

The Queen's Speech December 2019



Dear Colleagues,

Paper 2020-1: The Queen's Speech December 2019

Happy New Year! We hope you have recovered from the work that you did over the General Election and feel rested for 2020. We were pleased to see [so many of your suggestions in the manifesto](#):

- 57% of commitments in the published manifesto could be traced back to ideas proposed by CPF groups;
- 47% of ideas in the CPF Members' Manifesto were reflected in the published manifesto.

As we begin another period of Conservative majority Government, the CPF has an exciting programme ahead. We will continue to work closely with the Prime Minister's Policy Unit, who are now listening to CPF members in ways that was not previously so.

One of our biggest innovations this year is our new, interactive website, set up by our Digital Officer, Katrina Sale: conservativepolicyforum.co.uk. This will not replace local CPF group meetings, but we know that some people cannot attend meetings. So, this is an additional opportunity for everyone to contribute in other ways. Please explore the new website and sign up for the online debates and Question & Answer sessions.

The CPF will also be hosting monthly webinars—or video conferences—with policy experts. Last year, our webinars featured ministers such as Michael Gove, Matt Hancock and Chris Skidmore, who shared their views on key policy areas and took questions from participants online. These webinars are a fantastic opportunity to hear from leaders in our party—from the comfort of your own home! We'll be kicking off the year with John Penrose, the new CPF Chairman. He'll be discussing the first policy consultation paper and our plans for 2020, as well as taking your questions and suggestions. You will need to register as a member on the new website to access this webinar.

Our consultation programme this year begins with this paper, inviting you to let us know your views on the Queen's Speech, including any ideas you might have for the budget. The closing date for this consultation is 1st March. With the Police & Crime Commissioner elections in May, our next consultation paper will be on Policing. This should help members and other supporters with the knowledge to campaign for our fantastic PCCs on the doorsteps, and we anticipate that your local input will prove invaluable to your PCC candidates. For more details on our plans for 2020, please visit our website.

Thank you to everyone for your time spent in discussions and a particular thank you to all the organisers. Together we can help even more to shape our Party and country's future. So, keep up the great work!

A summary of responses to this discussion paper will be sent to the Prime Minister, Party Chairman and CPF Chairman within a month of the closing date for submissions. We look forward to hearing your ideas as we continue to unleash the country's potential.

The CPF Team

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P.S. As always, discussions will be more greatly informed if groups are able to include members and non-member supporters of the Party from different age groups.

Executive Summary

"My government's priority is to deliver the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union on 31 January... Thereafter, my ministers will seek a future relationship with the European Union based on a free trade agreement that benefits the whole of the United Kingdom. They will also begin trade negotiations with other leading global economies."¹

This Queen's Speech will **deliver Brexit** on 31 January and allow the Government to deliver on people's priorities and unleash the country's potential. The Government's first priority is to deliver Brexit on 31 January and to negotiate an ambitious free trade agreement with the EU that benefits the whole country. This Queen's Speech sets out how we will seize the opportunities created by Brexit:

- The European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill will ratify the deal secured by the Government in October, delivering Brexit.
- The Agriculture Bill will reform UK agriculture by improving environmental protections and strengthening transparency and fairness in the supply chain.
- The Fisheries Bill will enable us to reclaim control over our waters, ensuring the sustainability of our marine life and environment.
- The Trade Bill will establish the Trade Remedies Authority to protect UK industry from unfair trading practices.
- We will end free movement and pave the way for a modern, fairer points-based immigration system.
- A Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill will provide a clear framework for cross-border resolutions for individuals, families and UK businesses involved in international legal disputes.
- We will provide certainty, stability and new opportunities for the financial services sector.

The Speech sets out a number of proposals to **invest in and support our public services**:

- Legislation will enshrine in law the largest cash settlement in the NHS's history and we will deliver the NHS Long Term Plan in England to ensure our health service is fit for the future.
- A Medicines and Medical Devices Bill will ensure that our NHS and patients can have faster access to innovative medicines, while supporting the growth of our domestic sector.
- We will also pursue reforms to make the NHS safer for patients.
- We will provide extra funding for social care and will urgently seek cross-party consensus for much needed long-term reform so that nobody needing care should be forced to sell their home to pay for it.
- We will continue work to modernise and reform the Mental Health Act to ensure people get the support they need, with a much greater say in their care.
- We will increase levels of funding per pupil to ensure all children can access a high quality education.

The Speech sets out a variety of measures to **support workers and families**:

- An Employment Bill will enhance workers' rights, supporting flexible working, extending unpaid carers' entitlement to leave and ensure workers keep their hard earned tips.

- A Renters' Reform Bill will enhance renters' security and improve protections for short-term tenants by abolishing "no-fault" evictions and introducing a lifetime deposit.
- To ensure residents are safe in their homes, we will bring forward measures to implement the most urgent recommendations from the first phase of the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry. We will also publish a draft Building Safety Bill to implement the recommendations of Dame Judith Hackitt's review of building regulations.
- Recognising our commitment to making the UK the safest place to be online, we will continue to develop an Online Harms Bill.
- The Pension Schemes Bill will enable people to better plan their saving for later life and improve the protection of people's pensions, strengthening the regulator's powers to tackle irresponsible management of pension schemes.
- We will reduce the cost of living, including through increases to the National Insurance threshold and the National Living Wage.

