

KPMG have a very long way to go on responsible tax

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The [FT has reported](#):

Tax campaigners and academics have boycotted a “festival of tax” held by KPMG on Wednesday over concerns about the firm’s past role in helping large multinationals minimise their tax bills and the inclusion of a rightwing think-tank as a speaker. The event, which KPMG held in central London alongside consultancy Jericho Chambers, was billed as an “idea exchange” where a range of participants including politicians, academics, campaigners and policymakers would discuss the topic of “responsible tax”.

As they note:

Paul Monaghan, chief executive of the Fair Tax Mark, which lobbies companies to adopt ethical tax practices, said he and two prominent academics focused on this issue had boycotted the event. Mr Monaghan said it was “beyond a joke” that KPMG had decided to co-host the event “given they are active advisers on tax avoidance”. He added: “We have no problem with them being involved in the conversation [on responsible tax practices], but it is beyond daft for them to try and lead the conversation.”

And they add:

Prem Sikka, professor of accounting at the University of Sheffield, also declined to attend. He said: “I have long boycotted events organised and colonised by unethical organisations. I can’t recall any commitment from KPMG saying that they have abandoned the tax avoidance business.”

You might guess who the other academic was. One reason was to support Paul on this:

Mr Monaghan said inviting the IEA as a speaker was “like inviting climate change deniers to a conference on the shift towards a low-carbon economy”. He pulled out of the event after learning that the IEA was attending and requested that KPMG remove the Fair Tax Mark logo from its marketing material for the gathering.

In fact, to be clear, they never had permission to use the Fair Tax Mark logo in the

first place.

And as to the event, I note this:

Robert Palmer, head of campaign group TaxJustice UK, who attended the event, was critical of some of the points raised by other attendees. He said on Twitter that there was a “good contingent” of attendees “arguing for abolishing corporation tax”. “This is not only bad from a public point of view, but also self-destructive as it’ll undermine public faith in the system and business,” he said.

He added: “It’s Chatham House rules but someone has just suggested we ‘move on’ from talking about corporation tax. This is head in the sand stuff. It ignores the huge public concern about companies not paying their fair share.”

Quite so.

KPMG has a very long way to go if they think the IEA and debate on abolishing tax reform are part of the discussion on responsible tax.