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I am proud of the hard work that we have done over the past five years, and particularly in transforming our policy process. We responded to the outcome of the Refounding Labour consultation by creating a more open, transparent and engaging policy making process. But we have only just begun to inaugurate the changes necessary to reach out to more parts of our Party in a truly democratic way. By creating ’Your Britain’ our online policy hub we enabled more members, affiliates, supporters and members of the public to get involved and contribute to the development of our policy programme than ever before. Two hundred thousand people engaged with the process. This work came to fruition through a consensual process, where we were able to produce a progressive policy programme which was supported by all NPF representatives.

In 2010 Ed Miliband announced a Shadow Cabinet-led Policy Review, to feed into the wider policy process led initially by Liam Byrne and subsequently Jon Cruddas, whom I want to thank for their huge and invaluable contribution. This provided a huge body of high quality work for the NPF to consider and take forward.

In terms of the final year of the process, on which this Annual Report is based, crucially we developed and agreed the manifesto. And, in the spirit in which we have carried out the last five years of policy work, this was not a document drawn up in isolation and then presented to a Clause V meeting. It too was subject to several months of engagement and consultation, with a series of local and regional public meetings, expert seminars and online consultation under the Changing Britain Together banner. The Policy Commission reports enclosed detail the specific areas prioritised and discussed, and some of the key outputs from each in terms of manifesto content.

We must ultimately reflect on the defeat at the General Election and our Party must adapt our policy programme moving forward. Nevertheless, I take pride in the hard work our Party did, and in particular of the inclusive process we created, which will continue to strengthen our movement, and will allow us to rebuild and return to Government in 2020.

Angela Eagle MP
Chair of the National Policy Forum
VICE CHAIRS OF THE NATIONAL POLICY FORUM

Simon Burgess

Billy Hayes

Bridget Phillipson MP
STABILITY AND PROSPERITY
POLICY COMMISSION
STABILITY AND PROSPERITY POLICY COMMISSION

Membership 2014/15

HM Opposition
Ed Balls MP*/Chris Leslie MP**
Shabana Mahmood MP
Catherine McKinnell MP
Iain Wright MP‡

NEC
Margaret Beckett MP
Steve Rotheram MP
David Sparks
Cath Speight

CLPs and Regions
Gerard Coyne
Mark Glover
Theresa Griffin
Margaret McCulloch
Ian Miller
Alice Perry
Martin Philips
Sarah Rae
Pearleen Sangha
Liz Twist
Darren Williams

Affiliates
Nick Crofts
Steve Hart
Len McCluskey
June Nelson
Dave Prentis
Tim Roache
Fiona Wilson

Elected Reps
Julie Elliott MP
Lord Faulkner¥
Anneliese Dodds MEP†
Bryony Rudkin

*Co-convenor
**Co-convenor (from May 2015)
¥ Replaced Baroness Lister
†Replaced Arlene McCarthy MEP
‡Until May 2015

Policy development

The Stability and Prosperity Policy Commission considers Labour’s policy and thinking on the economy. It considers current issues ranging from growth and the economic recovery to public spending and taxation and how we can reduce the deficit in a fair way.

Sadly, the Commission has had to say goodbye to its co-convenor Ed Balls this year, following the General Election. The Commission would like to thank him for the work he has done over the years and wishes him well in the future.

Annual Conference 2014 prioritised and discussed contemporary resolutions submitted within the remit of the Stability and Prosperity Policy Commission on the cost of living. This included a composite motion on public sector pay. The motion said Labour’s approach should be built on the principles of fairness for the low paid, fairness in setting pay, with respect for outcomes of Pay Review Bodies and fairness to avoid a two-tier workforce, including reviewing TUPE.

Annual Conference also agreed the policy platform set out at the National Policy Forum in July 2014.

The Stability and Prosperity Policy Commission held a policy seminar at Annual Conference 2014. This was very well attended with a large number of delegates contributing to a lively debate. Issues raised included the mansion tax and 10p tax rate, the importance of manufacturing in the UK economy, child benefit uprating, problems in the banking sector, the zero-based review of public spending being conducted by the Shadow Treasury team, and the need to get the deficit down in a fair way.
The Commission met in December as part of the ‘Manifesto 2015: Changing Britain Together’ engagement programme. The purpose of this meeting was to consider what the priorities should be for the Manifesto the following year. In discussing Manifesto priorities reference was given to the ‘National Goals’ outlined by Ed Miliband at Annual Conference 2014: (1) giving all young people a shot in life; (2) tackling the cost-of-living crisis; (3) restoring the dream of home ownership; (4) tackling low wages; (5) securing the future; and (6) saving our NHS.

At this meeting Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls updated the Commission on the work of the Shadow Treasury team including the Autumn Statement that took place that month. The Commission also had an extensive discussion about the Party’s mansion tax policy and the importance of the revenue it would raise for the Party’s NHS ‘Time to Care’ policy. The Commission discussed the various policies that were agreed at the National Policy Forum in Milton Keynes particularly in relation to infrastructure investment and banking reform, noting that these are issues which are frequently raised in submissions to the Commission. The Commission also discussed how boosting productivity and raising living standards are of central importance to the economic debate.

In February 2015 Shadow Business Secretary Chuka Umunna updated the Commission on the launch of Labour’s ‘Better Plan for Britain’s Prosperity’. The aim of the Plan was to bring together the Party’s thinking on how Labour would chart a path to higher productivity in all parts of the economy as the basis of a renewed and inclusive prosperity, reflecting the work of the Policy Commissions and the Policy Programme agreed through the National Policy Forum over the last four and a half years. Chuka Umunna set out how Labour’s plan would:

- Recognise that Britain’s world class firms, in sectors which enjoy established comparative advantage, need to be able to take long-term decisions and access key markets, not simply ever lower taxes
- Prioritise doing everything we can to ensure more smaller businesses reach their potential to power future growth
- Develop a new industrial strategy that focuses not just on high-tech firms, but also on supporting our big employing sectors such as retail and social care to win a race to the top and not get dragged into a race to the bottom
- Ensure the public sector plays an active part in driving up productivity across the whole economy, supporting firms through cutting-edge innovation and research, strategic investment and procurement

Following the Summer 2015 Budget the Commission held a conference call with Shadow Chancellor Chris Leslie to discuss the measures announced in the Budget. This included discussion on public sector pay, business and personal taxation (including corporation tax and the bank levy) and productivity.
Labour’s Manifesto

The Stability and Prosperity Policy Commission met late in 2014 to discuss its priorities for the General Election manifesto, based on its work over the previous four years and the contents of the policy programme agreed at Annual Conference. The manifesto was agreed at a Clause V meeting in April 2015, and contained a number of commitments shaped by the work of the policy commission and the contributions received over the course of the Agenda 2015 process.

Deficit reduction

The manifesto committed a Labour Government to balancing the books. It said that Labour would cut the deficit every year and get national debt falling and a surplus on the current budget as soon as possible in the next Parliament. It also noted that Labour’s plan to balance the Budget meant tough, but fairer choices.

Fair taxation and cost of living

The manifesto said that the next Labour Government would create a fairer tax system to help those on middle and lower incomes. This would include introducing a lower 10 pence starting rate of tax, paid for by ending the Conservatives’ Marriage Tax Allowance. We also committed to use the first Finance Bill to close tax loopholes that cost the Exchequer billions of pounds a year. The manifesto promised to end unfair tax breaks used by hedge funds and to bear down on disguised employment. In addition it committed a Labour Government to seeking international agreement to make country-by-country reporting information publicly available. It also pledged to reverse the Government’s cut in the top rate of tax and to introduce a mansion tax to help pay for our NHS ‘Time to Care’ Fund.

Infrastructure:

The manifesto recognised that building world-class infrastructure would be crucial to fostering economic growth. It pledged that a Labour Government would create certainty for investors by taking a long-term approach to the major investment decisions facing the country. It committed Labour to creating an independent National Infrastructure Commission to assess how best to meet Britain’s infrastructure needs. The Commission would make recommendations to government, monitor their implementation, and hold government to account.

Banking and financial services

The manifesto pledged to establish a British Investment Bank with the mission to help businesses grow and to create wealth and jobs. It also pledged greater banking competition with a market share test and at least two challenger banks. The manifesto also recognised that charities, mutuals, co-operatives and social enterprises are pioneering new models of production that enhance social value, promote financial inclusion and give individuals and communities more power and control. It committed the next Labour Government to support and help develop the social economy by improving access for co-operative and mutual organisations to growth finance through the new British Investment Bank.

Devolution

Labour’s manifesto outlined plans to transfer £30 billion of funding to city and county regions, along with new powers over economic development, skills, employment, housing and business support. This would enable city and
county regions to retain 100 per cent of additional business rates raised from growth in their area.

**Current issues**

**Growth, jobs and the cost of living crisis**

The Commission has received a large number of submissions on the rising cost of living and the need to boost living standards. Many people are concerned about stagnating living standards in recent years and the Commission agrees it is important that the Party has a plan to ensure that all members of the society benefit from the economic recovery. These issues have been discussed extensively by the Commission in the last year.

The Commission also recognises the need for the Party to pursue policies that deliver sustainable growth for the long-term and which boost productivity. A number of submissions have been received on this issue. The Commission notes that following the Summer 2015 Budget the forecast for productivity growth has been revised down in each of the next four years.

The Commission has also received submissions on devolution and the importance of ensuring that growth is shared right across the country. Securing national prosperity and boosting living standards will require more of our towns and cities to become engines of growth.

Submissions have also been received on the issue of pay, including the living wage, the National Minimum Wage and public sector pay. The Commission agrees on the need to strengthen the National Minimum Wage, promote the living wage and ensure decisions on public sector pay are rooted in fairness as well as affordability.

**Taxation**

At a time when living standards are not growing as strongly as they should the Commission believes it is even more important to ensure that the tax system is fair and transparent. The Commission notes that at a time when ordinary people are struggling to make ends meet it was the wrong priority for the Tory-led Government to cut the 50p top rate of tax. The Commission notes that during the General Election campaign the Conservative Party refused to rule out another reduction in the additional rate of tax. The Commission will study developments in this area.

The Commission has also urged further action on tackling tax avoidance – an issue raised repeatedly in submissions to the Commission. The Commission believes that society relies on tax revenues to provide essential services and we should not take for granted its importance. At a time when the Government is cutting spending and raising taxes the Commission believes it is more important than ever that individuals and companies should pay their fair share of tax, and be seen to do so. This has been a key priority for the Commission over the last year.

**Fair deficit reduction**

Submissions to the Policy Commission recognise the importance of tackling the deficit, but also recognise the fact that the Government has failed to meet its promise to balance the books by 2015. Submissions to the Commission have expressed concern at the approach the Conservative Government is taking to deficit reduction.
Austerity

The Commission agrees that we need a fair approach to deficit reduction and recognises that we can only reduce the deficit if our recovery is balanced, long-term and does not sow the seeds of problems ahead. We need to take action to deliver investment-led growth, and fairer choices about how to get the national debt down while protecting vital public services.

Financial services and banking reform

Many submissions to the Commission continue to express concern about the financial services sector and the need for further reform.

The Commission has received a number of submissions emphasising the need for more competition in the banking sector, which many people feel is at the root of many of the wider problems facing businesses and consumers. The Commission also acknowledges the role that mutuals, co-operatives and social enterprises can play in promoting a diverse financial services sector.

The Commission notes that following the General Election the Conservative Government has set out plans to begin to sell off the Government's shares in Royal Bank of Scotland at a loss to the taxpayer. The Commission believes that taxpayers, who bailed out RBS, will want their money back and will be suspicious of any rush to sell. The Commission further believes that when RBS is still restructuring the business, a premature sale poses a risk for taxpayers.

Infrastructure

Submissions to the Commission acknowledge the important role infrastructure can play in boosting our economy and promoting jobs and growth. However, the Commission recognises that the Government's record on infrastructure investment has been one of delay and failure to deliver.

The Commission believes that proper investment in the country’s infrastructure will be essential in securing the recovery for the long-term and in delivering the productive economy we need. An emphasis on infrastructure is necessary to prepare the country for the major challenges ahead, including climate change and population growth.

Submissions

All submissions received by the Policy Commission are circulated to members ahead of the next meeting for consideration as part of our discussions on policy development. In the last year the Stability and Prosperity Policy Commission has received and considered submissions on the following topics.

- Alternative economic strategies
- Austerity
- Banking reform
- British Investment Bank
- Business rates
- Carbon taxes
- Consumer spending
- Green Investment Bank
- Digital technologies
• Exports
• Financial services
• Manufacturing
• Measures of inflation
• Income tax
• Inequality
• Inheritance tax
• Infrastructure
• Land value tax
• Mansion tax
• Manufacturing
• Property taxation
• Public ownership of national assets
• Public sector pay
• Public sector pensions
• Quantitative easing
• Stamp duty
• State Pension
• Spending cuts
• Sustainable growth
• Taxation of earnings and capital gains
• TTIP
• VAT
• Wealth tax
• Winter fuel allowance
WORK AND BUSINESS POLICY COMMISSION
WORK AND BUSINESS POLICY COMMISSION

Membership 2014/15

HM Opposition
Chuka Umunna MP*  
Chris Leslie MP**  
Rachel Reeves MP  
Stephen Timms MP

NEC
Jennie Formby*  
Ann Black  
Jim Kennedy  
Andy Kerr

CLPs and Regions
Shaukat Ali  
Mike Amesbury  
Boyd Black  
Jackson Cullinane  
Deborah Gardiner  
Fred Grindrod  
Daniel Johnson  
Alon Or-bach  
Mike Payne  
Jayne Shotton  
Linda Woodings

Affiliates
Richard Angell  
Tony Burke  
Karin Christiansen  
Ruth George  
Paul Kenny

Elected Reps
Baroness Lister†  
Andy Sawford MP  
Sharon Taylor  
Derek Vaughan MEP

*Co-convenor  
**Until May 2015  
†Replaced Lord Faulkner

Policy development

The Work and Business Policy Commission is charged with considering how Labour can ensure the UK economy is best placed to compete in the global market. This includes looking at what government can do to support businesses across a wide range of sectors and how we can support employees in the workplace. Issues relating to work and business were at the heart of Labour’s manifesto for the General Election and the Commission has been closely involved in this debate.

