

Westminster Employment Forum policy conference:

Next steps for women in the workplace - new employer duties, implementation and effective practice, and policy development

Timing: Morning, Monday, 27th April 2026

Taking Place Online

Draft agenda subject to change



WESTMINSTER
EMPLOYMENT
FORUM

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Women in the UK workforce - considerations for effective practice, implementation of legislation and future policy development**
Professor Jill Rubery, Professor, Comparative Employment Systems and Director, Work and Equalities Institute, Alliance Manchester Business School
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **Approaches to fair and meaningful workplace transformation**
Nikki Pound, Policy Lead, Women's Equality, Trades Union Congress
- 9.40 **Priorities following the Employment Rights Act 2025 and implications of ongoing consultations - employer duties, commencement and implications for women in the workplace**
phased commencement and implementation | day-one rights and extended protections | impact of reforms to Statutory Sick Pay | operational and cost implications for employers | reform of parental protections | flexible working arrangements | approaches to workforce planning and job design | effects on progression, pay and workplace inequalities | role of the Fair Work Agency and approaches to guidance and enforcement | strategies for securing compliance | issues for regulatory capacity | statutory duties alongside voluntary employer initiatives | monitoring and assurance | considerations for small and medium-sized enterprises and labour-intensive sectors | implications for hiring and staffing approaches | impact on investment decisions | support for employers in implementing new measures | employer accountability and the role of trade unions
Donna Sharp, Partner, Employment Law, KPMG
Yvonne Leslie, Senior Business Adviser, ACAS
Senior representative, employers
Senior representative, SME
- 10.00 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.30 **Priorities for female progression in the workplace and the role of leadership in delivering workplace support**
Vivienne Artz, Chief Executive, FTSE Women Leaders Review
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.55 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.00 Break
- 11.10 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.15 **Addressing gender-based inequalities in the workplace - priorities for supporting health, culture change, tackling discrimination and preventing harassment**
approaches to creating safe and inclusive workplace cultures | assessing guidance on workplace action plans | protections against sexual harassment and preparation for October 2026 duties, including direct liability for third-party harassment | tackling workplace misogyny | practical approaches to meeting new statutory duties | implementing culture change | consideration of senior leadership responsibilities | reporting and redress arrangements | priorities for family friendly policies and practices | addressing women's health | menstrual and menopause support | implementing mandatory action plans on gender equality and supporting employees through the menopause | addressing barriers to accessing female healthcare | supporting alternative working patterns | consistency and variation across sectors and workplace settings | strategies for supporting work-life balance and promoting employee wellbeing
Deborah Garlick, CEO and Founder, Henspiked
Lucy Healy, Human Rights Manager, Balfour Beatty
Kevin Bampton, CEO, British Occupational Hygiene Society; and Chair, Council for Work & Health
Zoe Shackleton, Head of Human Resources and EDI, Huddersfield Town Association Football Club
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.00 **Opportunities for collaboration on delivery and implementation at a local level - place-based partnerships, employer engagement, support networks and health-related support**
Senior representative, local authority
- 12.10 **Equality duties in practice for employers - intersectional data, pay reporting and addressing barriers to progression**
impact of legislative reform on underrepresented groups | diverging workplace experiences | tackling unconscious bias | promoting diverse representation in senior roles | addressing barriers to retention and advancement | considerations for mentoring and sponsorship pipelines | senior leadership responsibilities | improving access to targeted career support and networking opportunities | impact of pay gap reporting reform | tackling disparities in pay | approaches to gathering and using intersectional data
Kate Nightingale, Director, Communications, Campaigns and Research, Young Women's Trust
Katy Bennett, Diversity and Inclusion Consulting Director, PwC
Senior representative, HR
Senior representative, legal
- 12.30 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Employment Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Harry Nelson, Westminster Employment Forum