

Disability Expert Advisors Panel

Overview

The Disability Expert Advisors Panel, chaired by Philip Rutnam, Civil Service Disability Champion and Permanent Secretary at the Department for Transport, is a group comprised of external disability expertise.

The group offers examples of external best practice, and provides friendly challenge to disability initiatives within the Civil Service.

Membership

External

- **John Binns** – Mental health Advisor, Fit4Success and MIND
- **Kate Headley** – Director of Consulting at The Clear Company
- **Lord Chris Holmes of Richmond MBE** – Civil Service Diversity Expert Advisor
- **Jean Irvine OBE** – IT Accessibility Champion
- **Jolanta Lasota** – Chief Executive, Ambitious about Autism
- **Norbert Lieckfeldt** – Co-Chair, Employers Stammering Network
- **Kate Nash OBE** – Founder of PurpleSpace
- **Liz Sayce OBE** – Chief Executive, Disability Rights UK

Civil Service

- **Alex Freegard** – Chair of the Civil Service Disability Network
- **Janet Hill CBE** – Programme Director, Civil Service Disability Inclusion
- **Matt Meynell** – Civil Service Workplace Adjustments Programme Director

Philip Rutnam, Chair, Permanent Secretary, Department for Transport



Philip Rutnam joined the Department for Transport (DfT) as Permanent Secretary in April 2012.

Before joining DfT, Philip was the Director General, Business and Skills, at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). He was responsible for policy on industry and enterprise, including regional economic development and support for small business.

Before joining BIS, Philip helped to establish Ofcom and then led its work on competition, economic regulation and use of the radio spectrum.

In April 2015, Philip was appointed Civil Service Disability Champion. He has brought passion and an action orientated approach to this role, initiating many innovative cross-government disability initiatives. Philip has effectively engaged others, in establishing a Senior Disability Champions Group, taking a leading role in disability events, and publishing regular blogs on disability topics/issues. He has identified and published key disability priorities for the Civil Service, including

an ambitious target to halve the engagement gap between disabled and not disabled colleagues by 2020.

John Binns, Mental Health Advisor, Fit4Success and MIND



John has enjoyed a long and successful career in the blue chip commercial professional services sector. He was an Equity Partner in the Consulting division of Deloitte from 2001 until 2013. He continues to work with Deloitte as a Personal Resilience and Mental Health advisor on a retained basis, through his company Fit4Success. He now provides strategic advice to many other City organisations, on how to build mental resilience in their leadership. In particular he provides cognitive behavioural therapy-based executive coaching to individuals in those firms.

Prior to 2001 John was a Worldwide Partner in Andersen which he joined in 1994.

He is well known in the national media and highly respected across the City for his willingness to speak openly about overcoming a period of stress related depression in 2006/7. Following this period he went on to continue a highly successful business career as a Partner in Deloitte.

He has significant non-executive director experience and is now a Trustee and Board Member of the leading UK mental health charity Mind. He sits on the Committee of Management of the City Mental Health Alliance, is a member of the Business in the Community Mental Health Champions Group. John is a founder member of the New York based Workplace Mental Health Summit which now meets quarterly to discuss mental health in the workplace. Members are typically multinational Corporates, headquartered in New York.

He is a Visiting Lecturer at the City CBT Coaching College, based at King's College London.

Kate Headley, Director of Consulting, The Clear Company



Kate is a qualified HR professional who has followed an early career in the private sector (Marks & Spencer) and the public sector (Manchester City Council) with 20 years in recruitment and diversity. As Director of Clear Company she has been instrumental in developing a recruitment review process that uniquely combines analysis for recruitment policy and process, with the behaviours and practices of people 'doing the job' of hiring. The results enable employers to fully understand the barriers that lie in everyday recruitment that can exclude diverse talent and provide a roadmap of achievable steps that will lead to a more inclusive approach.

Knowledge attained by Clear Company through delivery of successive large employer recruitment reviews, has been effectively applied to develop a suite of online, cloud based solutions to aid the provision of training, expert information and case specific guidance, direct to the people who need it, when they need it. Kate is also the founder of the multi-award winning Clear Talents reasonable adjustments portal that provides timely and effective adjustments.

