



Liberal News.

SUMMER 2020

A NEW POLITICAL CLIMATE POST LOCKDOWN

There has never been a situation that has changed the political discourse of a country and the economic journey as the Covid-19 pandemic has.

Economically the right-wing agenda of cutting public expenditure and services and a pure focus on individual profit has been replaced by debate over public investment assisting businesses, workers, and services. The unthinkable has become the norm.

We have a Conservative government forced to see that Government investment is needed to ensure the economy and society does not plunge into recession. Who would ever have thought of Boris Johnson as being a resurrected Lord Keynes?

The task for us as Liberals is not to sit back, but to seize the change in the political agenda. We must ensure that those in casual work and the low paid are not forced to suffer excessive tax rises to fund the public deficit when the Covid-19 crisis is over.

We must ensure that 'clapping for health workers' is a platform to ensure that investment in public health is restored and maintained.

Whilst private businesses have been given meaningful funding, local councils hit by increasing costs and reduced income are still left in limbo. As we write this article there is every possibility some major cities are on track to be declared bankrupt.

We Liberals have long argued we need more public health investment for preventive health care. It should not shock anyone, that heavy smokers and those overweight have disproportionately been subject to fatalities during this crisis. We need community health education more than ever, yet in some cities like Liverpool our long-established community health workers are being made redundant.

Cllr Steve Radford

President of the Liberal Party

APOLOGIES BY CLLR STEVE RADFORD

Whilst the brunt of the Covid-19 crisis has hit Liverpool as deeply as any other UK city our local team has been at the forefront of assisting older and vulnerable neighbours staying at home.

In the first ten weeks of the crisis our community charity, the Tuebrook Hope Group has delivered over £18,000 worth of hampers to older neighbours and those medically compromised by immunity or respiratory illness. Our hampers were reaching the home of the vulnerable even before the government scheme got off the ground.

As a consequence, our focus on national politics and producing Liberal News took a sidestep so please accept our apologies.



LIBERAL PARTY NEC ELECTIONS

The elections for party President, part officers and the full NEC were concluded in December 2019 and we would like to thank all the members who support this and to Hazel Williams for compiling the results.

The following in the full list of party officers:

Cllr Steve Radford - President

Richard Phillips - Chair of NEC

Anne Bradshaw - Treasurer

Paul Bradshaw - Membership Secretary & Deputy Chair of the NEC

Stephen Graham - NEC Secretary & Election Nominating Officer

Farès K Moussa - Communications Officer

Cllr Steve Radford - Liberal News Editor

Policy Committee - Richard Phillips (Chair), Paul Bradshaw, Stephen Graham, Farès K Moussa, Cllr Charles Shaw and Dane Clouston.

The full NEC consists of Cllr Charles Shaw, Neil Taylor, Paul Bradshaw, Ann Bradshaw, Stephen Graham, Richard Phillips, John Hein, Cllr Chris Eccleston, Liam Clarke, Cllr Chris Ash, Mark Page, Dane Clouston and Farès K Moussa.

END THE COLD WAR, DON'T JUST MOVE THE BORDERS

I am not going in any way suggest President Putin is a force for liberalism, particularly when listening to his interview with the Financial Times he very much declares his view that the age of liberalism, multiculturalism, and gender diversity is over.

However, he does make some articulate views and reasoning we should listen to.

Firstly, when the Soviet Union dissolved into a myriad of states, these were often little more than a product of Stalin dividing the Soviet Union into administrative regions with little regard to historical borders or local identities.

There are over 25 million ethnic Russians living outside the Russian Federation; if local regions provinces were allowed to hold referenda on which state they belonged to, I have no doubt the Ukraine war would not have happened

With the challenges of a more fragmented

world is it not time UK and world powers started listening to the legitimate interests of Russia and try a working relationship, rather than isolation? Other international borders we must recognise should be up for review in the Middle East and Africa and which cannot remain sacrosanct should include Iraq, the West Bank and Palestine, and Syria, the later the product of back room deals between France and UK.

Liberals have often recognised democracy cannot be imposed on countries, but it is by International trade and cultural contact that these traditions and values can spread. Trying to impose democracy upon Iraq for instance has been an utter disaster. Is it not time for realpolitik and stability to create the foundations needed for change?

Cllr Steve Radford

President of the Liberal Party

GENERAL ELECTION 2019

The Liberal Party stood 19 candidates at the December 2019 General election, our largest showing in recent years and the 14th largest party by candidates in the national poll.

Boosted by a generous financial donation the party was able to finance the candidates deposit and offer a limited grant towards the printing and distribution of local election leaflets.

Party President Cllr Steve Radford stood in Liverpool West Derby, whilst other candidates stood in such diverse constituencies as Blaydon in Gateshead, Calder Valley, Bridgwater and West Somerset, Altrincham & Sale West in Trafford and Stalybridge and Hyde in Manchester

In Cornwall, all 6 regional constituencies included local candidates offering real choice at the ballot box and an opportunity to expand our membership and branch network.

The party stood on a platform of a Liberal BREXIT, honouring the outcome of the 2016 European membership referendum, and promoting the opportunities to trade with the wider world and Commonwealth.

Our election manifesto was widely circulated to the media and can be viewed on the party website at Liberal.org.uk.

The party wishes to express its thanks to those who chose to represent the party at the polls, party workers, local helpers, and our financial supporters.

Stephen Graham

Elections Nominating Officer

LIBERAL PARTY NEC STATEMENT: THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ISRAELI ANNEXATION OF THE WEST BANK

The Liberal Party notes with grave concern increased media reports that the Israeli Government intends to annex sections of the West Bank as early as July of this year.

Such a move would effectively end any prospect of a viable Palestinian state by reportedly taking control of 30% of the disputed area and thus deny Palestinians the right to self-determination and statehood.

Any such annexation must be roundly condemned by the international community and pressure brought to bear on the Israeli Government to accept a workable two state solution which guarantees Palestinians the right to self-government.

The party again reiterates its call for the British Government to actively and urgently promote Palestine's entry into the United Nations as a full member and for an invitation to join the Commonwealth, to be extended to Palestine immediately, with an offer of tacit and practical support to ensure they meet the criteria for membership if they wish to apply.

AN APPEAL ON BEHALF OF THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The newly revitalised Policy Development Committee is now engaged in a root and branch review of the party policies passed at the annual assembly and those on our party website.

The committee has now completed a review of the Individual and Group Rights section which is now being put before the NEC at a Special Assembly for approval by the party members.

We believe that the party contains people with valuable subject knowledge, and we would like to ask them to assist in the review of Liberal policy.

We are keen to hear from groups or individuals who can assist in the revision of education and electoral policy or who could act as a reviewer for other areas.

Please reach out to the members of the committee or the NEC if you can assist in this valuable undertaking in clarifying and promoting our aims.

LOCAL ELECTIONS IN 2020

As we are all now aware this May's elections covering 118 English councils, the London Assembly, seven English regional mayors and the PCCs have now been suspended till May of 2021.

In view of the numbers of people who would be visiting polling stations and the number of electoral services staff would have been potentially exposed during the electoral process by handling ballot papers and election material, this was the most sensible response to the evolving pandemic.

My local electoral services have confirmed that where the scheduled elections have been postponed, the term of current elected representatives will be extended to May 2021. For those elected in 2021 because of the postponement their term of office will be three years ending in 2024 rather than four years.

I would again appeal to members to consider standing as a Liberal Party candidate and to contact myself or another member of the NEC to discuss the options for promoting the Liberal Party cause at the ballot box.

Stephen Graham

National Elections Nominating Officer

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