

Thoughts on Hancock

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Did I really want to think about Matt Hancock this morning? Would I on any morning? Probably not. But he has somewhat thrust himself into news agenda and so some thoughts on the affair that it is suggested by The Sun that he is having with Department of Health non-executive director Gina Coladangelo seem to be appropriate.

First, I am not worried about people's sex lives. What consenting adults get up to is not my business, or anyone else's, usually. It is only when relationships impact on other issues that they matter.

Second, I feel sorry for his wife and especially his children. This is going to be tough on them.

Third, this is an issue that is of political concern. Numerous questions arise.

First, how and why was Gina Coladangelo appointed without any scrutiny of the appointment? Was the relationship already in existence? We know she and Hancock are old friends; were there issues not disclosed?

Second, Covid rules were broken. Is that inconsequential for the Health Secretary?

Third, have any aspects of the ministerial code been broken? Alternatively are there rules about relationships with staff? I would be surprised if there were not. And, she was on his staff.

Fourth, she is a lobbyist. Did she or any client secure preferment? In particular, were there PPE contracts that she won for herself or clients?

And, fifth, when will full disclosure of all potential conflicts of interest be made?

The sex is inconsequential. Instead what matters is whether abuse of public funding has taken place. Hancock already has considerable form on that issue. I think it wholly appropriate to ask.