



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modernising Employment

MEETING MINUTES, C4DI, HULL
2nd October 2023

Chair's Introduction: Ambition is to make Hull the work hub of the UK. How do we improve the regionality of work, we do not have a UK wide strategy and want to develop one.

Present: Emma Hardy MP (Chair), Andrew Henderson (Secretariat), George Warrington & Callum Wright, Reed;

Speakers:

1) Paul Devoy, Investors in People:

Paul is the Chief Executive of Investors in People (IIP). In 2016, Paul led the buyout of IIP from the UK Government and the organisation is now a Community Interest Company. IIP's purpose is to Make Work Better. Investors in People works with a community of organisations, employing over 1 million people providing digital diagnostic tools, advice, support and assessment against their internationally recognised Frameworks. Our network of 150 skilled and experienced Consultants work with organisations across 70 countries, but predominantly in the UK. Prior to leading Investors in People, Paul was a Director at the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, an executive non-departmental body that offers guidance on skills and employment issues in the UK. He led the development and implementation of strategic programmes to create sustainable skills solutions with joint investment from industry and government. He previously worked in the Scottish Prison Service for 4 years leading on change management programmes. He spent his early career working in local DWP offices. Paul studied Human Resource Management, graduating in 1994. He is a Chartered Fellow of Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and a Companion of the Chartered Management Institute. The room has heard of Investors in People but few understand what it is. IoP is a CIC, known for standards creation by researching good practice so that the community can benefit from them. Members employ 1.2m people, 1 in 20 employees in the UK. Want to get to 1 in 10 which is the tipping point.

ONS have stated that the value of the UK Labour market is £21.4 trillion which is more than double the value of the UK's tangible assets.

Productivity – we are behind similar countries and have not tackled this problem successfully. The labour market has structural problems which need to be dealt with.

2.4M accidental managers in the UK i.e. someone who has been put into a management position without the necessary training. We seem to think that people will just pick up the know-how as they go along.

80% of people who visit a GP contact come in for mental health problems through work. The prescription should be for a better boss! We do not train management staff, needs ongoing coaching and development.

Skills – Contrast the national skills survey of 2002 and 2019: they say the same thing. The structure of the labour market is not working. Still short of STEM workers, chefs etc. Seems that we go round in circles with this.

Training – employers need to invest more, we are at the bottom of the ladder for investment. To improve productivity, we need to invest much more in vocational training.



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modernising Employment

MEETING MINUTES, C4DI, HULL

2nd October 2023

Talent –1000s of organisations do this really well but do not see themselves as special. The old prescriptions for sorting out skills gaps and shortages (importing labour) do not work anymore. There are too many people leaving employment so we need to think differently. Need to recruit on skill rather than roles. May also need to employ part time, on a bite-sized basis. Read “The Coming Wave” about AI. This could be as big a disruptor as the pandemic. AI can outperform us in so many ways. This is a revolution, the likes of which we have not seen before. Should be one of the top 3 things on the policy agenda.

Investing in people: white dots show where the executive team lives, we operate more efficiently as a home-based, tech savvy organisation. The yellow dots are the last three hires, prior to the pandemic they would have been in London but today they are all around the UK. Technology can level us up, we can push the work to where the talent is. Employers need to change the way they think about work.

Speaks to employers who are getting people back into the office for 2 or 3 days. No-one can say why they have chosen those numbers. We need to rethink how we organise work and think radically about it recreate a positive future.