Annual Conference 2014 discussed contemporary resolutions relevant to the Work and Business Policy Commission. This included a composite on ‘work and the contemporary economy’ that called on a Labour Government to boost pay, support trade unions and work to create a fairer, more prosperous and democratic settlement in employment relations in the modern workplace. The composite also called on Labour to work to tackle low pay and job insecurity by taking action to increase the minimum wage and ban exploitative zero-hours contracts. A composite on ‘low pay and insecurity’ called on Labour to tackle abuses such as making employees redundant and rehiring them as so-called ‘self-employed’ workers on lower pay with few employment rights. A second composite, also on this issue, called on Labour to ban exploitative zero-hours contracts, review the impact of short-hours contracts and charge the Low Pay Commission with implementing a target to significantly increase the National Minimum Wage bringing it closer to average earnings in the next Parliament.

Annual Conference also agreed the policy platform set out at the National Policy Forum in July 2014.
The Work and Business Policy Commission held a policy seminar at Annual Conference 2014. This was very well attended with a large number of delegates contributing to a lively debate. Issues raised included Employment and Support Allowance, including the need to reform the Work Capability Assessment, zero-hours contracts, the role of trade unions in improving working conditions, child benefit, employment tribunal fees, workplace pensions and the Bedroom Tax.

The Commission met in December as part of the ‘Manifesto 2015: Changing Britain Together’ engagement programme. The purpose of this meeting was to consider what the priorities should be for the Manifesto the following year.

Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury Chris Leslie, Shadow Minister for Disabilities Kate Green, Shadow Pensions Minister Gregg McClymont and Shadow Business Ministers Ian Murray and Stella Creasy attended the meeting and provided an update on the work of their respective shadow teams. This included discussion of Labour’s policy on EU migrants’ benefits and Labour’s position on child benefit uprating.

Kate Green discussed her recent work in highlighting how the Government’s Work Programme is failing disabled people. She also set out the Party’s position on the Independent Living Fund and the need for clear guidance for local authorities to ensure that existing users are protected. Chris Leslie emphasised how the focus of the shadow team is how dealing with the cost-of-living crisis and growing our economy is central to getting the deficit down. He also set out the Party’s policies to help small businesses, such as cutting business rates. Other issues discussed included benefit sanctions, food banks and Universal Credit as well as pensions transparency and increases in the basic state pension. Additional issues raised by policy commission members included sector bargaining, the Agricultural Wages Board, a Financial Transaction Tax, employment tribunal fees and the mansion tax.

Chris Leslie updated the Commission on the work of the zero-based review, a root and branch review of every pound the Government spends from the bottom up. In addition there was discussion about what more Labour could do on consumer issues and it was agreed that the Commission would hold a conference call on this topic in the New Year.

The consumer rights conference call was held in January 2015. It was noted that the discussion was taking place following the publication of the final year report of the National Policy Forum, which was formally agreed at Annual Conference 2014 following the NPF meeting in Milton Keynes. Members on the call were keen that ongoing discussions on these issues following the NPF report are considered as part of the policy making process. Stella Creasy updated the Commission on the recent work she had done on consumer rights. This was based on four principles: access to information, advocacy, redress, and independence.

In February 2015 Shadow Business Secretary Chuka Umunna reported to the Commission on the launch of Labour’s ‘Better Plan for Britain’s Prosperity’. The aim of the Plan was to bring together the Party’s thinking on how Labour would chart a path to higher productivity in all parts of the economy as the basis of a renewed and
inclusive prosperity, reflecting the work of the Policy Commissions and the Policy Programme agreed through the National Policy Forum over the last four and a half years. Chuka Umunna set out how Labour's better plan would:

- Recognise that Britain’s world class firms, in sectors which enjoy established comparative advantage, need to be able to take long-term decisions and access key markets, not simply ever lower taxes.
- Prioritise doing everything we can to ensure more smaller businesses reach their potential to power future growth.
- Develop a new industrial strategy that focuses not just on high-tech firms, but also on supporting our big employing sectors such as retail and social care to win a race to the top and not get dragged into a race to the bottom.
- Ensure that the public sector is able to drive up productivity and stimulate growth of key sectors such as manufacturing and construction through public procurement, strategic investment and innovation and research.

Following the Summer 2015 Budget the Commission held a conference call with Shadow Chancellor Chris Leslie to discuss the measures announced in the Budget. This included welfare changes, cuts to tax credits, child poverty, student maintenance grants and the so called ‘National Living Wage’.

**Labour’s Manifesto**

The Work and Business Policy Commission met late in 2014 to discuss its priorities for the General Election manifesto, based on its work over the previous four years and the contents of the policy programme agreed at Annual Conference. The manifesto was agreed at a Clause V meeting in April 2015, and contained a number of commitments shaped by the work of the policy commission and the contributions received over the course of the Agenda 2015 process.

**Security in the workplace**

The manifesto committed Labour to banning exploitative zero-hours contracts and ensuring that those who work regular hours for more than 12 weeks would have the right to a regular contract. It also committed a Labour Government to abolishing the Swedish Derogation that allows agency workers to receive lower pay. It further committed a Labour Government to abolishing the Government’s employment tribunal fee system as part of wider reforms to ensure people have proper access to justice.

**Fair pay**

Labour’s manifesto pledged to raise the National Minimum Wage to more than £8 an hour by October 2019, bringing it closer to average earnings. It also set out plans to give local authorities a role in strengthening enforcement of NMW. In addition, it committed Labour to using government procurement to promote the Living Wage as well as requiring publicly listed companies to report on whether or not they pay the Living Wage.
Support for business

The manifesto set out how a Labour government would improve productivity by building a long-term investment culture in the private and public sectors, and supporting small businesses in their growing to becoming British success stories of the future. It pledged to give small businesses a voice at the heart of government with a Small Business Administration to ensure procurement contracts are accessible and regulations are designed with small firms in mind. It also pledged to cut business rates for small business properties.

Young people, jobs and apprenticeships

Labour’s manifesto promised to cut tuition fees from £9,000 to £6,000 a year. In addition it pledged to introduce a Compulsory Jobs Guarantee to tackle long-term unemployment and to guarantee every school leaver that gets the grades an apprenticeship. It also committed Labour to ensuring apprenticeships are gold-standard qualifications and to give employers more control over apprenticeships funding and standards.

Social security

The manifesto pledged that Labour would tackle the root causes of rising social security spending by making work pay and building more homes. It pledged that a Labour Government would restore contribution to the heart of the welfare system and that it would not cut tax credits. The manifesto also pledged that Labour would abolish the Bedroom Tax and reform the Work Capability Assessment. It committed Labour to keeping the triple lock for the state pension but also to removing winter fuel payments for the richest five per cent of pensioners.

Devolution

Labour’s manifesto outlined plans to transfer £30 billion of funding to city and county regions, along with new powers over economic development, skills, employment, housing and business support. This would enable city and county regions to retain 100 per cent of additional business rates raised from growth in their area.

Current issues

Getting people back to work

Throughout the year the Commission has received numerous submissions on the need to ensure people who are unemployed are helped back into well-paid, secure work. The Commission recognises that for many unemployed people – particularly those who have been out of work for a long time - finding a job is extremely difficult and this point is reflected by many of the submissions received by the Commission.

The Commission believes that getting people back into work should be a priority for any government and that this needs to be focused on good quality, proper jobs, with fair terms and conditions. The Commission also believes that government should ensure that jobseekers are helped to acquire the skills necessary for work, in order to avoid a race to the bottom in the labour market. The Commission will continue to scrutinise the approach taken by the Government in relation to getting unemployed people back to work.

The Commission further notes that submissions it has received focus on action to spread the living wage as a means of increasing living standards across the economy.
Support for business

The Commission recognises the need to reform the economy in order to deliver the jobs and growth of the future. Reflecting the submissions received it is clear that Labour must aim for a high-productivity, high-skilled, innovation-led economy. The Commission also agreed the need for an integrated industrial strategy including procurement, restoring high quality skills and decent work.

Submissions to the Commission continue to emphasise the importance of a balanced, resilient economy succeeding in the world, creating good jobs and opportunities, offering people a ladder up and the chance to make the most of their potential. This requires action to boost skills and support industries such as manufacturing and construction, including through the use of public procurement.

The Commission also recognises the challenges frequently facing small businesses which have been raised in submissions. This includes the costs of doing business and ensuring small firms can get adequate access to finance. The Commission notes that the Conservative Government has announced a series of measures on this issue, including those relating to late payment and business rates, and the Commission will continue to scrutinise the work of the Government on this issue.

Social security and pensions

Over the last year the Commission has received a large number of submissions expressing concern about the approach the Government is taking to social security. Many correspondents are worried about the impact of the Bedroom Tax on disabled people and carers as well as the impact of benefit changes on child poverty. The Commission has also discussed concerns with Employment Support Allowance and the new Personal Independence Payment. There are ongoing concerns about the roll out of Universal Credit.

The Commission notes that the Summer 2015 Budget set out further cuts to social security, including changes to housing benefit for young people, a reduction in the household benefit cap and reduced support for those in the Work Related Activity Group of Employment and Support Allowance. The Commission is concerned about the impact that further changes will have on vulnerable people across the UK. The Commission will continue to scrutinise the impact of the Government's social security policies on people across the UK in order to help inform Labour’s policy development.

The Commission further notes that the proposed changes to tax credits included in the Budget will hit working people on middle and lower incomes. Labour opposes these cuts which will make three million low and middle income families worse off.

The Commission continues to receive submissions expressing worries about the future for pensions and whether people are saving enough for their retirement. The issue of pensions transparency has also been raised and the Commission believes this should remain a priority for Labour.

Workplace rights

The need to ensure fairness in the workplace is clearly highlighted in submissions received by the Commission with many people concerned about what a Conservative majority government will mean for employment rights. The Commission notes that the Government
has already announced reforms to the rules around strike ballots, including introducing a 50 per cent threshold for union ballot turnouts and also plans to introduce an ‘opt-in’ process for the political fund element of trade union subscriptions.

The Commission believes the Government should be focusing on how to prevent industrial action rather than attacking people’s employment rights.

Submissions to the Commission over the last year have stressed that preventing exploitation and supporting measures that provide protection for workers in the workplace, including how information and consultation can be made widespread and more meaningful, must be a priority for Labour. Labour is clear about the positive role the trade union movement plays in delivering fairness, safe working conditions and supporting productivity in the workforce, and we recognise the important discussions around the role of collective bargaining in boosting pay and promoting pay equality, as well as employee representation in the workplace.

Low pay and insecurity in the workplace

Good workplaces are not just beneficial for employees: they are good for business and our economy as a whole. Significant concerns continue to be raised about growing insecurity in the workplace and the Commission has received numerous submissions on this issue.

In particular submissions have raised issues such as underemployment and zero-hours and short-hours contracts. Issues relating to agency workers have also been raised. The Commission believes that working to ensure people have security in the workplace should remain a key priority for Labour.

The introduction of the National Minimum Wage was one of the proudest achievements of the last Labour Government. The Commission has received many submissions on the importance of strengthening the NMW, including improving enforcement and tackling abuse. In addition, reflecting submissions received, the Commission has discussed extensively how to promote the living wage across the country.

The Commission notes that the proposed ‘National Living Wage’ announced in the Summer 2015 Budget is not a living wage. The new rate when it is introduced in April 2016 will be lower than the national Living Wage set by the Living Wage Foundation this year.

Royal Mail

The Commission received many submissions relating to the privatisation of Royal Mail. Concerns have been raised about the principle of selling off such an important asset, and also the way in which it was carried out, with taxpayers losing hundreds of millions of pounds.

Following the General Election the Conservative Government announced its intention to sell off its remaining stake in Royal Mail and this process has already begun. The Commission notes that vital postal services are already being put in jeopardy as a result of the Government’s original sell-off. The risk is that the Conservative Government’s latest move will further weaken their future. Consumers and businesses which rely on Royal Mail need reassurance that essential services like daily deliveries,
and the availability of Royal Mail services through the Post Office network, will continue.

**Consumer issues**

The Commission has discussed the issue of consumer rights in the last year. The Commission has discussed how consumer rights are ill-defined and poorly applied in both the public and the private sector meaning the most vulnerable often lose out. Submissions to the Commission have emphasised the need for a strong consumer voice within government.

**Submissions**

All submissions received by the Policy Commission are circulated to members ahead of the next meeting for consideration as part of our discussions on policy development. In the last year the Work and Business Policy Commission has received and considered submissions on the following topics.

