

**Westminster Employment Forum policy conference:
Next steps for labour market enforcement - the Fair Work Agency, employment rights
and workplace relations**

Timing: Morning, Friday, 23rd October 2026

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

Draft agenda subject to change



- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **The role and remit of the Fair Work Agency - first phase of delivery, organisational transition and operational priorities**
Matthew Taylor, Chair, Fair Work Agency
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.35 **Assessing priorities for implementation of the Fair Work Agency's enforcement and compliance frameworks**
functions and powers inherited by the FWA | organisational capacity and service continuity during transition | balancing compliance support with investigation and sanctions | proportionality and fairness in enforcement | allocation of funding and resources | governance, accountability and reducing system fragmentation | extension of state enforcement to further employment rights | preparations for holiday pay enforcement | intelligence and data-led approaches to targeting activity | support for businesses, including smaller employers, with guidance and transition
Professor David Whyte, Professor, Queen Mary University of London; and Member, Executive Committee, Institute of Employment Rights
Charlie Barnes, Legal Director, Employment, RSM UK
Senior representative, employer
Senior representative, trade union
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.25 **Priorities for businesses preparing for National Minimum Wage changes and enforcement**
Senior representative, enforcement
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.50 Break
- 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.05 **Next steps for regulation of agency work, umbrella companies and the temporary labour market**
implications of the consultation on modernising the Agency Work Regulatory Framework | regulation of agencies and umbrella companies | allocation of responsibilities across complex labour supply chains | operation of the new PAYE joint and several liability rules | implications for agencies, umbrella companies and end clients | financial responsibility, due diligence and contractual arrangements | transparency around pay, deductions, contracts and employment rights | employment status and protections for self-employed, freelance and contracted labour | maintaining labour market flexibility and access to skilled temporary workers | workforce planning, administrative costs and business preparedness
Frances Lewis, Head, Contingent Workforce UK, Osborne Clarke
Lucy Smith, Founder, Clarity Umbrella
Senior representative, workforce
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.40 **Labour market enforcement reform and priorities for workplace dispute resolution**
Baroness Maggie Jones, Chair of Acas
- 11.55 **Examining the future role of trade unions in labour market relations**
Nicola Smith, Director, Policy and Analysis, Trades Union Congress
- 12.05 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.25 **Implications of the Employment Rights Act 2025 for workplace disputes and collective employment relations**
implications of employment rights reform for workplace disputes and collective relations | interaction between FWA enforcement, Acas conciliation and the employment tribunal system | supporting early intervention and resolution | implications of the extension of employment tribunal time limits to six months | tribunal capacity and wider reform | enforcement of new Statutory Sick Pay measures | implementation of new trade union rights and responsibilities | reduced notice for industrial action, recognition processes and workplace access arrangements | employer duties to inform workers of their right to join a trade union | the expanded role of the Central Arbitration Committee | future relations between employers, workers, trade unions and enforcement bodies
Claire Burns, People Director, Abraham Moon and Sons
Tom Williams, Partner, KPMG
Senior representative, SME
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Employment Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Harry Nelson, Westminster Employment Forum