2) Keith Rosser, Reed Screening:

Founded and built Reed Screening, one of the UK's largest employee screening businesses with revenues over £7m annually. Various roles with UK Gov advising on employee screening, labour market policy and legislation. Keith received a Home Office Commendation Award in 2016 for services to recruitment and was recognised as a Community Leader at Buckingham Palace in 2018. Creator of the UK's first APPG on Modernising Employment and hiring and as a labour Market expert was appointed to the Ministerial Advisory Panel on the Future of Work and also advises on the UK's Labour Market Strategy. A Non-Executive Board Member of the GLAA, an arms-length body of UK Home Office, and a Non-Executive board member and appointed person to public bodies in Scotland. Keith is also the Chair of various trade bodies including the criminal record checking agencies. Keith is Chair of JobsAware, a MET Police founded charity with cross government support tackling labour market issues and Chair of the Better Hiring Institute. In 2023 Keith was made an Honorary Fellow of Lancaster University for his services to the UK labour market.

APPGs are predominantly London-based, fantastic to be in Hull.

Work is changing and has changed thanks to the pandemic. The challenge for the nation is that we have not recovered from that forced change. We have not worked out a strategy for the future, change has been iterative.

Where are we now? – currently the UK has very high levels of sickness. Nearly half of those on long-term sick wanted more flexible working environments. A third said that they would return to work if they had greater flexibility in the workforce. Others have left the labour market due to retirement with a high number of early retirees. Many would have returned to work if the hours or location suited them better. Parents said that they found home working to be much better for family life.



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modernising Employment

MEETING MINUTES, C4DI, HULL

2nd October 2023

The productivity challenge – need to turn the tables on the debate around productivity. Some high profile people are very negative and the research about hybrid working is positive. A number of companies did tell us that hybrid working does not suit them but there are technologies that can make a difference.

How we hire people changed during the pandemic. At the start we had to see people in person and in Jan 2022 the Home Office announced that most people could be hired by digital work checks. We estimate that 30M people will have found jobs in the UK via the digital right to work process. People are voting with their feet and choosing digital as the way that they want to be hired.

1M vacancies now, skills shortage, more are leaving the market than entering so what about individuals.

54% of job seekers want flexible working. The BHI is developing a better hiring charter asking for more transparency on job adverts through standard templates. Adverts should state salaries, where the job can be undertaken from etc. The charter also talks about giving employees the option of working from the office vs. home or co-working environments. There should be assisted application routes for the digitally poor. You should be able to apply for a job in London from Hull without needing to travel.

Skills frameworks – employers have taxonomies but hardly use them. Work seekers need to understand what skills are required and how to upskill themselves. Need better skills standardisation. Calling for a broader work charter. Not just about the hiring process but helping managers with training e.g. remote management. Need to help organisations measure productivity properly.

Revolutionising the future of work – what are we going to do with office space? Hull is a leader and at the edge of the revolution. Research suggests that office utilisation is down. Hull is a fantastic model for us.

AI is already having an impact on hiring. Used by employers to weed out workers as well as sifting CVs which is dangerous.

Need for regulations is changing as work changes.

How do we ensure that the UK is where jobs are? Have to be competitive vs other countries. Now we have national competition between countries for staff. Why work in Hull vs other places in the UK for instance?

Fastest globally – think about a point where hiring is fast and digital as well as inclusive, this removes barriers and enables us to recruit those who have opted out of the workforce.

3) Professor Stephen Hardy PhD, LLB, FAcSS, PFHEA, MCI Arb, FRSA, Barrister, Dean of Faculty of Business, Law & Politics at the University of Hull:

Stephen is the Dean of the Faculty of Business, Law & Politics at the University of Hull with over 3 decades experience in higher education. He is a respected Professor of Law and internationally recognised scholar in employment and social security laws, with 12 monographs and over 450



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modernising Employment

MEETING MINUTES, C4DI, HULL

2nd October 2023

published articles. He was formerly a Barrister, practising in employment/Public law, particularly trade union litigation. He remains an Academic Associate of 33 Bedford Row Chambers in London. Since 2011 he has been a fee paid (part-time) Tribunal Judge. He was also a Board Member of the UK's Judicial Pensions Board from 2019-23. He is a former General Editor of Sweet and Maxwell's Encyclopaedia in Employment Law and has recently published a guide to UK Social Security Law (Kluwer). Also, he is co-author with Sir Ernest Ryder of Judicial Leadership (Oxford). He is currently the Honorary Treasurer of the UK's Society of Legal Scholars and was from 2020-23 a Governor of the International Association of Law Schools.