- Agency workers
- Apprenticeships and employment
- Bedroom Tax
- Benefit Cap
- Benefit sanctions
- Blacklisting
- British Investment Bank
- Business Rates
- C&G site diary support
- Carers
- Child Benefit
- Child Poverty
- Collective bargaining
- Cooperatives
- Disability benefits
- Disguised employment/false self-employment
- Employment contracts
- Employment Support Allowance
- Equalities in the workplace
- EU benefits tourism
- Food banks
- Freedom of movement
- Housing benefit
- Immigration and employment
- Immigration and social security
- Independent Living Fund
- Insurance companies and renewal quotes
- Internships
- Living wage
- Living wage for pensioners
- Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Low Pay Commission
- Ministry for small business
- National infrastructure
- National Insurance numbers
- National Minimum Wage
- National Minimum Wage apprenticeship and youth rates
- Pension fees and charges
• Pension reform
• Pensioner's benefits reform
• People's Bank
• Personal Independence Payments
• Poverty and disability
• Private sector job creation
• Public procurement
• Regional economies
• Responsible consumerism
• Restricting benefits to two children
• Science R&D
• Statutory duty for business
• Student loans
• Remploy
• Royal Mail
• Tax avoidance
• Tax credits
• Trade Unions
• TTIP
• Tuition fees
• Use of pension funds to raise a housing deposit
• Universal Credit
• Virtual apprenticeships
• Voluntary sector
• Welfare reforms
• Work Capability Assessment
• Workers with dyslexia
• Working hours as a measure of employment
• Working Time Regulations
• Workplace rights
• Zero-hours contracts
The Living Standards and Sustainability Policy Commission is tasked with looking at issues affecting quality of life, the cost of living, and our environment. In particular, it has been considering how best we can create a national integrated publicly accountable and cost effective transport model; achieve sustainable growth and a secure, low carbon energy mix while improving living standards for families and individuals across all communities. Key policy areas include transport, climate change, energy, the environment, food, water and rural affairs.

In September 2014, Commission Co-Convenor Diana Holland led the Living Standards, Environment and Sustainability seminar at Annual Conference in Manchester. The panel comprised of Mary Creagh (then shadow Secretary of State for Transport), Maria Eagle (shadow Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and Jonathon Reynolds (shadow Minister of State for Energy and Climate Change). Delegates at the policy seminar discussed a number of issues, including bus and rail ownership, accessible public transport, HS2, fracking and shale gas, flooding, and taxi regulation. There was a discussion on provision of public transport in rural areas, with delegates sharing their own local experiences of rural transport. A delegate shared his experience of competing companies running buses along exactly the same local route, rather than working to expand the routes available to passengers. Annual Conference also debated and agreed a contemporary motion on rail franchising.

In November 2014, the Commission met for a discussion on their priorities
for Labour’s manifesto offer as part of the Manifesto 2015: Changing Britain Together engagement programme. Maria Eagle and Gordon Marsden (shadow Minister for Transport) attended to join the discussions on their respective briefs. The meeting covered a wide range of topics but particular attention was paid to the issues of rail franchising and ownership, climate change, and the low carbon economy. The discussion also covered shale gas and fracking, the water industry, the environment, rural pay and the abolition of the Agricultural Wages Board, and rural poverty. The Commission confirmed their support for the Gangmasters Licensing Authority which is particularly relevant in agriculture and the food industry. In addition, there was a more cross-cutting, general discussion, during which the Commission considered the importance of making sure the Party’s message was heard, and ensuring that where we have clear policy commitments that will make a tangible difference to people’s lives we make sure that voters have heard about them. Members also reflected on the importance of using language that would be readily accessible and that could be easily used by campaigners on the doorstep.

**Labour’s Manifesto**

The Living Standards and Sustainability Policy Commission met late in 2014 to discuss its priorities for the General Election manifesto, based on its work over the previous four years and the contents of the policy programme agreed at Annual Conference. The manifesto was agreed at a Clause V meeting in April 2015, and contained a number of commitments shaped by the work of the policy commission and the contributions received over the course of the Agenda 2015 process.

**Energy Market Reform**

Reform of the energy market formed a key part of our pledge to tackle the cost of living crisis. The manifesto outlined our plans to freeze energy bills and reform the market so that it delivers fairer prices. We pledged that the ‘Big Six’ Energy companies would have to separate out the parts of their business that generate energy from the parts that sell it to consumers. We also promised to establish a tough new watchdog to enforce our reforms, with the power to strip energy companies of their licenses if they repeatedly harmed the interests of consumers.

**Energy Efficiency**

The manifesto also outlined our plans to improve the energy efficiency of the UK’s homes. We pledged to deliver a million interest free loans for home energy improvements, and to make 200,000 low income homes warmer each year, with energy efficiency measures delivered street by street by local authorities and community organisations.

**Climate change and the environment**

The manifesto also included the measures on nature and the environment that formed part of the Milton Keynes agreement, pledging to keep our forests in public ownership, promote access to green spaces, and support the work of the Natural Capital Committee. The Manifesto also committed us to publishing an ambitious adaptation programme, as well as using our Infrastructure Commission to prioritise investment in flood prevention. We also committed to putting tackling climate change at the heart of our...
foreign policy and pushing for an ambitious agreement on climate change at the UNFCCC conference in Paris in December. The manifesto included a pledge to deal with the problems of air pollution by giving local authorities the powers they need, backed up by a national framework.

**Rail franchising and bus regulation**

Reform of the transport system was also included in the manifesto. As per the Milton Keynes NPF agreement, the manifesto pledged to review the rail franchising system as a priority, to put in place a new system and avoid a repeat of the franchising fiasco which took place under the Coalition Government. The manifesto also pledged to legislate to ensure that a public sector operator would be able to take on lines and challenge the private train operating companies on a level playing field, putting passengers before private profit in running the railways. These pledges reflected the importance placed by members on the reform of the broken franchising system, which was the most common subject of submissions to the Commission.

Also in the area of transport, we pledged to give city and county regions more power over the way buses are operated in their area, including the ability to decide routes, bear down on fares, drive improvements in services and bring together trains, buses and trams into a single network with smart ticketing.

**Reform of the water industry**

The manifesto also included a pledge to reform the water industry, as agreed in Milton Keynes. Under our reforms, water companies would have been required to sign up to a national affordability scheme to help those who cannot afford to pay their water bills. We also pledged to strengthen the powers of the water regulator to change licenses, limit price rises and enforce industry standards.

**Animal welfare**

The manifesto contained measures to advance animal welfare, as agreed at Milton Keynes, and starting with an end to the Government’s cruel and ineffective badger cull. We also pledged to improve the protection of cats and dogs, ban wild animals in circuses, defend the hunting ban and deal with wildlife crime associated with shooting.

**Current Issues**

**Climate Change**

Tackling the threat of dangerous climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, and is consequently a subject that has come up frequently in submissions and in Commission meetings. In December, government representatives from across the world will meet in Paris at the United Nations Frameworks Convention on Climate Change conference with the goal of agreeing a legally binding and universal agreement to reduce emissions in order to limit the global temperature increase to two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Current pledges are not ambitious enough to achieve this and the UK must lead the way in championing greater ambition.

It was a Labour government that passed the UK’s ground breaking Climate Change Act, a world first, that bound the Government by law to reduce carbon emissions by a third by 2020 and by 80 per cent by 2050, and which has inspired action and been copied in countries.
across the world. David Cameron has pledged to show international leadership but his position is weakened by his actions at home, where too often he has placated sceptics on his back benches and undermined green jobs and investment. As we approach the Paris summit, the Labour Party must continue to show leadership internationally and call for greater ambition, and to ensure that as the official opposition we hold the Government to account on these important negotiations.

**Energy Policy**

The cost of energy for families also continues to be of concern, with wholesale prices falling much faster than domestic bills, and energy companies failing to pass on savings to consumers. During the last Parliament the failure of the Government to take any action against the ‘Big Six’ energy companies for overcharging their customers was something that Labour frequently highlighted, and the Commission will continue to scrutinise the Government’s action, or lack thereof in this regard, in an attempt to stop families being ripped off, particularly in light of the Competition and Markets Authority investigation into the energy market.

The Commission has frequently discussed the challenge of achieving a secure, clean and affordable energy supply, and the Party’s plans for reform of the energy market and to secure low carbon investment formed a key plank of our manifesto. The transition to a low carbon economy is a huge opportunity for Britain, with the potential to be a major source of jobs and growth. But the Conservatives’ irrational opposition to onshore wind and their determination to push ahead with fracking for shale gas in the face of environmental concerns threatens to undermine green growth.

Experts are clear that in the long term a diverse and low-carbon energy mix is likely to cost far less than relying on fossil fuels, and we will continue to advocate a low carbon energy mix that includes renewables, nuclear, green gas, and carbon capture and storage. Achieving this mix is not just necessary if we are to meet our carbon emissions targets and avert catastrophic climate change – it will also protect us against future price rises.

**Rail Franchising**

Rail ownership and the franchise system were some of the most frequently recurring themes in the submissions the Commission received, not just this year but across the whole policy cycle. Following discussions at Milton Keynes, the Party pledged to review the franchising system to put in place a system that is fit for purpose, to create a public sector operator to take on new lines, and to create National Rail to oversee the railways and act as a guiding mind. The Party also opposed the privatisation of East Coast Mainline.

In contrast to this, the Conservative Government is committed to continuing the flawed franchising model. A number of franchises are up for re-tendering in this Parliament and we will scrutinise these to ensure that passengers are put first and value for money is delivered for the taxpayer.

Furthermore, in contrast to Labour’s plan to drive better integration of the railways through National Rail, there are reports that this Government is considering privatising Network Rail. This would lead to further fragmentation of the railways with passengers paying the price. We will scrutinise future plans from the Government and call for a new strategic
body to improve co-ordination and add a real passenger voice in how are railways are run.

**Bus Regulation**

Labour made a commitment to give London-style bus powers to all areas of the country that want it so that they can decide routes, set fares and improve services.

The Government has introduced a Buses Bill that would allow directly-elected Mayors to have greater control over their local bus service, including bus franchising powers. Whilst Labour supports this measure, we have been clear that these powers should be extended to all areas with combined authorities and not restricted to those with Mayors. And so we will continue to support areas like their North East Combined Authority as it moves forward with plans to introduce quality contracts across the city region.

**Rural Communities**

Scrutinising the effects of Government policy on those who live in rural communities is an ongoing thread of work for the Commission. Often, rural households face very specific challenges—for example; many rural communities have no grid access, so they are forced to use more expensive alternative sources of household energy. And while many rural households pay more for transport, access is worse than in urban areas. The Tories’ botched rural broadband rollout has further heightened the sense that some rural communities are being left behind by Westminster.

The Commission will also continue to pay close attention to the rights of agricultural workers, particularly in England as the abolition of the Agricultural Wages Board in England in the last Parliament means that this is now the only part of the United Kingdom that does not have defined standards for pay and working conditions for agricultural workers.

**Animal Welfare**

Animal welfare has been a consistent and recurring theme in the submissions received by the Commission, and the Party’s pledges on animal welfare at the general election reflected the importance members attach to this topic. We pledged to end the cruel and ineffective badger cull, improve the protection of cats and dogs, ban wild animals in circuses, defend the hunting ban and deal with wildlife crime associated with shooting. We also pledged to show international leadership to end animal cruelty abroad.

In stark contrast to Labour’s position, this Conservative government has pledged to continue with their inhumane and ineffective badger cull, as well as to hold a free vote on the repeal of the Hunting Act, despite surveys repeatedly showing that the majority of the public back the ban on hunting with dogs. And although the Tories have pledged to outlaw the use of wild animals in circuses, this is something that they promised but never implemented in the last Parliament.

The Commission will therefore continue to closely scrutinise this Government’s action on animal welfare, and hold it to account if it fails to ensure we treat the animals we share our planet with in a humane and compassionate way.
Submissions

All submissions received by the Policy Commission are circulated to members ahead of the next meeting for consideration as part of our discussions on policy development. In the last year the Living Standards and Sustainability Policy Commission has received and considered submissions on the following topics.

- Air Passenger Duty
- Airport expansion
- Animal welfare
- Bus services
- Bus franchising
- Carbon capture and storage
- Climate change
- Cycling safety
- CO₂ emissions and climate change
- Drink driving
- Energy efficiency
- Energy market reform
- Energy prices
- Energy security
- Food banks
- Fossil fuels
- Flood protection
- HS2
- Hunting Act
- International climate change negotiations
- Nuclear power
STRONGER, SAFER COMMUNITIES POLICY COMMISSION
STRONGER, SAFER COMMUNITIES

Membership 2014/15

**HM Opposition**
Yvette Cooper MP*
Hilary Benn MP
Jenny Chapman MP

**NEC**
Ann Lucas* ~ / John Healy MP**
Christine Shawcroft
Keith Vaz MP
Alice Perry

**CLPs and Regions**
Azhar Ali
Julie Brookfield
Ann Cryer
Nicky Gavron
Carol Hayton
Jillian Merchant
Brynnen Ririe
Lorna Trollope
Brenda Weston
Mark Whitcutt

**Affiliates**
Emma Burnell
Mervyn Butler
Gail Cartmail
Jennifer Elliot
Paul Liam Evans
Sarah Gill
Stephen Murphy
Rebekah Price

**Elected Reps**
Ruth Cadbury
Barry Gardiner MP
Mary Honeyball MEP

* Co-convenor
~ Until November 2014

Policy Development

The Stronger, Safer Communities Policy Commission is tasked with looking at issues and developing ideas around the areas of policy concerning our communities and how we live, such as community safety, housing, local government and immigration.

Two well attended seminars were held at Annual Conference 2014. The Crime and Justice policy seminar had an extensive panel of shadow ministerial team members present to hear delegates’ views and respond to points raised. Among the issues raised by delegates were access to justice, legal aid cuts and the reduction in cases brought forward to employment tribunals as a result of the introduction of fees.

