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Commenting on the response to the IEA's report *Viral Myths: Why we risk learning the wrong lessons from the pandemic*, IEA Director General Mark Littlewood said:

"The Institute of Economic Affairs has never and will never make political donations. Its trustees are, however, perfectly entitled to support whichever political causes or politicians they wish – in their own time and with their own funds. Being a trustee of an educational charity does not prohibit an individual from being a member of a political party nor from making political donations. The IEA takes no interest – one way or another – on whether its trustees do so.

"Neil Record's support for Matt Hancock not only pre-dates his elevation to the Chairmanship of the IEA, but it also pre-dates Matt Hancock's promotion to any Government post. For the avoidance of doubt, he has never had any commercial or any other lobbying-type relationship with Mr Hancock in any of his Ministerial posts, nor has he ever discussed his responsibilities in any context that relates to him personally, or his Chairmanship of the IEA. Mr Record's donations to Mr Hancock ceased before Mr Hancock was appointed Health Secretary.

"Mr Record's donations are personal. It is already in the public domain that he is a personal supporter of, and donor to, the Conservative Party. This in no way alters the IEA's position of independence from alignment with any political party."

ENDS

A copy of *Viral Myths: Why we risk learning the wrong lessons from the pandemic*, authored by IEA Head of Political Economy Dr Kristian Niemietz, can be found [here](#).

The mission of the Institute of Economic Affairs is to improve understanding of the fundamental institutions of a free society by analysing and expounding the role of markets in solving economic and social problems and seeks to provide analysis in order to improve the public understanding of economics. The IEA is a registered educational charity and independent of all political parties.