

## **F24 Facing the Future (Policy Development Agenda Policy Paper)**

Conference welcomes policy paper 100, Facing the Future, as a programme of policy development for the rest of this Parliament which is both optimistic and forward-looking, but also recognises the scale of the challenges we face, and which is inspired by our core values which put people first.

Conference supports its re-affirmation of Liberal Democrat values and principles, with an emphasis on:

- A. Empowering individuals to make the best of their lives regardless of their social background.
- B. Reducing Poverty.
- C. Supporting flourishing communities.
- D. The wider distribution of political, economic and social power.
- E. Championing the rule of law, civil liberties, and human rights.
- F. Challenging all forms of unfair discrimination.
- G. Sustainable development, meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- H. The development of international co-operation and democratic institutions to spread and safeguard human rights, and to protect humanity from global threats.

Conference acknowledges the major challenges facing Britain and the world and understands that this results in many people having fears and anxieties about the future, but also identifies the opportunities available to us in the coming years, and so recognises the need to:

- i) Rebuild the public finances and reduce unemployment while at the same time reforming the economy onto a more economically and environmentally sustainable basis.
- ii) Increase equality of opportunity and reverse trends towards greater inequality.
- iii) Give international leadership in tackling climate change and achieve more sustainable use of natural resources.
- iv) Reform our political institutions, re-engage the public with the democratic political process, and further devolve political power to nations and communities.
- v) Adapt Britain's foreign and defence policies to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing international landscape.
- vi) Address the needs of a growing and ageing population.
- vii) Reform the public services to help them to deliver high quality, responsive services fairly to the entire population.
- viii) Tackle crime, in particular the growing threat of internationally organised crime and electronic crime, while upholding vital civil liberties.
- ix) Tackle poverty – in particular the scourge of child poverty.

Conference endorses the priority areas identified for policy development to provide us with a distinctive platform for the next General Election informed by our values, including:

- a) Taxation, including tax avoidance.
- b) Sustainable Sources of Growth and Jobs.
- c) Housing.
- d) Tackling Inequality.
- e) Supporting Working Families.
- f) Crime and Justice.
- g) Defence.
- h) Immigration and Identity.
- i) Public Services.
- j) The Challenges of an Ageing Population.
- k) Skills and Post-16 Education.
- l) The Transition to a Zero Carbon Britain.
- m) Sustainable Use of Natural Resources.
- n) Gender Equality.
- o) Political Reform and Participation.
- p) Europe.
- q) Mutualisation, Employee Ownership and Workplace Democracy.

In the light of the recent riots, conference calls on the Federal Policy Committee to consider what additional policy development may be needed following the outcome of the Grassroots Communities and Victims Panel.

Conference also calls for further work to develop proposals for a public distribution of government-owned shares in RBS and Lloyds Banking Group, in order to empower the public and give them something back in return for bailing out the two banks.