There were a range of issues concerning the Government’s changes to the criminal justice system. These included overcrowding in prisons, prison staff shortages, and prisoner access to courses and education. Concerns surrounding the Government’s Transforming Rehabilitation programme and measures that mean non-professionals will be responsible for making decisions about whether or not an offender needs to be recalled to prison were also voiced. Delegates made several points on the issue of violence against women including Community Resolutions being used for serious crimes such as Domestic Violence when the Association of Chief Police Officers guidance says they should only be used for low-level crimes. Delegates also discussed proposals to deregulate taxis so that those other than the named driver can use them as in London. Concerns were raised that this could put the safety of women at risk.
Topics of interest for those attending the Stronger Communities seminar included the housing crisis, what powers should be devolved to local communities, what the future of local government looks like and how we can build a stronger art and culture sector. Delegates discussed the importance of building new homes across all tenures, from social housing built by councils and housing associations through to new private market housing. Deep concerns were voiced about local government funding and the increasingly stark choices that councils face.

The Policy Commission held a meeting in December to discuss the priorities for Labour’s manifesto offer. Following the NPF elections in November John Healey MP replaced Ann Lucas as the new NEC Co-convenor. The Commission noted their thanks to Ann for her service. The Commission welcomed the recently published Changing Britain Together pre-manifesto document, finding it a helpful summary of our key policies from the NPF agreement that would be a useful campaigning tool.

Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper updated the meeting on developments since their last meeting. This included the next report of the Women’s Safety Commission, chaired by Vera Baird, and the announcement that Labour would support a national network of women’s refuges from the money saved through the abolition of Police and Crime Commissioners to stem the tide of the closures that have been occurring. The group discussed immigration, a key issue both in submissions and on the doorstep. Yvette Cooper spoke about the approach that she had set out recently, pointing out also that Labour’s second General Election pledge, on controlling immigration with fair rules, had been announced by Ed Miliband.

Shadow Communities Secretary Hilary Benn gave updates on the issues of devolution and housing. Labour had announced devolution of 100 per cent of business rate income growth to local authorities, amounting to £30 billion over five years - three times as much as that being offered by the Government.

On housing, the Commission heard that the Lyons report had highlighted the issue of land banking, and that in response Labour would adopt a ‘use it or lose it’ policy, to give local authorities powers to intervene when land banking is occurring, through reform to Compulsory Purchase Order legislation. The Commission also discussed how the New Homes Bonus would be re-allocated on a fairer basis under Labour, and incentives for garden cities. Commission members also raised points on spatial planning and fairer funding for local authorities.

**Labour’s Manifesto**

The Stronger, Safer Communities Policy Commission met late in 2014 to discuss its priorities for the General Election manifesto, based on its work over the previous four years and the contents of the policy programme agreed at Annual Conference. The manifesto was agreed at a Clause V meeting in April 2015, and contained a number of commitments shaped by the work of the policy commission and the contributions received over the course of the Agenda 2015 process.
Housing

The manifesto contained an ambitious plan to get at least 200,000 new homes built each year by 2020. The need to tackle the housing crisis, with more affordable housing and a better private rented sector, had been a key theme of the work of the National Policy Forum and the Policy Review, and many of the ideas that emerged were reflected in the manifesto.

It included several measures to give communities the powers to provide the homes they need, in the places they want. These included new ‘use it or lose it’ powers for local authorities in order to encourage developers to build. The manifesto also pledged to increase competition in the housebuilding industry by backing small builders, to increase the supply of affordable homes and to give local authorities the powers to reduce the number of empty homes.

As agreed at Milton Keynes, the manifesto also pledged action to give private renters more affordability and stability, with three year tenancies and a ceiling on excessive rent rises, as well as a ban on unfair letting agent fees.

Neighbourhood Policing

Labour pioneered neighbourhood policing rooted in local communities, with police doing more than reacting to crimes by also preventing them. Key to this was partnership working with agencies such as local authorities and schools. But the Government’s actions have hollowed out neighbourhood policing and the Commission regularly discussed the importance of protecting frontline policing to keep people safe. The NPF agreement included a pledge to transform policing and make savings that could be ploughed back into the frontline while at the same time professionalising the service and raising standards. Our manifesto stated our intention to protect frontline policing by making different choices than the Tory-led Government, such as abolishing Police and Crime Commissioners, ending the subsidy of firearms licenses and mandating police forces to work together to safeguard 10,000 police officers over the next three years. This was alongside a Local Policing Commitment to guarantee neighbourhood policing in every community.

Criminal justice system

Building on the work of the NPF and the Victims’ Taskforce led by former Director of Public Prosecutions, Keir Starmer, the manifesto promised wider access to legal aid for victims of domestic violence, reforms to prisons and the probation service with an increased focus on restorative justice, and Britain’s first ever victims’ law to put victims at the heart of the criminal justice system.

The crime and justice mini manifesto published in went further still, promised tough new laws to confront child sexual abuse and violence against women, including mandatory reporting of child abuse, banning the use of community resolutions as a response to domestic violence and changes to DNA retention so that rape suspects have their DNA recorded and stored. To often crime victims are not being listened too or let down by the criminal justice system.
Devolution

Labour’s manifesto built on a number of measures agreed at the Milton Keynes NPF meeting to devolve new powers to local authorities (and groups of local authorities), with a focus on skills and employment support, economic growth and health and wellbeing, empowering them to build thriving, sustainable and prosperous communities and improve standards of living for local residents.

Ahead of the election, the Party also published a paper on devolution of economic power and funding, committed to introducing an English Devolution Act, enshrining in legislation the devolution of power and funding worth at least £30 billion over five years. The Party's aim was to put local areas in the driving seat on key decisions affecting their local economies – with new powers over back-to-work schemes, to drive house building, and to integrate, invest in and plan transport infrastructure. Labour also pledged to let city and county regions keep all the additional business rates revenue generated by growth.

Current Issues

Immigration

Britain has benefited over many centuries from immigration and it will be ever more important in a globalised economy. But it is because of this that it needs to be controlled and needs to work for everyone. Labour went into the election with a range of measures to improve the system and make it fairer. This included 1,000 new border staff to tackle illegal immigration, new laws to stop the exploitation of migrant workers that undercuts workers, and ensuring EU migrants earn their entitlements to benefits.

This issue remains in the spotlight and the Government brought forward proposals for their Immigration Bill in the Queen's Speech. Labour supports measures contained in the Bill to tackle illegal migration and deport foreign criminals. We believe we should go further to reduce the exploitation that undercuts local wages, with a new offence of serious exploitation and closing the loophole that allows employers to use agency workers to undercut the wages of permanent staff. After the failures on immigration in the last Parliament, where the government were focussing on their net migration target and failing to tackle illegal migration, the Commission is concerned that the Government will break their promises once again.

For months Labour has been warning the Government that more action needs to be taken to resolve the growing crisis at Calais. As well as measures to safeguard the security of our borders, we need to ensure proper immigration procedures are followed. This includes working with European partners to ensure people’s immigration status is assessed at the first port they arrive in, as agreed as part of the Dublin convention. Britain should also be a lead player in the continued efforts to resolve the refugee and humanitarian crisis in north Africa and the middle east which is leading to people fleeing.
Counter terror

With the conflict in Syria, the terrorist attack in Tunisia and the barbarism of ISIL, the terror threat has been growing. We are seeing awful cases of young British citizens and entire families being drawn into extremism or travelling to join ISIL, and more needs to be done to highlight the causes of radicalisation and the importance of tackling both non-violent and violent extremism.

Labour has set out our concerns about how in addition to the vital work the police are doing, the Government needs to do more to help community-led organisations prevent extremism and radicalisation in the first place. Community-led programmes still lack enough support, even though there are many faith groups, voluntary organisations and families who want to do more. The Prevent programme needs a major overhaul to cope with the scale of the problem. Hundreds of people have returned from fighting with ISIL in Syria and we need proper measures in place to ensure the security agencies and counter terror police have the tools they need to protect the public.

Our investigative laws need to keep up with changing technology. This is why Labour argued for an independent review undertaken by the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation David Anderson. Strong powers need strong checks and balances to ensure they are used appropriately. We must ensure these measures are both effective and proportionate.

Housing

Britain is in the midst of the biggest housing crisis in a generation, with the lowest levels of peacetime housebuilding since the 1920s. This was a key theme in submissions throughout the last Parliament and continues to be so. First time buyers are being priced out of home ownership and millions of families face insecurity and poor standards in the private rented sector. This Government is not doing enough to get more homes built and we are building fewer than half of the homes we need.

Although we support people’s aspirations to buy their own homes, the Government’s proposals on extending the Right to Buy to Housing Associations risk making the housing crisis worse. Experts have criticised it as unworkable and unfunded. Any proposal which does not address the key problem of the chronic shortage of homes will push home ownership further out of reach for families. Labour will continue to call on the Government to do more to build the homes we need, and give first time buyers priority when new homes are built in their area.

Local Government & Devolution

Devolution is key to driving economic growth, raising productivity and rebalancing our economy. Devolution to Scotland, Wales and London – initiated by Labour – has energised the devolution agenda, and in local government Labour authorities have shown what can be done when they are given more freedom to innovate and redesign services to meet the needs of their communities.

But although this Government pays lip service to the merits of devolution, their ad hoc and piecemeal approach risks leaving some communities behind. Furthermore, by dictating the terms of devolution (for example by imposing mayoral structures) the Government undermines its own devolution agenda.

As the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill goes through Parliament Labour will work with Local Authorities for greater devolution in housing, adult skills, transport, back to work schemes and business support.

**Submissions**

All submissions received by the Policy Commission are circulated to members ahead of the next meeting for consideration as part of our discussions on policy development. In the last year the Stronger, Safer Communities Policy Commission has received and considered submissions on the following topics.

• Access to justice
• Alcohol and licensing
• Alternatives to custody
• Anti-social behaviour
• Border controls
• British citizenship
• British Commonwealth Housing Trust
• Building new towns
• Buy-to-let tax relief
• Charitable sector housing
• Community safety
• Criminal assets
• Crime
• Crossbow licensing
• Cyber surveillance and privacy laws
• Devolution to local authorities and communities
• Drugs
• Dual nationality and ISA
• Eco homes
• Employment tribunals
• Exploitation of migrant workers
• Extremism and radicalisation
• Foreign workers and skills shortages
• Free movement of people in the EU
• Gambling
• Hate crime
• High streets
• Homelessness
• Housing
• Immigration
• Improving social housing
• Integration
• Interest only mortgages
• Internet fraud
• Land banking
• Landlords
• Legal aid
• Libraries
• Local government finance
• Localism
• Mansion tax
• Media regulation
• Nationalising the lottery
• New Homes
• Online crime
• Policing
• Police and Crime Commissioners
• Police pensions
• Prisons and punishment
• Private rented sector
• Private sector involvement in local authority services
• Property taxation
• Racism
• Registration for house builders
• Rehabilitation of offenders
• Rent controls
• Right to buy
• Second homes
• Social Housing
• Sport
• Telephone fraud
• Victims of crime
• Violence against women and girls
• Young people
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN POLICY COMMISSION
Membership 2014/15

HM Opposition
Tristram Hunt MP*
Kevin Brennan MP
Liam Byrne MP
Lucy Powell MP/Alison McGovern MP

NEC
Mary Turner*
Paddy Lillis
Wendy Nicholls

CLPs and Regions
Charlotte Hale
Chris Hughes
Dawn Elliott
Diane Green
Fiona Twycross
Helena Dollimore
John Wiseman
Judith Blake
Lara Norris
Nick Ireland
Stephanie Peacock

Affiliates
Grace Skelton
John Hannett
Siobhan Endean

Elected Reps
Bill Esterson MP
Catherine West
Steve Bullock
Julie Ward

* Co-convenor

Policy Development

Ensuring that all children have access to a world class education is core to Labour’s commitment to delivering social justice and tackling the inequality that is holding our country back. The Education and Children Policy Commission is tasked with considering all aspects of education policy development, from childcare and the early years, through primary and secondary school, to opportunities for young people post-16. A key theme that runs throughout the Commission’s work is the drive to deliver an education system that harnesses the talent and potential of all children and young people.

The Education and Children Policy Commission began its year by hosting a seminar at the 2014 Labour Party Annual Conference in Manchester. The Commission’s Co-convenor, Mary Turner, led the discussion on key challenges and priorities for policy in supporting our children and young people. The event was well attended, leading to lively discussion on contemporary issues. Shadow Education Secretary Tristram Hunt provided an update of the discussions held at the National Policy Forum earlier in the year, thanking those that attended for their contribution to the Party’s education policy programme.

Conference delegates then had the opportunity to raise questions and points for discussion. Topics were wide-ranging and spanned from admissions to faith schools and grammar schools, to youth services, the Education Maintenance Allowance and tuition fees. Other points discussed included childcare and the threat to Sure Start Children’s Centres, the universal infant free school meals initiative, the role of
the local authority in Labour’s plans for Directors of School Standards, and improving the quality of apprenticeships.

In November, the Commission met to discuss the education priorities for Labour’s manifesto drawing on the NPF agreement. Commission members suggested that technical and vocational education should be front and centre in the manifesto, with weight given to improving the quantity and quality of apprenticeships and Labour’s offer of a clear route through education and into a career for those young people not pursuing the traditional route into university. The development of a new careers advice policy, guaranteeing young people independent information and guidance on both academic and vocational qualifications, was also welcomed. It was agreed that these policies, alongside a new Higher Education announcement, which would form the pledge to reduce tuition fees to £6,000 per year, would provide a strong sense of Labour’s vision of developing an education system that delivers for all young people regardless of their background, and supports them to make choices about their future that are right for them.

