
Press Release

PRISM Hosts Round Table Discussion on Modern Employment

On 8th May 2018 PRISM hosted a Round Table discussion on Modern Employment at The Law Society in London.

The event brought together many of the leading Trade Associations, Representative Bodies and experts including ACCA, APSCo, CBI, CIPD, CIPP, CIOT, ICAEW, IOD, IFS, Law Society, LITRG and University of Oxford. Representatives from key government departments involved in the response to the Matthew Taylor Report also attended including BEIS, HMRC, HM Treasury, and the OTS.

Commenting on the event, Crawford Temple, CEO of PRISM said 'In all my meetings and discussions with leading groups it became clear that everyone recognises the importance of the subject and ensuring it is given the time and consideration required to deliver a sustainable lasting framework. Whilst some of the fine detail differed between groups there was significant common ground on the issues that had to be resolved. As a result the PRISM Exec felt that bringing everyone together to discuss and debate the key points would prove to be a useful exercise.'

The discussions focused around 3 key areas; The Role of the Tax Framework in Driving Employment Trends, Employment Status, Rights and Benefits and Agency Workers. Presentations were made by PRISM, The Institute of Directors, The Law Society and APSCo which were followed by healthy discussions and debates.

Common themes emerged through all the debates with broad agreement that the current framework was too complex, leading to differing interpretations of the rules which resulted in unintended market distortions. It was also generally felt that this complexity made it difficult to deliver an effective enforcement regime. A phrase that was used throughout the meeting was 'The Sticking Plaster Approach' with agreement that a more strategic approach was required, as businesses would need enough notice of planned changes to adapt and change protecting both the economy as well as the flexibility.

A critical question was asked – 'Should tax and employment remain linked or not'? It was felt that the answer to this was central to delivering a lasting framework.

Crawford Temple went on to say: 'Having the answer to this question is fundamental to even begin the journey of creating a lasting framework around Modern Employment. Current consultations touch on tax and recognise that it does play a role in decisions around employment, but fail to examine this in detail. This leaves uncertainty on whether a view has been formed on this basic underlying principle.'

There was also broad agreement that more needs to be done to educate and inform both employers and workers, with government departments encouraged to take a more proactive approach.

The consensus was that further events should be planned and PRISM has already started working on these.