

Clare Chapman appointed Chair of Acas

Business Secretary Alok Sharma has announced the appointment of Clare Chapman as the new Chair of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) Council.

She formerly served as Group People Director at BT Group and prior to that, Director General of Workforce at the Department of Health.

Clare will take up her new role on 27 July, replacing Sir Brendan Barber, who served two terms as Acas Chair. Sir Brendan has been in the post since 2014.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

Clare has a long track record of managing relationships between employers, workers and their trade unions, in both the private and the public sectors.

Clare's experience will be vital as Acas continues to support both employees and employers through this difficult period and beyond.

I also want to extend my thanks to Sir Brendan Barber for his hard work and dedicated leadership of Acas over the last six years.

Clare Chapman said:

I am delighted to be taking on this role. Given the uncertainty created by the Covid-19 crisis, Acas is proving its strength not just in dispute resolution but its role in helping employees and employers face the extraordinary workplace challenges that are still unfamiliar and evolving.

The appointment was made in line with the governance code for public appointments.

Notes to editors

Clare Chapman biography

Clare currently serves on the Board of the Weir Group Plc, G4S Plc and Heidrick and Struggles Inc. She has also been a Low Pay Commissioner since 2015 and is co-chair of The Purposeful Company with Will Hutton.

Prior to that Clare was the Group People Director of BT Group and Tesco Plc and Vice President of Human Resources for PepsiCo's operations in continental Europe. She also was the Director General of Workforce at the Department of Health where she was responsible to more than 2.2 million health and social care employees in England. Clare has also worked for Quaker Oats in the USA.

In her time at Tesco, the company partnered with The Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) to establish a strong framework for progressive employee relations.

At the Department of Health, Clare was responsible for creating the Social Partnership Forum in Health, bringing Ministers, health service organisations and union leaders together to shape large scale operational change, prior to its implementation within the National Health Service (NHS). The NHS Constitution, still in use today, was developed during this time and was significantly shaped by the Forum.

Clare is a Trustee of the Reconciling Leaders Network, a registered charity established by the Archbishop of Canterbury to equip a generation to live out their calling as peacemakers and reconcilers for a just and flourishing society.

Acas and the role of the Acas Council

Acas is an independent non-departmental public body (NDPB) and the Acas Council was established by statute to safeguard its independence. The Council consists of a Chair and eleven members who represent employer, worker or independent interests; all are appointed by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Acas aims to make working life better for everyone in Britain. It advises millions of people every year on how to resolve issues at work, through its website (www.acas.org.uk), through its Helpline, and through workplace training. When things go wrong at work, Acas offers conciliation, both to individuals and to groups represented by trade unions.

Links to government

Acas is independent of ministers, but is one of BEIS' key partners. Acas' services contribute to delivering a competitive, efficient and effective labour market which supports economic growth and employment.