Alongside transforming vocational education, other issues that were seen as a priority for the manifesto included Labour’s offer of extending free childcare, plans for ensuring that all children benefit from high quality teaching, compulsory sex and relationship education, and promoting an emphasis on a broad and balanced curriculum that considers both arts and sciences as important subjects.

During the meeting, the Commission also welcomed the Party’s recent announcement of its plans to introduce a new ‘Schools Partnership Standard’, which would require private schools to form a meaningful partnership with a state school in order to continue to receive state subsidised business rates relief that they currently benefit from. Commission members agreed that this policy fit with the overarching vision of Labour’s schools policy programme, with its focus on collaboration between schools to drive up standards and ending the fragmentation of our schools system.

**Labour’s Manifesto**

The Education and Children Policy Commission met late in 2014 to discuss its priorities for the General Election manifesto, based on its work over the previous four years and the contents of the policy programme agreed at Annual Conference. The manifesto was agreed at a Clause V meeting in April 2015, and contained a number of commitments shaped by the work of the policy commission and the contributions received over the course of the Agenda 2015 process.

**Technical and vocational education**

The education section of Labour’s manifesto began with clear commitments to invest in education from the early years through to post-16 education and skills, and to raise the standard and status of technical and vocational education. This builds on much of the work of the Commission over the past five years, whose members have championed the need to create a clear, vocational route to success that sits alongside high quality academic choices for young people. As part of the
plans to transform vocational education and following discussions held at the National Policy Forum meeting in July 2014, Labour’s manifesto also pledged a new, independent system of careers advice, offering personalised face-to-face guidance to support young people to make the best choices for their future.

Teacher quality

Labour’s plan to raise the quality and status of teaching was another central theme of the education content of the manifesto. This began with the commitment that under a Labour government every teacher would need to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Policies outlining new career routes for teachers who are expert in their subject, high quality continuing professional development for the workforce, and a new School Leadership Institute to support headteachers and improve school leadership followed this minimum guarantee.

School structures

Over the past cycle of policy development, a key issue has been school structures and the current Government’s fragmentation of the schools system. Following discussions at the National Policy Forum, it was agreed that in a One Nation education system parents and local communities should have a greater say in the school systems that serve them, with local support on hand to drive up standards. Labour’s manifesto pledged to deliver a system of robust local oversight for schools, with new Directors of School Standards at a local level to monitor performance, intervene in underperforming schools and support them to improve. As part of this policy, where a majority of local parents have concerns about underperformance, or a dip in standards, they would be able to call in their local Director of School Standards to hold a school to account.

The early years

The manifesto reaffirmed Labour’s support for the early years, with commitments to protect the early years budget and prioritise early intervention to give children and parents the best start in family life. Key pledges also included restoring and strengthening the role of Sure Start children’s centres and helping families by expanding free childcare from 15 to 25 hours per week for working parents of three and four-year-olds, paid for with an increase in the bank levy.

Collaboration in the schools system

The manifesto included plans to ensure private schools do more to contribute to raising standards in state education to justify receiving business rates relief, which is worth hundreds of millions of pounds. As a condition for receiving this state subsidy, private schools will be required to form a meaningful partnership with a school, or cluster of schools, in the state sector. There was also a clear pledge to end the wasteful Free Schools programme.

Support for vulnerable children

Alongside policies to raise the quality and status of teaching, the manifesto included plans for improving training for teachers working with children with special educational needs and disabilities, and increased support for children in kinship (family and friends) care and their families, a group too
often overlooked and undervalued. The manifesto also reiterated Labour's support for Frontline and its innovative approach to training social workers, and Teach First. As part of Labour's approach to the curriculum, the manifesto committed to introducing compulsory age-appropriate sex and relationship education in state schools, including working with schools to stop the blight of homophobic bullying.

**Current Issues**

**The early years**

The earliest years of a child's life are vital. The gap in achievement emerges long before a child starts primary school, with children from poorer backgrounds estimated to already be 19 months behind their more advantaged peers when they start school. Yet despite the important role that early years services play in child development, the Government's record is woeful. Over the past five years, the Tories have presided over the closure or hollowing out of hundreds of Sure Start children's centres, leaving many vulnerable families without the support they need. This is highlighted by many of the submissions received by the Commission that raised the loss of Sure Start centres in their local areas and how painfully this was felt by communities. The Commission agrees that Sure Start and in particular, early intervention to tackle the root causes of problems, should remain a priority for Labour.

Getting the early years wrong can have serious long-term consequences for individual children, society and our economy. Despite this the Government is not planning to invest in education and protect the budget for the early years of a child's life. Not only is this likely to continue to confine Britain to its status as a country that allows a child's background to define how they get on in life, but it could widen existing educational inequality that children experience. The Commission believes that the earliest years of child's development – zero to five – should be viewed with the same importance as a child's time at school. We consider this a crucial step in achieving the goal of ending educational inequality in this country once and for all.

**School structures**

The Education and Adoptions Bill that has been presented to Parliament will see the Tories continue with and expand their approach of simply changing the structure of a school when it fails. Over the past five years we have seen that this approach has failed to deliver the high standards that are so badly needed for all children in the country. Sadly many local areas that were underperforming in 2010 are still struggling today and many have got worse. Our schools system is sorely lacking the tough local oversight that is necessary to identify problems and intervene early to fix them.

Whilst the Commission supports academy status as one option for turning around failing schools, unlike the Tories we realise that raising standards and tackling underperformance requires far more than just this. Submissions received by the Commission reflect the need for a much stronger focus on raising the quality of classroom teaching and school leadership, greater collaboration between schools at a local level and more devolution of decision-taking powers to local areas than is currently the case. The Commission strongly believes that all schools,
regardless of their type, should be held to account.

**School places**

With two in five councils forecasting that they will have more primary-age pupils than school places by September 2016, rising to more than half in 2017 and three in five in 2018, the issue of better planning for school places will be a key priority for Labour over the next Parliament. The Tories have still not set out how they are going to tackle this serious issue and they are refusing to change tack and prioritise spending where there are shortages of school places, continuing instead with their plans to spend hundreds of millions on Free Schools in areas where there are already enough places. At the same time more and more young children are being crammed into large classes and parents are finding it harder to get their child a place at their local school.

**Teacher quality and recruitment**

Over the past few years the burgeoning crisis in initial teacher training and teacher recruitment has become palpable. The Commission has heard from experts and received many submissions questioning the impact of this Government's policies on the teaching profession. Poor rhetoric, increasing workloads, and undermining the status of the profession by removing the requirement for teachers to be qualified has seen the number of teachers quitting rise to a ten year high. The combination of these issues alongside the Government's botched handling of teacher recruitment has led to the situation where many are considering whether the country will have an adequate supply of qualified teachers in all subjects to educate the next generation over the coming years. For Britain to be starting this parliament with questions over the teacher supply and school places shortages is a damning indictment of the last Government's record on education.

**The curriculum**

Currently academies and Free Schools have the freedom to innovate in the curriculum, whilst local authority maintained schools cannot. This has created a fragmented and divisive schools system. The Commission believes that a school should not have to change its structure just to gain freedoms and that all schools, and not just academies, should have the freedoms that raise standards to meet the needs of their local area. Labour's priority will be to ensure that alongside robust local oversight, all schools have the freedoms academies can use to innovate and raise standards, such as freedom over the curriculum, trusting teachers to get on with the job. We will continue to insist that all schools teach a core subject entitlement, including English, maths and science.

Throughout the year, submissions received to the Commission have referred to various issues relating to the curriculum, from the side-lining of the arts to compulsory sex and relationship education. Commission members feel strongly that all schools should deliver a “broad and balanced curriculum” so that every child is given a great education. The Commission also recognises the need to develop a clear, vocational route through education and into a career for young people not choosing the traditional academic path to university – a policy issue that has and continues to be sorely neglected by this Government.
Health and well-being at school

The impact of a child's physical and mental health across their school life is hugely significant. Throughout the year, the Commission discussed the importance of ensuring all children have opportunities to play sport, access to healthy food at school, and support for their social and emotional well-being to help them concentrate fully at school. Following discussions held at the National Policy Forum meeting, it was agreed that Labour would continue with the universal free school meals initiative for all infants in English primary schools, and the Commission will monitor the delivery of this programme in this Parliament. With the amount of time spent taking part in PE at school falling well below two hours a week and reports of a rise in the number of children with mental health issues, supporting the health and well-being of children at school will remain firmly on the agenda over the next five years.

Post-16 opportunities

Throughout the year the Commission has focused on a range of issues that affect opportunities for young people from the age of 16, including increasing the number of high quality apprenticeships, widening access to university, and guaranteeing opportunities for careers advice and work experience. This reflects the breadth of submissions received by the Commission, which have also covered concerns over Further Education funding cuts that have seen the sector suffer, and developing a better system for financing Higher Education.

With youth unemployment still worryingly prevalent, many young people are extremely anxious about the future. The Tories' plans to turn university maintenance grants into loans will see poorer students graduate with even more debt than their peers. This could have disastrous implications for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who are currently considering applying to university. Whilst the Government continues to show a shocking ambivalence towards both vocational education and widening access to Higher Education, the Commission recognises the challenges we face as a country and is determined to keep transforming opportunities for young people post-16 on the agenda.

Submissions

All submissions received by the Policy Commission are circulated to members ahead of the next meeting for consideration as part of our discussions on policy development. In the last year the Education and Children Communities Policy Commission has received and considered submissions on the following topics.

• Academies
• Admissions
• Apprenticeships
• Bullying
• Careers advice
• Charitable status of schools
• Child poverty
• Child protection
• Childcare costs
• Children’s centres
• Discipline
• Early years
• Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
• English Baccalaureate
• Faith schools
• Free school meals
• Free schools
• Further education
• Grammar schools
• Grandparent’s rights
• Higher education (HE)
• International students
• Languages
• Maths and English to 18
• Mental health
• Ofsted
• Online learning
• Political education
• Private schools
• Personal, social and health education (PSHE)
• Reading methods
• School accountability
• School buildings
• School funding
• School holidays
• School leaving age
• School travel costs
• Sex and relationship education (SRE)
• Support for new mothers
• Sure Start
• Teacher recruitment and retention
• Teacher workloads

• Teaching assistants
• Technical education
• Term time holidays
• Tuition fees
• University Technical Colleges (UTCs)
• Unqualified teachers
• Vocational education
• Vulnerable children
• Youth services
HEALTH AND CARE

Membership

**HM Opposition**
Andy Burnham MP*
Liz Kendall MP
Luciana Berger MP

**NEC**
Keith Birch*
Rachael Maskell MP
Conor McGinn MP

**CLPs and Regions**
Lucy Anderson MEP
Peter Box
Simon Burgess
Nick Forbes
Joanne Harding
Donna Hutton
Katrina Murray
Douglas Naysmith
Sandra Samuels
Denise Thursfield

**Affiliates**
Neeraj Patil
Beryl Shepherd
Eleanor Smith
Martin Rathfelder
Maggie Ryan

**Elected Reps**
Debbie Abrahams MP
Angela Cornforth

* Co-convenor

Policy Development

The Health and Care Policy Commission is concerned with Labour’s policy direction and thinking on health and care. It considers current issues, including service reconfigurations, access to primary care and social care reform. A key focus of the policy commission in the past year has been consideration of priorities for the Manifesto.

At Annual Conference 2014, a policy seminar took place which provided an opportunity for delegates to discuss a variety of issues with the Health and Care Policy Commission. The seminar was attended by Keith Birch (Chair) and members of the shadow health team including Andy Burnham MP; Liz Kendall MP; Andrew Gwynne MP; Luciana Berger MP; Jamie Reed MP; Debbie Abrahams MP and Lord Phil Hunt.

Members of the Policy Commission updated delegates on the work of the Commission. Andy Burnham spoke about the need to shape services around the needs of the person, which requires the better integration of health and care services. Liz Kendall MP led a discussion on social care and the important role played by informal and formal carers while Luciana Berger MP spoke about the need for a greater focus on prevention and early intervention. Jamie Reed MP spoke about the need for better access and more accessible primary care, while Debbie Abrahams MP spoke about health inequalities. A wide ranging discussion took place on the effect that deep cuts to local authority budgets are having on the provision of social care. Many delegates raised concerns about the funding of, and the current crisis in, social care. Many were concerned about the varying
quality of care that people received in care homes and that all care should be of the highest standard. Concerns were also raised about the use of Zero Hours Contracts.

During the seminar many delegates raised their concerns about the increasing role of the private and independent sectors in providing health and social care services. Delegates also discussed the importance of public health and the wider determinants of health with many raising the need to focus on prevention and early intervention.

Conference also took the opportunity to debate and agree a composite on health and social care. The debate noted that David Cameron promised to protect the NHS but he has broken that promise and is privatising the service.

The Policy Commission convened a teleconference in December to discuss their key priorities for the manifesto. Andy Burnham and Luciana Berger represented the health team. Members of the commission felt that it was important to emphasise our commitment to repeal the health and social care act and protect the NHS from TTIP. Members also felt that the manifesto should emphasise the benefits of integration and the need to improve access to GP services and improve social care.

The policy commission also welcomed the publication of a number of Policy Review papers: Protecting Children, Empowering All: Labour’s New Approach to Public Health in the 21st Century; Labour’s 10 year plan for health and care and; The Mentally Healthy Society: The report of the Taskforce on Mental Health in Society, all of which helped to inform the commission’s thinking.