In addition to her role at The Clear Company, Kate founded and continues to Chair the Recruitment Industry Disability Initiative, a national programme that gave 500,000 disabled job seekers a more positive candidate experience in 2015.

Kate is also an active contributor to publications, guidance and events to engage and empower employers to recruit and retain disabled job seekers.

Lord Chris Holmes of Richmond MBE, Civil Service Diversity Expert Advisor



Chris is one of Britain's greatest Paralympians, amassing nine gold, five silver and one bronze medal across four Games, including a record haul of six golds at Barcelona 1992.

In 2013 Chris entered the House of Lords as Lord Holmes of Richmond, focusing his time on business, culture, media and sport and the digital opportunity. Last year Chris was appointed as a Diversity Adviser to the civil service. He is also a non-executive director at the Equality and Human Rights Commission. This year is Channel 4's 'Year of Disability' and Chris is chairing Channel 4's Year of Disability Adviser (YODA) Group.

Prior to this Chris was Director of Paralympic Integration at the London 2012 Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG); a vital role in ensuring consistent delivery across the Olympics and Paralympics in 2012. Chris has also worked as a lawyer, freelance journalist and broadcaster at sporting events across the world.

Jean Irvine OBE, IT Accessibility Champion



Following a career in local, central government and the Post Office (in which she held roles including IT Director and HR Director) Jean has undertaken a "portfolio" of non-executive director board posts in the public, private and voluntary sector.

Her recent roles include Trustee of the Employers Network on Equality and Inclusion, Commissioner at the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Non Executive Director at the Chelsea Building Society and Non Executive Operations Board Member at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. She has also been a trustee of several charities associated with equality and diversity including Vice Chair of RADAR, the UK charity for disability rights. She is currently a trustee of the Ruth Winston Centre a community centre for people over 50 in North London.

Jean is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a Chartered Fellow of the British Computer Society and also a Liveryman in the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists actively championing IT Accessibility in both these roles. Jean was awarded an OBE in the Queen's New Years Honours list in 1994 for services to IT and in 2002 was awarded the University of Wolverhampton's School of Computing and Information Technology Honorary Degree of Doctor of Technology in recognition of her contribution in the field of IT and Strategic Planning.

Jolanta Lasota, Chief Executive of Ambitious about Autism



Jolanta has been Chief Executive of Ambitious about Autism since 2009.

Previously she was the founding Chief Executive of Turn2us, a new charity that helps people in financial need access the money they are entitled to. Jolanta was also the Head of the Governance Hub, the national body charged with supporting the development of third sector governance. She also worked as a Director of I CAN, the charity that helps children and

young people with speech, language and communication difficulties.

Jolanta is Chair of the Autism Education Trust. She has a passion for enabling children, young people and families affected by disability to live the life they choose.

Norbert Lieckfeldt, Co-Chair, Employers Stammering Network



Norbert Lieckfeldt is a person who has personal experience of stammering and who has been involved with the British Stammering Association (BSA), the UK's national association for stammering, since the mid-1990s, starting out as a volunteer on their helpdesk and serving as Chief Executive for the past 12 years. He is a Trustee and Treasurer of St Margaret's House in East London and serves as a Governor of the East London NHS Foundation Trust.

With a degree in Political Science from Kiel University (Germany), he has a strong interest in policy making, serving on the Expert Advisory Panel of The Bercow Review on Services for Children and Young People (0-19) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs. He was an elected board member for three years of The Communication Trust and has been supporting the Trust during its work on the Children and Families Act 2014.

As co-Chair of the Employers Stammering Network, together with Iain Wilkie (a senior Partner at EY), a network of 12 leading organisations such as EY, Shell, RBS and the Civil Service, Norbert is working to ensure that stammering as an often invisible disability is recognised in the wider workforce, and that stammering is no longer a barrier to career choice, recruitment and success at work.

Kate Nash OBE, Founder of PurpleSpace



Kate Nash OBE is a leading authority in 'Networkology' – the science behind the growth of workplace networks/resource groups.

Known for her work with disability networks, she set up a hub of best practice in running disabled employee networks publishing the first best practice guide in 2009, with a Ministerial launch. She now works with 300 UK employers running the most successful disability networks.

