

One one point we were all agreed at the ICAEW last nigh...

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There was a point of clear unanimity at the [ICAEW New Era](#) meeting last night (well, all bar David Gauke, I guess it's fair to say).

As Paul Taplin, a former ICAEW Tax Faculty Chair for whom I have a lot of respect put it, he warned five years ago that cuts at HMRC would lead to chaos and a failure to collect tax due, and it has.

No one argued. The consensus was very clearly that he was right.

[Iain Wright MP](#), in the chair, then asked David Gauke that if he went on Newsnight would he feel comfortable with having paid the market rate to buy the best expertise needed to beat tax avoiders. Gauke wriggled but the answer that came in the end was clear: HMRC may need to buy that expertise and pay the going rate for it.

One point though: the people in question have to be employees. secondments from PWC are not on.

And another, final point: let's stop the nonsense about 'investing' in HMRC when thousands are losing their jobs. Let's do some real investment, now.