**Labour’s Manifesto**

The Health and Care Policy Commission met late in 2014 to discuss its priorities for the General Election manifesto, based on its work over the previous four years and the contents of the policy programme agreed at Annual Conference. The manifesto was agreed at a Clause V meeting in April 2015, and contained a number of commitments shaped by the work of the policy commission and the contributions received over the course of the Agenda 2015 process.

**Restoring the right values**

The manifesto committed a Labour government to repealing the Government’s Health and Social Care Act; to scrap the competition regime and restore proper democratic accountability for the NHS. It also included a commitment to establishing a sensible commissioning framework, based on the principle of an NHS preferred provider, to stop the drive towards privatisation and make sure that NHS services are not destabilised by competition and fragmentation.

**Joining up care from home to hospital**

The current system is too fragmented and was not designed for the growing numbers of people living with chronic conditions or multiple needs. Our manifesto set out plans to create a whole person approach: a single service to meet all of a person’s health and care needs, underpinned by new rights for patients.
Better access to primary care and diagnostic tests

Our manifesto recognised that patients are finding it harder to see a GP and that quicker access to health services is better for people’s health outcomes. The manifesto made a commitment to guarantee people a GP appointment within 48 hours, and on the same day for those who need it. It also committed to the creation of a Cancer Treatments Fund so that patients have access to the latest drugs, surgery and radiotherapy. It also committed to speeding up the time that people wait for cancer tests making the commitment that by 2020, patients will wait no longer than one week for vital cancer tests.

Investing in staff so the NHS has time to care

A key focus of the manifesto was a commitment to the Time to Care Fund. Labour committed to invest in 20,000 more nurses, 8,000 more GPs, and 3,000 more midwives, paid for by a Mansion Tax on properties worth over £2 million, a levy on tobacco firms, and by tackling tax avoidance.

Giving mental health the priority it deserves

The manifesto committed to giving mental health the same priority as physical health, giving people the same right to psychological therapies as they currently have to drugs and medical treatments.

Social care:

The growing social care crisis is one of the biggest challenges we face as a society. The manifesto reaffirmed our support for measures to cap the costs of care and improving the quality of care services. The manifesto also stated that Labour would work with local authorities and care providers to end time-limited 15-minute visits, and to introduce year-of-care budgets to incentivise better care in the home.

Better public health

A greater emphasis on prevention and public health is essential, not just to improve outcomes and tackle inequalities, but to ensure the NHS remains sustainable. Our manifesto set a new national ambition to improve the uptake of physical activity and take targeted action on those high strength, low cost alcohol products that fuel problem drinking. It also committed to setting maximum permitted levels of sugar, salt and fat in foods marketed substantially to children.

Current Issues

Social Care

Many submissions to the Commission have raised concerns about the impact that cuts to local authority budgets that pay for social care are having on the provision of services and on the NHS. In particular, the commission were concerned that figures from the Health and Social Care Information Centre showed that there are now 300,000 fewer older people getting vital care services compared to 2010, and many older people are receiving care
visits limited to just 15 minutes. The Commission noted figures showing that billions of pounds have been cut from adult social care budgets since 2010, demonstrating the true scale of the care crisis unfolding under this Government.

The Commission are concerned that tighter eligibility criteria means that more and more elderly and disabled people are being denied vital services to help them get up, washed, dressed and fed and that families are left struggling to cope and seeing their own health suffer too. Of particular concern to the Commission is that more people are ending up needing expensive hospital or residential care when they don’t need to, because the support they require isn’t in place in the community.

The Commission has also noted that carers make a vital contribution to our local communities and to our economy. Across the UK there are 6.5 million unpaid carers of whom many receive no financial support of any kind and this number is expected to rise to 9 million over the next 25 years.

**Accident and Emergency**

Many submissions to the Commission have continued to express concern at the ongoing crisis in Accident and Emergency (A&E), which has resulted in patients being held in the back of ambulances outside of A&E, more people waiting in A&E, increased emergency admissions and more patients waiting longer to be admitted into hospital from A&E.

The Commission are particularly concerned by official figures from NHS England which show that since 2009/10, the number of people forced to wait longer than four hours in a hospital A&E has quadrupled. In the last year, 1.4 million people waited longer than four-hours in A&E. The Commission believes that record numbers of patients, who have been let down elsewhere, have turned to hospital A&Es for support, in particular older people who have lost social care. The commission noted that one in four now wait a week or more or can’t see a GP at all which has led to increasing numbers of people coming through the doors of A&E departments.

The crisis in A&E is having an impact across the NHS and is a problem of this Government’s making. Figures show that record numbers are attending A&E and thousands of older people are trapped in hospital because the services they require aren’t in place, such as social care. Pressure is backing up through A&E, ambulance response times are getting worse and waiting lists are a seven-year high.

**Public Health**

The commission are concerned that the Tory-led Government has failed to provide the answers on public health that we need and that they are unwilling to stand up to vested interests or are ideologically opposed to intervening in markets.

The Commission also noted that on tobacco, the Government has failed to stand up to vested interests and it has been left to Labour to lead the debate in opposition by winning the fight for a ban on smoking in cars with children.

**Mental Health**

Many submissions to the Commission have expressed concern that hundreds of mental health beds in acute wards
and intensive care units have been lost. The Commission is concerned that spending on mental health has fallen for the first time in decade and that spending on child and adolescent mental health services has fallen by £50 million. The Commission believe that although money is tight in all our public, squeezing budgets for mental health services is a false economy which results in hundreds of thousands of people who could recover with treatment being denied help and left to suffer, often at greater cost further down the line.

**Staffing and service provision**

Under the Tories, nurse numbers have failed to keep pace with demand. A survey of nursing staff shows that more than half of nurses believe their ward or unit remains dangerously understaffed. There are fewer GPs per head of population, and the Government’s own taskforce has declared “that there is a GP workforce crisis”.

The commission note that nurse training places have been cut which has resulted in 8,000 fewer nurse training places during this Parliament than if numbers had been retained at 2010 levels. This has led to ballooning spending on agency staff and spiralling recruitment from overseas.

The Commission is also concerned about the deterioration in service standards against key areas, for example, the two month cancer target has now been missed since the beginning of 2014; ambulance are missing response time targets and referral to treatment time targets have also been missed.
Submissions

All submissions received by the Policy Commission are circulated to members ahead of the next meeting for consideration as part of our discussions on policy development. In the last year the Health and Care Policy Commission has received and considered submissions on the following topics.

• Advertising in waiting rooms
• Reducing pressure on A&E
• Annual prescription pass
• Care in the community
• Care of the elderly
• Community services facilities
• Costs of criminal injury
• Dementia
• Disability
• Drug compensation fund
• Electro-hypersensitivity
• Family carers payment
• Food labelling
• Frontline staff in NHS decision making
• Funding the NHS
• GP referral letter fees
• GP user fees
• Health and wellbeing
• Homecare providers
• Hospital chaplains
• HPV and boys
• Immune based disease
• Inflammatory Bowel Disease
• Marketisation of the NHS
• Maternity
• Mental health discrimination
• Mental health provision
• Motobility scheme
• National Insurance
• Neurofibromatosis
• NHS assets
• NHS patient listeners
• Nurse training
• Nursing homes
• Operations
• Parkinsons
• Patient autonomy
• Prescription charges
• Private healthcare
• Seven-day NHS
• Smoking age
• Social care
• VAT on medication
• Vulnerable adults and isolation in hospital.
BETTER POLITICS
POLICY COMMISSION
Policy Development

The Better Politics Policy Commission considers Labour’s policy and thinking on constitutional and democratic reform, equality, civil society and participation and engagement in our political system.

At the Better Politics policy seminar at Annual Conference in Manchester last year, many delegates were in attendance to ask questions and share comments on a variety of issues across the Commission’s remit. The panel of Shadow Ministers from Labour’s Justice, Equalities and Cabinet Office teams was chaired by NEC co-convenor, Johanna Baxter, and members of the Commission were there to hear everyone’s views. During the discussion a broad range of topics were raised including: reform of the House of Lords, workplace equality reps and pay transparency measures, Individual Electoral Registration changes and the danger of people falling off the register, and the commitment in Ed Miliband’s speech to lower the voting age to 16. In light of the Scottish Referendum result, several contributions were made on the subject of further devolution, including to the north of England, and what the proposed Constitutional Convention should contain.

The Commission held a meeting in December to examine the outcomes of the NPF process culminating at Milton Keynes last July, and to discuss what the priorities should be for the manifesto. Shadow Women and Equalities Minister, Gloria De Piero, updated the meeting about current key issues in her remit. These included equal pay, childcare, maternity discrimination, and trans-discrimination. She noted how many of our policies would benefit women in particular including banning exploitative...
zero hours contracts and scrapping the unfair Bedroom Tax. In the discussion that followed, commission members made points on the minimum wage, maternity and paternity leave, maternity rights during pregnancy and Work Capability Assessment and ATOS.

Sadiq Khan, Shadow Justice Secretary and Co-convenor spoke to the group about changes to Individual Electoral Registration and fears that millions of electors could be missing from the register. The Human Rights Act and recent Tory attacks on it were discussed. Commission members spoke about the need to protect the laws that enshrine and protect our rights. The Commission also discussed the proposals for a full Constitutional Convention rooted in our nations and regions, to address the need for further devolution in England and political reform of Westminster. It is the next stage of Labour's plan to ensure decisions are taken closer to the families and businesses they affect following proposals for further devolution to Scotland and new devolution to the English regions. Sadiq underlined how this should begin before the next election with every nation and region in the country engaged in a dialogue with the people about how power needs to be dispersed, not just in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, but in England too.

Labour’s Manifesto

The Better Politics Policy Commission met late in 2014 to discuss its priorities for the General Election manifesto, based on its work over the previous four years and the contents of the policy programme agreed at Annual Conference. The manifesto was agreed at a Clause V meeting in April 2015, and contained a number of commitments shaped by the work of the policy commission and the contributions received over the course of the Agenda 2015 process.

Votes at 16

As part of the NPF’s Milton Keynes agreement in 2014, the Labour Party pledged to lower the voting age to 16 for all UK elections. Last year’s referendum on Scottish independence demonstrated the impact this could have, with huge numbers of young people engaged in the argument and voting for the future of their country. The manifesto reaffirmed Labour’s commitment to lowering the voting age to 16, promising to bring it in before May 2016. The Commission believes that lowering the voting age to 16 for all UK elections, alongside improved citizenship education is of vital importance to the future of our democracy.

Political reform

Our manifesto commitment on replacing the House of Lords with a Senate of Nations and Regions followed intensive discussion on this issue at the NPF meeting in Milton Keynes in July 2014. This was alongside consideration of how English MPs can have a greater role in the scrutiny of legislation that affects only England. Both these matters would be part of the Constitutional Convention process that Labour called for to allow people across the country, not just politicians in Westminster, to consider. The manifesto also contained a pledge to take steps to ensure the move to individual registration does not leave millions unregistered, or lead to constituencies that fail to take into account all of the people that live
in them. This is a topic that has been examined in Commission meetings as a result of the number of submissions received on this issue, and was also part of NPF discussions on how to increase the completeness of the register.

Rights and equality

The Labour Party has always championed equality and led on challenging prejudice and discrimination. Our manifesto set out how we would continue on this path working to gain further progress in areas where more still needs to be done to ensure true equality. This included establishing a comprehensive race equality strategy to break down barriers still faced by BAME communities and building on our history of championing LGBT rights tackling homophobia with stronger laws here and with greater engagement abroad.

Women

The manifesto set out how we would go further in reducing discrimination against women. In the last five years progress to close the gender pay gap has slowed, more women are low paid and on zero-hours contracts than men and tens of thousands of women are being forced out of their job each year due to maternity discrimination. The manifesto stated that a Labour government would require large companies to publish their gender pay gap and strengthen the law against maternity discrimination. Where further action is needed we would enforce the relevant provisions of the Equality Act.

Representation

We want our Parliament to look more like the country it serves. Our manifesto committed us to achieving a better balance in Parliament of under-represented groups. Our aim is to go further and make sure all our national institutions, including Parliament, the police, judiciary, civil service and the boardrooms of our companies are more representative of our diverse country.

As well as key commitments in the General Election manifesto we also produced a range of ‘mini manifestos’ going into more detail about our approach and the measures we would take to achieve progress for women, disabled people, the LGBT community, older people, and BAME communities.

Current Issues

‘English votes for English laws’

Plans to introduce the Conservative election pledge of giving MPs from English constituencies an effective veto on laws affecting only England were included in the Queen’s Speech. Labour believes it is right to give English MPs a greater role in scrutinising legislation that only affects England, however, this issue should be looked at as part of a broader discussion of the future of the Union and devolution. Submissions received raised concerns that the Government must not do anything that could threaten to break up the Union by rushing this issue, or dealing with it in a piecemeal manner. Therefore these ideas should be considered as part of a Constitutional Convention process as Labour has called for. Suggestions that Scottish MPs should be excluded from
voting on taxation matters were not proposed by the Mackay Commission nor by the Smith Agreement which the Government is signed up to and which must be delivered. The Commission will continue to scrutinise this alongside other proposals for further devolution of the nations and regions.