In October 2015 she founded PurpleSpace (www.purplespace.org) – the world's first professional development hub for disabled employee networks bringing together the 850,000 disabled employees from across employee networks. It delivers best practice and leadership know-how to network leaders as well as resilience and confidence training for disabled employees.

In April 2014 her book '*Secrets & Big News*' was published, unpacking the truth behind 'disclosure' of disability and what employers can do to help people be themselves. The content was informed by extensive research including 2,511 disabled employees from 55 employers

In 2007 she was awarded an OBE for services to disabled people and in 2013 she was appointed Global Ambassador to Business Disability International.

Liz Sayce OBE, Chief Executive, Disability Rights UK



Liz Sayce is the Chief Executive of Disability Rights UK, leading work to achieve equal participation for all, through programmes on independent living, career opportunities and shifts in cultural attitudes and behaviour.

Liz is a member of the Committee of Healthwatch England and has recently joined the board of the Equality and Diversity Forum. With a background in mental health and disability policy, previous roles include Director of Policy and Communications at the Disability Rights Commission, where she led formal investigations and a new 'Disability Agenda'; and Policy Director of Mind.

In 2011 she led a Government Independent Review into disability employment programmes and has published widely on mental health, disability and social participation.

She undertook a Harkness Fellowship in the USA resulting in the publication of a book entitled (From Psychiatric Patient to Citizen, 2000 – updated in 2016).

She was awarded an OBE in 2009 for services to disabled people and an honorary doctorate from the University of Kent in 2014.

Alex Freegard, Chair of the Civil Service Disability Network



Alex Freegard joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in 2001, working in Finance, Corporate Services and Knowledge and Technology Directorate.

She assumed the role as Chair of Enable, the FCO staff disability network in May 2014 whilst participating in the Civil Service Positive Action Pathway, a programme aimed at talented Civil Servants from under-represented groups with potential to progress. Since graduating from the programme, Alex speaks openly about her Dyslexia and shares her passion for improving disability awareness and confidence, working with Enable as a change agent. In the FCO, Alex is a trained First Response Officer for Bullying Harassment and Discrimination BHD queries, a BHD Board Angel, a member of the wellbeing network – supporting the Time to Change Campaign, member on the technology overhaul programme board and assurance board.

In June 2014, Alex became an Executive Member of the Civil Service Disability Network (CSDN) and in 2016 was elected as Chair of CSDN. Working with the CSDN executive committee she connects disability organisations across the Civil Service, and supports the CS Disability Inclusion Team and CS Workplace Adjustments Team.

Alex has received worthy recognition for leading Enable and has been short-listed for the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Awards 2016, in the Championing Disabled People category. She has also gained a place on the Equal Approach / PurpleSpace bursary scheme 2016-2019 for 'aspiring, high-potential and/or high performing network leaders'.

Janet Hill CBE, Programme Director, Civil Service Disability Inclusion



Janet's current role working on Civil Service diversity and inclusion strategy has involved overseeing the development of cross-Government initiatives such as the development of a corporate Workplace Adjustment Service, expanding the D&I learning portfolio and developing the Positive Action Pathway.

She now supports Philip Rutnam in the delivery of an ambitious vision of organisational culture that is disability confident and inclusive.

Janet is currently a trustee of enei, non-executive advisor to Radius, non-executive director on the executive board of RIDI, non-executive on the Metropolitan Police Service STR.IDE Board, and member of the 'Mum's the Chef' Advisory Board. Janet is also a member of Baroness Royall's STRIDE Board and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Matt Meynell, Civil Service Workplace Adjustments Programme Director



Matt Meynell is a Deputy Director in Civil Service Employee Policy.

Having helped lead and develop CS Employee Policy over the last four years as part of its senior team, Matt is now overseeing the establishment of CSHR Casework as a cross-government expert service. In this role, he also leads the CS Workplace Adjustment Service on behalf of Philip Rutnam.

Getting the basics right through delivering fast and effective workplace adjustments is Philip's top priority as Disability Champion.

Matt and his team are building a high quality central service while also working with departments to raise standards across government and deliver initiatives such as the Workplace Adjustment Passport.

Previously, Matt worked for the Training and Development Agency for Schools and, prior to that, as a teacher himself.