

**Westminster Employment Forum policy conference:
Next steps for workplace equality reform affecting women in the UK**

Timing: Morning, Friday, 8th January 2027

*****Taking Place Online*****



Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 9.05 **Workplace equality for women and implementation of mandatory action plans - priorities for policy**
Gillian Unsworth, Deputy Director, Women's Equality Division, Cabinet Office
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **Practical considerations for employers preparing for new equality duties from 2027**
Kirstie Loveridge, Chief People Officer, AEG International
- 9.45 **Implications of the *Employment Rights Act 2025* for female workplace equality - next steps for implementation, employer readiness and enforcement arrangements**
early effects of measures introduced across 2026 / six-month unfair dismissal qualifying period and fire and rehire protections / responsibilities across employers, trade unions, regulators and enforcement bodies / mandatory gender equality action plans covering gender pay gaps and menopause support / readiness by organisation size and sector, including operational and cost implications / sexual and third-party harassment prevention duties and regulation of NDAs in harassment and discrimination cases / guaranteed hours, shift notice and short-notice payments / proportionate enforcement, guidance and Fair Work Agency capacity / flexible working reasonableness test / organisational flexibility, confidence and access to skills
Senior representative, trade union
Senior representative, legal
Senior commentator
- 10.00 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.25 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 10.30 Break
- 10.40 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 10.45 **Regional approaches to strengthening economic gender equality and women's participation in work**
Senior representative, strategic authority
- 10.55 **Best practice for supporting women's participation and retention in the labour market**
Keep Britain Working Vanguard approaches to prevention, retention and return to work / development of the Healthy Working Lifecycle standard / stay-in-work plans and occupational health support / impact of changes to Statutory Sick Pay / managing menopause, menstrual and reproductive health in the workplace / implications of new protections around parental leave and pregnancy loss / access to flexible working arrangements / supporting women returning to work following periods of ill-health, caring responsibilities or career breaks / childcare availability and affordability / considerations for productivity, administration and job design / supporting work-life balance and promoting employee wellbeing
Senior representative, employer
Senior representative, occupational health
Senior representative, workforce
Senior representative, delivery
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.45 **Next steps for women's recruitment, development and representation in senior leadership**
Vivienne Artz OBE, Chief Executive, Women Business Leaders Review
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.10 **Supporting progression of female talent in the workforce - considerations for equal pay, progression pathways and discrimination prevention**
fair, safe and inclusive workplace cultures / female talent, sponsorship and succession planning / entry-level support and early careers guidance / training and progression in green, digital and other growth sectors / intersectional barriers, unconscious bias and uneven access to opportunity / new Class Unit remit and socio-economic disadvantage / Equal pay and pay discrimination consultation, race and disability protections and Equal Pay Regulatory and Enforcement Unit proposals / early identification and resolution of discrimination / pay transparency, reporting, redress and outsourcing arrangements / employment tribunal capacity and dispute resolution / management capability and upskilling / long-term income potential and pension outcomes
Sally Penni, Barrister, Kenworthy's Chambers
Senior representative, advisory
Senior representative, human resources
Senior representative, workforce
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Employment Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
Harry Nelson, Westminster Employment Forum