**Devolution**

Labour supports devolution to all parts of England, as well as to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Many submissions have been made on this topic, especially in light of the Scottish referendum and the General Election results in Scotland. The Labour Party made a commitment to meet our promises to devolve further powers to Wales and Scotland. We are committed to ensuring that the ‘Vow’ is delivered in full as per the recommendations put forward by the cross-party Smith Commission to make the Scottish Parliament one of the most powerful devolved Parliaments in the world. The new devolution settlement needs to recognise the strength and security offered by being part of the United Kingdom and that means retaining the pooling and sharing of resources of the Barnett Formula. As we set out in our manifesto, we will work to the Government’s proposals give the Scottish Parliament the final say on social security and give the Scottish Parliament the power to top up UK benefits.

We support additional powers for Wales, following the Silk Commission and cross-party talks during the last Parliament, and we support the extension of devolution in the areas outlined. However, had Labour won the election, we would be going further than the Government in devolving powers over policing and over welfare to work. These changes need to be carefully scrutinised as they fundamentally change the nature of the current devolution settlement.

**Human Rights Act and ECHR**

Labour has always stood firmly behind the need to protect our Human Rights. We will not resile from them. But the Conservatives set out in their General Election manifesto their intention to scrap the Human Rights Act. Submissions have expressed concern that our rights are at risk.

Labour will oppose any attempt to damage or dilute the human rights protections in this country. Withdrawing from the European Convention on Human Rights would do incredible damage to the UK’s standing in the world and it is shocking that the Government should dither over this issue. As we celebrate the 800th anniversary of the signing of Magna Carta Britain’s commitment to individual human rights is increasingly at risk from this Government’s plans. The Human Rights Act 1998 is a modern day British Bill of Rights that protects basic rights, such as right to a fair trial, right to life and the right to privacy. It is a crucial check against unaccountable state power and vested interests, and has led to changes in the law, for example to protect the rights of old people, victims of rape and gay people. Labour is proud of Britain’s role in protecting and championing human rights across Europe and beyond. Other countries look up to the UK, and our moral authority as a member of the European Convention on Human Rights empowers us to demand change of those who have weaker human rights records. Labour will protect the laws that enshrine and protect our rights.
**Votes at 16**

Agenda 2015 gave us a specific focus on the topic of increasing young people’s engagement in politics and many submissions were received in response to this. The Commission believes that lowering the voting age to 16 for all UK elections, alongside improved citizenship education is extremely important for the future of our democracy. We need to learn the lessons of success in this area from the Scottish referendum. The Commission supports recent efforts to amend the European Union Referendum Bill to extend the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds so that young people can have their say over an issue of such importance to the future of our country and its place in the world. Furthermore, we support First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones in his efforts to seek to extend voting rights to 16 and 17 year olds as soon as possible as part of the devolution of powers to the Welsh Assembly in the Wales Bill.

**Equalities**

The last Government took us backwards with the most vulnerable people often being hardest hit by its policies. Over this and previous years, the Commission has prioritised discussion of how disadvantaged sectors of society are being impacted while looking at what measures would ensure further progress on Equalities. We wish to pay tribute to our colleague Nicholas Russell from Disability Labour who was instrumental in ensuring disability issues were prominently discussed as part of the NPF Process. Nicholas sadly died in August 2014 but the strong programme on disability rights agreed at Milton Keynes was in no small part the result of his tireless work. We will continue to push for progress and scrutinise how the new Government’s proposals affect these groups and the ongoing fight for equality in our society. This will include social mobility and examination of barriers in the workplace and what more can be done to open up access to people from ordinary backgrounds.

**Submissions**

All submissions received by the Policy Commission are circulated to members ahead of the next meeting for consideration as part of our discussions on policy development. In the last year the Better Politics Policy Commission has received and considered submissions on the following topics.

- Civil partnerships
- Civil Service
- Civil Society
- Constituency boundaries
- Data protection
- Devolution
- Disability
- Discrimination
- Electoral register and bailiff access
- Electoral register and employment
- Electoral registration and the missing millions
- Electronic and weekend voting
- English votes for English laws
- Equality in inheritance law
- EU referendum
- EU residents voting rights
- Expanding the role of the Constitutional Commission
• Ex-pat voting rights
• Freedom of Information Act
• Gender equality
• Gender pay gap
• House of Lords Reform
• Human Rights Act
• Individual Electoral Registration
• LGBT rights
• Maternity discrimination
• MP sanctions
• MP second jobs
• Northern Ireland
• Parliamentary representation
• Pay transparency measures
• Political donations
• Political reform
• Political transparency
• Positive political messaging
• Proportional Representation in local and General Elections
• Race Equality
• Scottish Referendum
• Singlism
• Social inequality and the UK workforce
• The French election model
• The Union
• The voting system
• Trans hate crime
• Trust in politics
• Volunteering
• Voter engagement
• Votes at 16
• Wales

• Work Capability Assessments and ATOS
• Workplace equality reps
• Young people and politics
BRITAIN’S GLOBAL ROLE
POLICY COMMISSION
BRITAIN’S GLOBAL ROLE POLICY COMMISSION

Membership

**HM Opposition**
Douglas Alexander MP*
Vernon Coaker MP
Jim Murphy MP**
Mary Creagh MP***

**NEC**
Ellie Reeves*
Susan Lewis
Glenis Willmott MEP

**CLPs and Regions**
James Adams
Fiona Farmer
Glyn Ford
Sam Gurney
Clare Lally
Alex Mayer
George McManus
Clare Moody
Rory Palmer
Lucy Seymour-Smith
Nick Wallis

**Affiliates**
Billy Hayes
Mary Hutchinson
Gloria Mills
Dave Quayle

**Elected Reps**
Richard Howitt MEP
Roger Lawrence
Bridget Phillipson MP
Keir Fitch

* Co-convenor
** Until November 2014
*** Replaced by Jim Murphy in November 2014

Policy Development

The Britain’s Global Role Policy Commission deals with issues relating to foreign affairs, defence and international development.

While today’s global environment brings with it significant opportunities from a growing international interdependence, it also brings significant challenges. In the past year, the Policy Commission has discussed the new security threats emanating from terrorist groups in the Middle East, as well as the re-emergence of old threats in the form of Russian aggression in Ukraine.

The Commission has also witnessed the devastating effects the Ebola outbreak has had in West Africa, and has debated the need to strengthen public health systems in developing countries.

Closer to home, the Commission has discussed the impact of a referendum on the UK’s membership of the European Union, and has considered EU reforms. Many of today’s challenges are global, with threats often transcending national borders. No state can hope to successfully tackle them alone. From tackling climate change and terrorism, to eradicating extreme poverty, the Policy Commission believes we have a unique responsibility to reject an inward-looking approach that suggests the UK should simply turn our backs on the world. Only by being engaged internationally and working with our partners can we hope to build a better, safer and more just world, in which everyone can reach their full potential and prosper.

The Britain’s Global Role Policy commission hosted a policy seminar at the 2014 Annual Conference, offering
delegates the opportunity to share their views with Shadow Cabinet Ministers on a wide range of matters concerning foreign affairs, defence and international development. Around 100 delegates participated in the seminar, contributing to a lively discussion on issues ranging from the crisis in Gaza over the summer and the deteriorating situation in Ukraine, to human rights and multilateral nuclear disarmament.

Following Annual Conference, the Britain’s Global Role Policy Commission met in November to discuss the process of turning the policy programme into an election manifesto. Vernon Coaker MP, Mary Creagh MP and John Spellar MP represented the Shadow teams, providing updates on the work of their respective teams and facilitating the discussion.

On international development, attendees discussed the need to include a commitment to strengthening public health systems in developing countries in the wake of the Ebola outbreak, as well as the need for greater protection of workers’ rights and human rights.

On foreign affairs, discussion focused on the need to emphasise our EU reform agenda and Labour’s commitment to ensuring that the NHS will be protected in the final text of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

A brief discussion took place on the UK’s nuclear deterrent. Attendees welcomed Labour’s renewed focus on and commitment to multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, while also acknowledging the heavy reliance of North West England and Scotland on the defence jobs created as a result of this capability.

Labour’s Manifesto

The Britain’s Global Role Policy Commission met late in 2014 to discuss its priorities for the General Election manifesto, based on its work over the previous four years and the contents of the policy programme agreed at Annual Conference. The manifesto was agreed at a Clause V meeting in April 2015, and contained a number of commitments shaped by the work of the policy commission and the contributions received over the course of the Agenda 2015 process.

Europe

The manifesto reflected Labour’s belief that it is in Britain’s interests to remain at the heart of a reformed EU and the Party’s desire to see the EU operate in the best interests of our country. It set out a reform agenda that would help deliver a Europe focused on jobs and growth, not simply more austerity and rising unemployment. It included a commitment to ensuring that those coming to Britain from the EU to look for work contribute to our economy, and to our society. The manifesto detailed reforms to immigration and social security rules, as well as our commitment to work for stronger transitional controls. Finally, the manifesto stated that Labour will legislate for a lock guaranteeing that there can be no transfer of powers from Britain to the European Union without the consent of the British public through an in/out referendum.
Human Rights

Labour’s manifesto outlined the Party’s commitment to universal human rights and to putting human rights at the heart of our foreign policy. Labour pledged to promote women’s rights and to join with those campaigning to attain gender equality, the eradication of poverty and inclusive economic growth worldwide. Labour also committed to appointing a Global Envoy for Religious Freedom, and to establishing a multi-faith advisory council on religious freedom within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. In line with the agreement reached by the NPF, the manifesto detailed Labour’s pledge to appoint an International LGBT Rights Envoy to promote respect for the human rights of LGBT people, and work towards the decriminalisation of homosexuality worldwide.

Defence

The manifesto outlined Labour’s commitment to ensuring the UK has responsive, high-tech Armed Forces, with the capability to respond to emerging, interconnected threats, in an unpredictable security landscape. It stated that Labour would conduct a Strategic Defence and Security Review in the first year of government, with an inclusive national debate on the security and defence challenges facing the country.

In line with the agreement reached by the NPF, the manifesto detailed how Labour would strengthen the covenant between our nation and our Armed Forces, veterans and their families. This included Labour’s pledge to introduce legislation to make discrimination against members of our Armed Forces illegal, and to enshrine the Military Covenant in the NHS Constitution.

Climate Change

Labour’s manifesto included the Party’s commitment to working to ensure global action to hold warming below two degrees. Labour pledged to expand the role of the Department for International Development (DFID) to mitigate the risks of a changing climate, and support sustainable livelihoods for the world’s poorest people. The manifesto outlined Labour’s desire for an ambitious agreement on climate change at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) conference in Paris in December. It stated that the Party will make the case for ambitious emissions targets for all countries, strengthened every five years on the basis of a scientific assessment of the progress towards the below two degree goal. Labour committed to pushing for a goal of net zero global emissions in the second half of this century, for transparent and universal rules for measuring, verifying and reporting emissions, and for an equitable deal in which richer countries provide support to poorer nations in combatting climate change.

International Development

The manifesto outlined Labour’s commitment to continue to spend 0.7 per cent of GNI on development assistance. It detailed how Labour would
work with other countries at this year’s Sustainable Development Goals Summit to unite the world to eradicate extreme poverty, tackle growing economic inequality, and place human rights at the heart of development. Labour pledged to establish a Centre for Universal Health Coverage to provide the support, encouragement, and global partnerships needed to help countries provide free healthcare. The manifesto detailed the Party’s commitment to extending the sharing of tax information to developing countries, increasing DFID’s help to governments to collect more of their own taxes, to tackling corruption, and ensuring good governance.

Current Issues

European Reform

The European elections in 2014 saw the rise of anti-EU parties across Europe, reflecting in part widespread discontent with persistent economic stagnation in the Eurozone, high unemployment and low standards of living. While Eurozone economic growth accelerated in the first quarter of 2015, concerns remain about its stability, especially given the current negotiations with Greece regarding its bailout deal. With the EU under increasing scrutiny, focus is shifting to European reform. In Britain, the election of the Conservative Party has made a referendum on Britain’s membership of the EU inevitable. While the Prime Minister promises to agree the changes Britain needs, he continues to withhold the specifics of his reform agenda from the British public, while risking Britain sleepwalking towards the EU exit.

European reform has been a prominent topic of discussion for the Policy Commission this year, with several submissions received on various aspects of Britain’s relationship with Europe. The Commission focused on a range of issues highlighted by the submissions, such as reform of social security rules for EU migrants, improving access to decent jobs, and the impact of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, together with the investor-state dispute settlement arbitration mechanism, on the NHS and public services more generally. The Policy Commission firmly believes that Britain’s interests are best served by the country remaining at the heart of a reformed EU. However, the Commission also recognises that Europe needs to change and reform in order for it to work better for Britain. The Commission will continue to help develop Labour policies in this area as it campaigns for Britain stay in the EU. The Policy Commission will also help Labour scrutinise any proposals from the Government on EU reform and the Prime Minister’s approach to European negotiations where British national interest is at stake.

Strategic Defence and Security Review

Today’s security landscape differs considerably to that of fifty years ago. Within the past year alone, we have witnessed Russia attempt to reassert its influence in Eastern Europe with the illegal annexation of Crimea, ISIL spread its barbarism across the Middle East, and the decline of Libya into a failed state. As new threats continue to develop and old threats re-emerge, the future is anything but certain. Faced with security challenges of varying nature on multiple fronts, together with a squeezed Defence budget, Britain is going to have to be more strategic with the use of her Armed Forces. In this context, the next Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), scheduled for autumn 2015,
will be crucial in providing our Armed Forces with the strategic vision they require. Britain simply cannot afford a repeat of the failure’s of the previous Government’s 2010 review which left gaps in Government figures and gaps in Britain’s military capability.

