

Wife of Former Russian Minister Pays \$274,000 to Play Tennis With Britain's Cameron

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Lyubov Chernukhin, the wife of a former deputy finance minister in Russian President Vladimir Putin's Cabinet, has paid almost \$275,000 to play tennis with British Prime Minister David Cameron.

The wife of a former Russian minister has paid almost \$275,000 to play tennis with British Prime Minister David Cameron and the Mayor of London Boris Johnson, a news report said Friday.

The £160,000 bid was made at a Conservative Party fundraiser on Wednesday by Lyubov Chernukhin, the wife of Vladimir Chernukhin — a former deputy finance minister in Russian President Vladimir Putin's Cabinet, Britain's *The Guardian* reported, citing her law firm Carter Ruck.

Electoral Commission records show that British citizen Lyubov Chernukhin — a Conservative party member and supporter, according to Carter Ruck — has also made three donations of £5,600 to the party since 2012, while an earlier £10,000 donation was deemed

'impermissible' because she was not on the electoral register at the time, the Guardian reported.

The Conservatives had initially tried to keep the winning bid for the tennis match under wraps, amid recent concerns over the party's links with pro-Russia lobbyists, Britain's The Independent reported Friday.

On Thursday, the same paper reported that lobbying firm New Century Media, which represents high-profile Russian clients, had donated a quarter of their annual profit — or £85,000 — to help the Conservative party win the last election in 2010.

Although foreign nationals and governments are banned from donating money to British political parties, there is nothing to stop lobbying firms that work on their behalf from giving financial donations — as long as they are registered in the United Kingdom, the BBC reported.

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