The Speech reaffirms our commitment to **strengthening the criminal justice system, ensuring it keeps people safe:**

- A Counter Terrorism (Sentencing and Release) Bill will ensure the most serious and dangerous terrorist offenders stay in prison for longer.
- A Sentencing Bill will ensure the most serious and violent offenders serve more of their sentences in custody.
- A Serious Violence Bill will place a duty on public bodies to work together to identify and tackle early factors that can lead to crime and ensure the police can more easily stop and search habitual knife carriers.
- A Police Powers and Protection Bill will establish a Police Covenant and ensure the police are able to fully conduct their duties by providing them with additional support and protection.
- Recognising the pain felt by victims and their families when offenders refuse to disclose certain information about their crimes, the Prisoners (Disclosure of Information about Victims) Bill will require the Parole Board to take this into account - a version of "Helen's Law".
- The Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill will remove unnecessary conflict during the divorce process, in which children are so often caught up, while ensuring that divorce remains a carefully considered decision.
- We will re-introduce the Domestic Abuse Bill, strengthening protections for victims and providing new enforcement mechanisms.
- The Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Bill will empower police officers to immediately arrest someone wanted for a serious crime committed in a trusted country, without having to apply to a court for a warrant first.
- We will consider proposals to deal more effectively with foreign national offenders, including increasing the maximum penalty for those who return to the UK in breach of a deportation order.
- We will set up a Royal Commission to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice process.

The Speech sets out how we will **improve our infrastructure and level up opportunity** across the country:

- We will invest in public services and infrastructure while keeping borrowing and debt under control and will publish a National Infrastructure Strategy.
- We will accelerate the delivery of fast, reliable and secure broadband networks to millions of homes, with legislation to make it easier for telecoms companies to install

digital infrastructure and to ensure all new homes are built with reliable and fast internet.

- The Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill, will maintain our position as a world-leader in aviation by modernising our airspace, making journeys quicker, quieter and cleaner whilst also tackling the unlawful use of unmanned aircraft (drones).
- Legislation will be brought forward to ensure that minimum levels of service are maintained during transport strikes so that hard-working commuters can still get to work.
- We will develop measures to ensure people can get home quickly when an airline goes bust.
- In response to the Williams Review, we will publish a White Paper containing reforms that address passengers needs while providing value for the taxpayer and delivering economic benefits across the UK.
- A draft National Security and Investment Bill will strengthen the Government's powers to investigate and intervene in business transactions (takeovers and mergers) to protect national security.
- To maintain the UK's position as a global science superpower, we will boost public R&D funding, launch a comprehensive UK Space Strategy and develop proposals for a new funding agency.
- We will publish a White Paper to reiterate our commitment to levelling up opportunities and investment in the regions across England.
- We will reform business rates to protect high streets and communities from excessive tax hikes and keep town centres vibrant. We will bring forward the next business rates revaluation and make future revaluations in England more frequent.

This Queen's Speech deepens our commitment to **safeguarding the natural environment for future generations**:

- Our landmark Environment Bill will protect and preserve the planet for generations to come. It will establish a new Office for Environmental Protection, increase local powers to tackle air pollution, introduce charges for specified single use plastic items, and ban exports of polluting plastic waste to non-OECD countries.
- We will also continue to take steps to meet the world-leading target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- We will introduce legislation to promote and protect animal welfare, including measures to increase maximum sentences for animal cruelty, to ensure animals are recognised as sentient beings, and ban the import and export of trophies from endangered animals.

The Government will continue to work to **strengthen the bonds between the different parts of the UK and to safeguard its constitution and democratic processes**:

- We will continue to uphold the constitutional integrity of the UK, working constructively with the devolved administrations and their legislatures to ensure our Union continues to flourish.
- We will urgently pursue the restoration of the devolved power-sharing government at Stormont to ensure the people of Northern Ireland have the political leadership of their elected local representatives.
- We will set up a Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission to consider the relationship between Government, Parliament and the courts and to explore whether the checks and balances in our constitution are working for everyone.
- We will take forward work to repeal the Fixed-term Parliaments Act.

- We will protect the integrity of our democracy and elections, tackling electoral fraud through the introduction of voter ID and banning postal vote harvesting.

The Speech confirms our determination to **celebrate and support the work of our courageous armed forces and to retain and enhance the UK's global status and reach as we leave the EU:**

- We will continue to invest in our Armed Forces and honour the Armed Forces Covenant.
- We will continue to uphold the NATO commitment to spend at least two per cent of national income on defence.
- We will legislate to bring an end to the unfair pursuit of our Armed Forces through vexatious legislation.
- We will seek the prompt implementation of the Stormont House Agreement to provide both reconciliation for victims of the Troubles in Northern Ireland and greater certainty for military veterans.
- The Prime Minister will undertake an Integrated Defence, Security and Foreign Policy Review – the deepest review of these issues since the end of the Cold War.
- We will secure ambitious new trade deals with our international partners across the world.
- We will take forward our commitment to ban public bodies from imposing their own direct or indirect boycotts, divestment or sanctions campaigns against foreign countries.
- Finally, this Government will champion Conservative values and put a strong United Kingdom front and centre in the world. We will champion the UK's interests and uphold our values of the rule of law, freedom of expression, and the importance of human rights on the international stage. We will continue to work alongside our international partners to tackle the most pressing global challenges, including terrorism and climate change.

Questions for Discussion

Beyond the initial commitment to deliver on Brexit by the end of January, the Queen's Speech contained seven broad sections:

- Public services
- Workers and families
- The justice system
- Infrastructure, investment and devolution
- The environment and animal welfare
- The union and constitution
- The armed forces and foreign affairs

Bearing in mind that we plan on holding a detailed consultation in the coming months on each of these sections, please discuss in your groups:

1. What are you pleased to see contained in the Queen's Speech?
2. Is there anything that a majority of your group were disappointed to see included?
3. Is there anything else that you would have liked to have seen included?
4. If you have any specific ideas concerning the budget on 11 March, please submit them by **midnight on 7 February** via:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-representations-guidance

¹ The Queen's Speech 2019, Prime Minister's Office, 19 December 2019, [link](#)