

**Westminster Employment Forum policy conference:
Implementation of the Employment Rights Act and policy priorities going forward**

Timing: Morning, Friday, 17th April 2026

Taking Place Online



WESTMINSTER
EMPLOYMENT
FORUM

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 9.05 **Assessing measures in the Employment Rights Act 2025 - implementation and next steps for reform**
David Cabrelli, Professor of Labour Law, University of Edinburgh
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **Early experience of the Act for employers and businesses - considerations going forward**
Mike Clancy, General Secretary, Prospect
Patrick Milnes, Head of Policy for People & Work, British Chambers of Commerce
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.10 **Implementation in practice - employer duties, trade union reform, and workforce transformation**
assessing the implementation timetable | practical issues emerging from initial commencement | operational and cost implications for employers | introduction of day-one rights | administrative pressures during rollout | reform to Statutory Sick Pay and removal of lower earnings limit | implications for recruitment, probation and workforce planning | adapting HR systems and contracts | impact of changes to unfair dismissal | implications of reform to collective redundancy obligations | strengthened protections against sexual harassment | removal of minimum service level rules for strikes | reform to industrial action and ballot notices | preparing for implementation of phases two and three | compliance management across sectors and organisational sizes | approaches to guidance and enforcement | consideration of regulatory capacity | the role of tech, data, and automation in supporting compliance | equality action plans | alignment with the Plan to Make Work Pay
Guy Hollebon, Legal Director, Harrison Clark Rickerbys
Kirsty Watt, Director, Strategy and External Affairs, Acas
Helen Dickinson, CEO, British Retail Consortium
Gail Irvine, Head, Policy and Business Development, Living Wage Foundation
Senior representative, HR
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.05 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 11.10 Break
- 11.20 **Chair's opening remarks**
Lord Lucas, Co-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modernising Employment
- 11.25 **Approaches to effective enforcement - the role of the Fair Work Agency moving forward**
Ed Walkington, Head, Enforcement Policy, Employment Rights Directorate, Department for Business and Trade
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.50 **Assessing implications of legislative changes for productivity, job quality, and workforce stability**
impact of new measures on different working cohorts across sectors and workplace settings | workforce retention, productivity, and wellbeing benefits | implications for job quality, fairness, and workforce access | impact of reform to parental leave and pregnancy safeguards | impact on productivity and business investment | handling reporting, investigation, and prevention of sexual harassment | assessing the ban on fire and rehire practices | considering new redundancy protections | impact of changes to zero-hours contracts and guaranteed hours | flexible working arrangements | increased dismissal protection for industrial action | implications of reform for recruitment processes and workforce organisation | equality action plans and workforce inclusion strategies | implications for youth employment
Luke Raikes, Deputy General Secretary, Fabian Society
Jamie Cater, Senior Policy Manager, MakeUK
Laura Cunliffe-Hall, Head, Policy and Public Affairs, UK Youth
Senior representative, trade union
Senior representative, HR
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.45 **Next steps for employment rights implementation and policy priorities moving forward**
Richard Kelly, Deputy Director, Employment Rights, Department for Business and Trade
Questions and comments from the floor
- 13.10 **Chair's and Westminster Employment Forum closing remarks**
Lord Lucas, Co-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modernising Employment
Harry Nelson, Westminster Employment Forum