Modernising employment is about how to link academia with the workplace. SH introduced the June 2022 University of Hull study: [Remote Working? 'Live Hull, Work Anywhere'](#).

Not all jobs can become remote, but technology can manage how many of these industries can adopt.

The University of Hull is almost 100 years old. The Data AI Management (DAIM) centre at the University has over 600 students from 70 countries which illustrates the interest.

Remote working is hybrid, working as a co-worker or from home. There is no definition but we do need there to be one. We know that remote hiring, working and management works as we had to do it through the Pandemic. Productivity did not wane during the Pandemic. For over 75% of industries, it does not effect productivity. Home working is also evolving, so we either embrace or object.

Maximising “remoteness”: if we are positive we can maximise it. Studies show that productivity does not wane. Home working gave us more agility and at Hull we operate a minimum of 2 days in the office, 1 at home and 2 for optional office working. Colleagues are happy to do their work at home because they have more flexibility and there are climate change benefits. If you calculate how much time you spend commuting and how much carbon you produce then it is shocking.

University of Hull Study – shows remote working in practice. Parliamentarians welcomed the study and want to see it adopted elsewhere. The driving forces are employers and employees. 60% of employers continued remote working post-Covid. All employers need staff to do paperwork and could allow at least a day a week for those tasks.

KR talked about the Better Hiring Charter and how many employers are signed up to this. The emerging *Gig Economy* shows how tech has facilitated workers adopting different way so working. The Flexible Working Bill has been supported by the Government which will allow workers to make 2 or more requests annually for remote working. We need to address these practices via policies and the Law. We have to look at our contracts and what they say about the workplace. There is a legal challenge to update contracts, employers need to think the unthinkable.

Your workers' rights would be the same, need to discuss this. If we see the benefits of remote working and it is perceived as positive for recruitment and can be a levelling-up tool then we need to work out legally how this works. Many students to not want to be told where to work, their generation is only 2 clicks away from anything so we need to adjust the working world accordingly.



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modernising Employment

MEETING MINUTES, C4DI, HULL

2nd October 2023

We spend 80% of our time at work but cherish the 20% at home. We need to understand the relationship between employer and workers within the context of modern life – both at work and at home. Evidently, current studies have shown that we can live anywhere and work anywhere.

Questions:

Emma Hardy began by asking if anyone is experiencing recruitment concerns.

Mike Whitehead– Hull has an advantage because of fast broadband but other areas will catch up. House prices are cheaper here as well. There is an opportunity to be on better rates of pay but based here. We have to make Hull a place for people to come to live and work. We need to look at softer things and overcome a poor reputation. The city centre has got to be more vibrant. We need to market Hull better.

EH – the port centre of Hull is very attractive and shows off Hull well.

Kathryn Shillito, Hull Business Improvement District – looking at how to attract retail. Property is cheaper for instance. Hull has many positives. 46% of businesses are independent. How do we compete with other cities? There is real change in the centre about how people use space. The Quays has changed from a shopping centre to a mixed space. There is an appetite to accommodate remote working.

SH – we have a University open day on Saturday and people will like Hull. We need to be confident. The University is a civic institution which is here to educate and to provide workers for the region. Hull lacks confidence.

EH - Is there a way to identify an area as being good for certain types of job?

KR – yes that could work. Brand is important, so telling people the Hull story is key. It would be interesting to understand digital branding and how they could be used to target people for jobs. Encouraging businesses to move their jobs to Hull, so how do we market Hull to employers? Job boards, business organisations etc. What is Hull known for? Renewables for instance which can be used to attract more businesses in that sector. Indeed has showcased certain locations online.

