, the Social Security Advisory Committee, the Advisory Council and Arbitration Service and the Institute for Apprenticeships. Openness and transparency are key principles underpinning the Governance Code. Details of vacancies are advertised on the Centre for Public Appointments' website and are open to all to apply. It is good practice for departments to make a wide range of organisations, including trade union organisations, aware of any relevant competitions.

Appointments are made on merit in line with the Governance Code and in compliance with any additional legislation specific to the appointing body. The Governance Code is clear that political activity, including membership of a trade union, is no bar to public appointments. In some cases, legislation may require employee representation on a board or for the government to consult with employee representative organisations, an obligation it takes seriously. However, those posts are not exclusively reserved for trade union representatives and we must consider the full range of candidates who could fulfil these roles. One notable appointment which I omitted to mention is Sir Brendan Barber who is now on his second term as Chair of ACAS whose appointment is due to end at the end of 2019. However, a more detailed list of public appointees with trade union affiliation is not centrally held.

During my answer, I referenced an appointment to the board of the Health and Safety Executive. I would like to take the opportunity to correct my update to the House. The Health and Safety Executive Non-Executive Director competition is ongoing and no appointment has been made to the board. However, I understand that an announcement will be made very soon.

As I stated in my answer the government remains committed to maintaining a

The Baroness Prosser OBE  
House of Lords

constructive and positive relationship with all employee representative organisations.

I will place a copy of this letter in the House of Lords library.

L. Sincerely  
Lord Young

**LORD YOUNG OF COOKHAM**