

5. I was not aware that Mr Robinson had previously expressed an interest to Mr Richard Bullick about becoming a Special Adviser and do not believe that I spoke to Mr Bullick about the issue.

6. Mr Robinson agreed to take up the post and started shortly thereafter.

7. I was not told or instructed by Mr Johnston, or anyone else, who my Special Adviser would be. I, and I alone, decided who I wanted to offer the role to after considering the range of skills that I believed would complement my own and make a good adviser in the Department for the Economy. As stated above, I considered a number of possible candidates. I conducted this exercise myself.

8. I was not advised by Departmental officials that any aspect of the appointment process was outwith the relevant legislation. I would have expected to have been so advised if there was a belief or view that any element of Mr Robinson's appointment did not adhere to that legislation.

Statement of Truth: I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Simon', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dated: 25 October 2018