

Dear Colleagues,

2024#1 My Policy Story

Thank you to everybody who submitted a response to our consultation on the future of the welfare state. As we anticipate the forthcoming General Election, some time in the coming year, we in the CPF want to look ahead by taking a moment to look back.

Since the last General Election, CPF membership has more than trebled (x3.1); members actively participating in consultations has grown by a quarter (x1.27); and the number of constituencies participating in consultations has increased by almost a third (x1.3). Since September 2022, you and other CPF Groups have provided your Ideas for the Next Manifesto and have helped to Make The Case for Conservatism—applying the Conservative values of capitalism, freedom and responsibility to the most immediate challenges facing the country: that is, the cost of living, energy security, healthcare and our global engagement. You have also helped the Party’s policymakers and leadership to understand your views on some of the longer-term challenges: deregulation, artificial intelligence, transportation and the welfare state.

In this new consultation, we invite you to reflect on Conservative policies introduced since Rishi Sunak became Prime Minister, on 25 October 2022. We want to know how you think these have affected you, your family, your community and the country. We want to know your policy story. This will then give us a context in which to discuss the further changes that you would like to see as we look ahead to the General Election and beyond.

Make sure that your Conservative Association or Federation has a date in the diary to be a part of this vital consultation—and, as usual, be sure to invite as many members and supporters as possible. Don’t forget: 50% of voters are female, so we need to listen to female voices as well. If you don’t usually have an equal representation of men and women at your meetings, then **we would challenge you to reach out to and invite female members and supporters in your constituency** to help us collect as wide a range of stories as possible. Please submit your responses to the questions in this briefing paper using the online response form published on the CPF website. The deadline for sending your response is 17th March. Following our usual break for campaigning ahead of the May elections, we expect to publish our next discussion paper on 6th May.

We look forward to hearing your policy stories,

The CPF Management Team

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Setting the scene

“Greater focus, dedicated leadership, and better-targeted resources will help us deliver our promises in the here and now, as we halve inflation, grow the economy, reduce debt, cut waiting lists, and stop the boats.”

(Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP, 7 February 2023)¹

In the last parliamentary session, the Government passed 39 bills. Looking back over the year or so since Rishi Sunak became Prime Minister, CPF members can identify several newly-implemented government policies that either started out as CPF proposals or for which CPF has consistently campaigned. These include, but are in no way limited to the following “top dozen”:

1. Enabling young people to use the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) to search and apply for apprenticeships, alongside degrees²
2. Introducing “Returnerships” to help get older workers back to work³
3. Allowing private companies to access capital markets worldwide without floating on a stock exchange⁴
4. Introducing a statutory limit on the length of non-compete clauses in employment contracts⁵
5. Increasing the annual pension allowance and abolishing the Lifetime Allowance⁶
6. Moving to a broader-based British Baccalaureate in place of GCSEs and A-Levels, putting technical and academic education on an equal footing⁷
7. Implementing the largest ever cut to National Insurance⁸
8. Extending 30 hours of childcare a week to working parents of children aged 9 months to 4 years⁹ and paying Universal Credit childcare costs up front rather than in arrears¹⁰
9. Changing child ratios in the childcare sector from 1:4 to 1:5¹¹
10. Redirecting HS2 funding to enhance transport links across the North and Midlands¹²
11. Supporting the development of the next generation of nuclear reactors¹³ and of pioneering fusion technology¹⁴
12. Building on the Women’s Health Strategy¹⁵ and protecting women’s hard-won rights, for example by excluding from women’s prisons certain transgender offenders.¹⁶

Questions for discussion

1. In what specific ways have government policies implemented since Rishi Sunak became PM had a positive impact on your life and your family?
(Include first name and last initial if the CPF member is happy for us possibly to share their name in connection with this on social media.)
2. In what specific ways have other people in your community or area been positively impacted by government policies implemented since Rishi Sunak became PM?
3. Thinking of policies that the government has introduced, which do you believe could most benefit from modification in order to realise their full potential?
4. In as few words as possible, what single commitment or emphasis would you most like to see included in the Party’s General Election manifesto?
5. Is there any other observation you would like to make?

Sources and Further Details

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- ³ *Budget 2023: What are 'returnerships' and who are they for?*, Department for Education, 17 March 2023, <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/03/17/budget-2023-what-are-returnerships-and-who-are-they-for/>
- ⁴ *Chancellor's Mansion House Reforms to boost typical pension by over £1,000 a year*, HM Treasury, 10 July 2023, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellors-mansion-house-reforms-to-boost-typical-pension-by-over-1000-a-year>
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- ¹¹ *How staff-to-child ratios work*, Ofsted, 20 April 2023, <https://earlyyears.blog.gov.uk/2023/04/20/how-staff-to-child-ratios-work/>
- ¹² *PM redirects HS2 funding to revolutionise transport across the North and Midlands*, Department for Transport, 4 October 2023, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-redirects-hs2-funding-to-revolutionise-transport-across-the-north-and-midlands>
- ¹³ *Six companies through to next stage of nuclear technology competition*, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2 October 2023, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/six-companies-through-to-next-stage-of-nuclear-technology-competition>
- ¹⁴ *Thousands of new training places created as part of £650 million fusion package*, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 16 October 2023, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-of-new-training-places-created-as-part-of-650-million-fusion-package>
- ¹⁵ *Boost for women and girls as Women's Health Strategy turns one*, Department of Health and Social Care, 22 July 2023, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/boost-for-women-and-girls-as-womens-health-strategy-turns-one>; and *Women's Health Strategy for England*, Department of Health and Social Care, 20 July 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/womens-health-strategy-for-england>
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