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## In Full: Tessa Jowell inquiry letter

**Here is the full letter from Cabinet Secretary Sir Gus O'Donnell in reply to Theresa May, in which he finds that Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell did not breach the ministerial code of conduct:**

“Dear Theresa,

Thank you for your letter of 21 February.

As you say, any proceedings in respect of Mr Mills are a matter for the Italian courts and, like you, I make no comment in that respect.

I also agree with you that spouses or partners of Ministers should be free to undertake their own careers and business dealings.

Turning to the Ministerial Code, let me be absolutely clear about the proper procedures that should apply when cases arise where allegations are made as to whether a Minister has acted in accordance with the Code.

Section 1.3 of the Code states that:

"Ministers are personally responsible for deciding how to act and conduct themselves in the light of the Code and for justifying their actions and conduct in Parliament. The Code is not a rulebook and nor is it the role of the Secretary to the Cabinet or other officials to enforce it or to investigate Ministers although they may provide Ministers with private advice on matters which it covers".

The process followed in this case has observed these clear procedures.

In the first instance, the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport has worked closely with her Permanent Secretary, in close consultation with me, to establish the facts.

It is for me to provide advice as necessary to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State, in line with the Code.

The work done relates solely to the Secretary of State's responsibilities under the Code.

It is not an investigation of Mr Mills' financial affairs.

The Prime Minister's Official Spokesman has been clear about this process throughout the course of the week.

Following this painstaking process undertaken by the Secretary of State, with the Departmental Permanent Secretary and myself, the Secretary of State has today made a full, public statement about how she has discharged her responsibilities under the Code in line with the facts established.

I have reported these facts to the Prime Minister and he has also made a statement.

### TESSA JOWELL UNDER PRESSURE

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As has been made clear consistently throughout this series of events, it is the Prime Minister, not me, who, constitutionally, is the right and proper person to take a view on matters arising based on the Ministerial Code.

In her statement, the Secretary of State has said that she first became aware in August 2004 that her husband had received in September 2000 a sum of money which he thought he had reasonable grounds to believe was a gift.

By the time she became aware of it, he had already agreed with the then Inland Revenue that it should be classified as earnings on which tax should be paid.

As the Secretary of State says in her statement, she did not therefore consider it necessary to make any reference of any of this to her Permanent Secretary.

However, she fully accepts that Mr Mills should have informed her, and if he had, she would of course have reported it to her Permanent Secretary.

For my part, with regard to the Civil Service, I have reminded Permanent Secretaries that notification of personal financial interests of Ministers and their partners remains the individual responsibility of Ministers.

Given that the financial disclosure provisions of the Ministerial Code have been tightened since the present Government came to office, and the fact that the financial affairs of Ministers and their partners may well have changed over the course of time, I have asked Permanent Secretaries to discuss regularly with their Ministers their obligations to declare any necessary relevant information, as set out under the Code.

Finally, I am aware of the conversations between you and Lord Turnbull, my predecessor, about the actions of civil servants on Mr Mills' behalf.

I am satisfied that since that exchange, civil servants have acted in accordance with the Civil Service Code and no civil servant has acted for Mr Mills or made representations or statements on his behalf.

The Prime Minister is addressing the points raised about the Home Office issues set out by the Rt Hon David Davis MP in his letter to me yesterday.

Yours ever,

Gus ””

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