Rory Clarke, Rix and Sons – accepts flexibility in the workplace. Young people like coming to work as it stops isolation and helps them to learn. MIT study showed that flexible working works when people come in together.

KR – 75% of people had a positive work from home experience, if you remove young people the figure rises which demonstrates your point.

Need to address the young people question differently with a clear pathway for support. Hull plays nicely into the co-working space, likes the idea of sitting beside other young people and learning



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modernising Employment

MEETING MINUTES, C4DI, HULL
2nd October 2023

from my own colleagues and other businesses. Companies do need to think about the experience of young people, they need to give them mentors for instance. How we manage young people has to be different.

Mark Riley, Philips 66 – remote working is a balance for every business. We do have cultural balances to change. Concerned about risk assessments and isolation. You do need to get people together for collaborative projects. Flexible working really helps with families where both parents work. Humber region is 5th in the world for regional investment for de-carbonisation. Remote working might help to fill some of the 1M job vacancies.

PD – no one-size fits all. Pre-Covid organisation was based on the Industrial Revolution. Pandemic has let the genie out of the bottle. Need to understand employees' needs. IoP measures people on output not time. Staff cannot organise time to the detriment of clients or colleagues and productivity has improved. Any meetings over 2 hours are held in the office and staff meet once a month but there has to be a purpose. Make sure you understand the needs of young people.

EH – chairs two APPGs, one is on Endometriosis, how can we help women with this condition to get back into work?

Paula Gouldthorpe, FSB – crucial to invest in leadership and management. Small businesses are likely to struggle with recruitment of management and Level 2 and 3 staff. What does the Government need to do?

PD – train managers first to develop their team. “First break all the rules” showed how a successful business has first-rate front-line managers.

KR – training can be done online for managers which should help. Covered reform to the apprenticeship levy. EH is correct, there has to be training for managers.

SH – we are all “accidental managers” and need training. There is a cultural revolution so the training level could be reformed. Ironically although we are meeting remotely more and more, I have to dash to be at another face-to-face meeting. Hopefully there is money in the kitty from increased productivity.

Co-working is key because it helps with mental health.

Georgia Jamieson, Virgin Money – 15% of our staff cannot embrace flexible working because of their jobs but Virgin has looked at ways of supporting them. Productivity has not been effected by flexible working. Applications have risen as have rates of retention. No point in going into an office if no-one else is there. Connectivity is important.

KR – take on board Rory's point about onboarding. Georgia's point on connectivity is right and some really interesting evidence from Virgin. Liked the idea of doing a different type of role from home.



All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modernising Employment

MEETING MINUTES, C4DI, HULL

2nd October 2023

PD – about managing change. It is the most adaptive who survive the many challenges that are coming our way.

Conclusion: EH – thanked the audience for attending and John for use of our meeting room.

Present:

Organisation	First Name	Last Name
RSM UK	Phil	Whithers
Rix	Rory	Clarke
Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce and LSIP	Rod	Chambers
HEY LSIP	Phil	Ascough
Better Hiring Institute	Cal	Wright
Hull College	Liz	Ridley
Hull City Council	Richard	Cowther
Phillips66	Mark	Riley
The Deep	Freya	Cross
Virgin Money	Georgia	Jamieson
Sewell Group	Becky	Oughti- Bridge
Loom Consultancy	Martin	Stead
Hull College	Kirstie	Cawley
Wyke Sixth Form College	Jenny	Anderson
Swift Group	Kate	Williamson
KCOM	Kenneth	Ross
Hull BID	Kathryn	Shilltto
John Good Group	Rachel	Low
Quickline	Claire	Hickey
HEY LEP	Carl	Southcoat
Better Hiring Institute	Keith	Rosser
Reed Screening	George	Warrington
House of Commons	Emma	Hardy
Investors in People	Paul	Devoy
Investors in People	James	Burch
University of Hull	Stephen	Hardy