A number of submissions received by the Commission touched upon the deteriorating security situation in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The Policy Commission believes that the EU should be prepared to step up sanctions against Russia if President Putin fails to implement the Minsk Agreements and abide by the implementation plan agreed earlier this year. On the threat posed by ISIL, the Policy Commission supports UK participation in the international coalition’s air strikes and believes it is right that the UK answers the Iraqi government’s calls for assistance. However, the Commission recognises that military action alone will not defeat ISIL. A long-term multinational political strategy is needed for the region, in particular, the provision of ongoing support for an inclusive, sovereign and democratic Iraqi government that can push back on ISIL advances and restore stability and security.

Given the scale of the challenges before us, the Commission believes that in the months leading up to the next SDSR, a more inclusive and open discussion on defence and security is required. Britain must be ambitious but realistic about the role that the UK Armed Forces can play in the world. We will scrutinise the Government’s process around the next National Security Strategy and SDSR, as well as the documents themselves, in order to ensure our Armed Forces are equipped to meet the most pressing security challenges of today.

International Development

This September, world leaders will gather at a UN Special Summit in New York to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals - the framework for the post-2015 development agenda. Although significant progress has been made in the years since the Millennium Development Goals were agreed in 2000, considerable challenges still remain. Over six and a half million children under the age of five each year die from preventable causes. 31 million girls do not attend primary school. A billion people suffer each year because they cannot obtain the health services they need. And more than a billion people still live in extreme poverty in our world. While these facts may reflect an unequal, unjust and unfair world, they are not immutable or immovable. It is imperative that Britain seizes this unique opportunity to deliver real change and leads internationally with the power of example, urging other countries to commit to the 0.7 per cent aid target.

The Policy Commission received several submissions on matters related to international development throughout the year. The recent outbreak of Ebola in West Africa put into sharp contrast how quickly diseases can spread across state borders, the importance of strong health systems and how important it is to ensure countries are safeguarded against future pandemics. The Policy Commission calls for an ambitious global agreement for the Sustainable Development Goals, and for tackling inequality and climate change, as well as promoting decent work for all and universal health coverage (UHC), to be put at the heart of international development. The Policy Commission also believe the sharing of tax information must be
extended to developing countries and country-by-country reporting must be made available to all, requiring large multinational companies to publish the key pieces of information needed to assess the amount of tax they pay. As the Government continue to negotiate the Sustainable Development Goals, the Policy Commission will examine the proposals for the successor development framework.

Climate Change

Climate change presents a grave challenge to security, food and humankind. If progress is not made to stop global temperatures rising more than two degrees, then the development gains of the last twenty years will be lost and millions will fall back into poverty. In December 2015, the UN is holding a summit in Paris to agree a binding global agreement to tackle climate change. This presents an opportunity for action that cannot be missed. Over recent months the EU, the US and, most importantly, China, have all made substantial commitments to cut the growth of greenhouse gas emissions. This represents important progress but every country needs to be challenged to be as ambitious as possible. As the floods in Britain showed last year, this is an issue of national – as well as global – security. We must be guided by the science, which shows that emissions are higher than anticipated and some effects are coming through more quickly than foreseen. The weaker the action now, the more rapid and costly the reductions will need to be later.

The Policy Commission believes climate change should be a stand-alone goal in the new set of Sustainable Development Goals, and wants to see an ambitious agreement at the UNFCCC conference in Paris in December. Ahead of that conference, the Policy Commission will work with Labour to ensure that climate change is on the agenda of major summits, such as the G7, UN General Assembly and the Commonwealth, and to hold the Government to account as it pledges to seek effective global collaboration to sustain economic recovery and to combat climate change.

The Middle East

The threat posed by ISIL continues to sweep across the Middle East, with the terrorist organisation carrying out barbaric atrocities throughout the territories it controls in Iraq and Syria. ISIL continue to recruit and radicalise those overseas and the recent terror attacks in Tunisia, France and Kuwait are a stark reminder of the existential threat facing the West, as fears of an attack on British soil increase. In response to a request for assistance by the Iraqi government, British Armed Forces have conducted air strikes over the country against ISIL targets. The UK's military response is part of a wider international strategy, involving a coalition of more than 60 countries, including the US, Arab and European nations. Although the UK is currently conducting surveillance operations over Syria, the UK has not joined other coalition partners in extending airstrikes to ISIL targets in Syria. Should the Government bring forward proposals to extend airstrikes to Syria, Labour will carefully consider these and we stand ready to work with the Government to defeat ISIL. As Vernon Coaker MP recently stated in Parliament, “we all need to be clear about what difference any action would make to our objective of defeating ISIL, about the nature of any action, its objectives and the legal basis. Any potential action must command the support of other nations...
in the region, including Iraq and the coalition already taking action in Syria.”

The UN estimates that 12.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in Syria, while a further 7.6 million Syrians have internally displaced and 4 million have fled to neighbouring countries. In response to the crisis, the UK has allocated £900 million since 2012 to over 30 implementing partners (including United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organisations and the Red Cross) to meet the immediate needs of vulnerable people in Syria and of refugees in the region. A further £9.5 million from the UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund has been allocated by DFID to support local capacity and build longer term stability. Additionally, the UK government is also providing £59.5 million in humanitarian aid to support people across Iraq who have fled from ISIL. Over 8 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in Iraq, with over 3 million internally displaced Iraqis.

Submissions

All submissions received by the Policy Commission are circulated to members ahead of the next meeting for consideration as part of our discussions on policy development. In 2014-15, the Britain’s Global Role Policy Commission received and considered submissions on the following topics:

- Afghanistan
- Aid
- Armed Forces facilities
- Armed Forces medals
- Arms trade
- Asylum
- British Investment Bank
- Climate change
- Colombia
- Defence spending
- Ebola
- Education
- EU migration
- EU referendum
- EU reform
- Ex-pats
- Freedom of press
- Gender equality
- Intellectual property
- International development
- Iraq
- ISIL
- LGBT rights
- Middle East Peace Process
- Nuclear deterrent/Trident
- Occupied Palestinian territories
- Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)
- Population
- Religious persecution
- Renewable energy subsidies
- Strategic Defence and Security Review
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Syria
- Tax avoidance
- Terror
- Trade
- Ukraine
- The UN
- Veterans
- Workers’ rights and trade unions
In addition to many submissions from individual party members and members of the public, the following party units, affiliates and external organisations have made submissions to the National Policy Forum in the last year:

Action for Children
Amnesty International
ASLEF
Association for Physical Education
BAME Labour
Barnardo’s
Bath East North & West BLP
Betfair
Biofuelwatch
British Educational Research Association
Cancer Research UK
Charities Aid Foundation
Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation
Cheadle CLP
Clinks
College of Occupational Therapists
Community
Compact Voice
CWU
Directory of Social Change
Equifax Ltd
Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine
Food and Drink Federation
Forum of Insurance Lawyers
GlobalGivingUK
GMB
Guide Dogs
Herne Hill and Dulwich Trade Justice Campaign
Holborn and St Pancras CLP
Independent Taskforce on Poverty and Disability
Jersey Consumer Council
John Muir Trust
Labour Campaign for Human Rights
Leeds Older People’s Forum
Leonard Cheshire Disability
Living Streets
Local Trust
National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
National BME Cancer Alliance
National Council for Voluntary Organisations
National Federation of the Blind of the UK
National Governors’ Association
National Housing Federation
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
New Philanthropy Capital
Orpington CLP
Oxford East CLP
Oxford West and Abingdon CLP
Royal College of General Practitioners
Royal College of Physicians
Small Charities Coalition
Sport & Recreation Alliance
Sport and Recreation Alliance
Sports Consultation
Sports Coach UK
Sports Leaders UK
Stop the War Oxford Branch
Sustainable Flood Plan Group for Oxford
The Campaign for Co-operative Socialism
The Chief Cultural & Leisure Officers Association
The Children’s Society
The Dyslexia Foundation
The Health Communications Centre
The New Economics Foundation
The New Economics Foundation

APPENDIX: SUBMITTING ORGANISATIONS

Jersey Consumer Council
John Muir Trust
Labour Campaign for Human Rights
Leeds Older People’s Forum
Leonard Cheshire Disability
Living Streets
Local Trust
National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
National BME Cancer Alliance
National Council for Voluntary Organisations
National Federation of the Blind of the UK
National Governors’ Association
National Housing Federation
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
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Sports Coach UK
Sports Leaders UK
Stop the War Oxford Branch
Sustainable Flood Plan Group for Oxford
The Campaign for Co-operative Socialism
The Chief Cultural & Leisure Officers Association
The Children’s Society
The Dyslexia Foundation
The Health Communications Centre
The New Economics Foundation
The New Economics Foundation
The Salvation Army
The Scout Association
The Social Economy Alliance
Transparency International UK
TSSA
UCATT
UKWIN
USDAW
Unison
Unite the Union
United Kingdom Homecare Association
Valueworks Ltd
Voluntary Sector North West
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
West Suffolk CLP
Willmott Dixon
Wirral West CLP
Woking CLP
Woodbridge CLP
## APPENDIX 2 - NATIONAL POLICY FORUM MEMBERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands region</td>
<td>Julie Brookfield</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
(CLP) West Midlands region
Lucy Smith

(CLPM) Yorkshire region
Ann Cryer

(CLPM) Yorkshire region
Emma Hoddinott

(CLPM) Yorkshire region
George McManus

(CLPM) Yorkshire region
Denise Thursfield

(CLPM-YTH) East Midlands region
Bex Bailey

(CLPM-YTH) Eastern region
Sarah Rae

(CLPM-YTH) Greater London region
Sally Hussain

(CLPM-YTH) North region
Daniel Johnson

(CLPM-YTH) North West region
Chris Hughes

(CLPM-YTH) Scottish Labour Party
Darren Young

(CLPM-YTH) South East region
Helena Dollimore

(CLPM-YTH) South West region
Bethan Davey

(CLPM-YTH) Wales Labour Party
Pearleen Sangha

(CLPM-YTH) West Midlands region
Charlotte Hale

(CLPM-YTH) Yorkshire region
Ruth Davies

(TU) ASLEF
Rebekah Peterson

(TU) BECTU
Paul Liam Evans

(TU) BFAWU
Pauline McCartney

(TU) Community
Richard Angell

(TU) CWU
Billy Hayes

(TU) CWU
Beryl Shepherd

(TU) GMB
Mary Hutchinson

(TU) GMB
Paul Kenny

(TU) GMB
Maria Ludkin

(TU) GMB
Tim Roache

(TU) MU
Barbara White

(TU) TSSA
Frank Ward

(TU) UCATT
Stephen Murphy

(TU) UNISON
Mervyn Butler

(TU) UNISON
Dave Prentis

(TU) UNISON
Eleanor Smith

(TU) UNISON
Liz Snape

(TU) Unite
Tony Burke

(TU) Unite
Gail Cartmail

(TU) Unite
Collette Cork-Hurst

(TU) Unite
Jennifer Elliott

(TU) Unite
Siobhan Endean

(TU) Unite
Steve Hart
(TU) Unite
Len McCluskey
(TU) Unite
David Quayle
(TU) Unite
Maggie Ryan
(TU) Unite
Tony Woodhouse
(TU) USDAW
Ruth George
(TU) USDAW
John Hannett
(TU) USDAW
Fiona Wilson
(R) East Midlands region
Rory Palmer
(R) East Midlands region
Linda Woodings
(R) Eastern region
Fred Grindrod
(R) Eastern region
Lara Norris
(R) Greater London region
Lucy Anderson
(R) Greater London region
Sam Gurney
(R) North region
Simon Henig
(R) North region
Jayne Shotton
(R) North region
Ann Trafford
(R) North West region
John Wiseman
(R) North West region
Jackson Cullinane
(R) Scottish Labour Party
Jill Merchant
(R) South East region
Michael Hassell
(R) South East region
Carol Hayton
(R) South West region
Nick Ireland
(R) South West region
Libby Lisgo
(R) Wales Labour Party
Diane Green
(R) Wales Labour Party
Mark Whitcutt
(R) West Midlands region
Gerard Coyne
(R) West Midlands region
Colleen Fletcher
(R) Yorkshire region
Judith Blake
(R) Yorkshire region
Peter Box
(LG) Association of Labour Councillors
Ruth Cadbury
(LG) Association of Labour Councillors
Angela Cornforth
(LG) Association of Labour Councillors
Roger Lawrence
(LG) Association of Labour Councillors
Steve Swift
(LG) Local Government Association
Steve Bullock
(LG) Local Government Association
Bryony Rudkin
(LG) Local Government Association
Sharon Taylor
(LG) Local Government Association
Catherine West
(LG) Local Government Association
Michael Ross
(LG) COSLA
Emma Burnell
Socialist Societies
Socialist Societies
Socialist Societies
BAME Labour
BAME Labour
BAME Labour
Parliamentary Labour Party
Parliamentary Labour Party
Parliamentary Labour Party
Parliamentary Labour Party
Parliamentary Labour Party
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European Parliamentary Labour Party
European Parliamentary Labour Party
European Parliamentary Labour Party
European Parliamentary Labour Party
European Parliamentary Labour Party
Labour Students
House of Lords
House of Lords
Northern Ireland
Labour International
Labour Party Disabled Members
LGBT Labour
Scottish Policy Forum (chair)
Scottish Policy Forum (vice chair)
Scottish Policy Forum (vice chair)
Welsh Policy Forum
Welsh Policy Forum (chair)
Shadow Cabinet
Shadow Cabinet
Shadow Cabinet
Shadow Cabinet
Shadow Cabinet
Shadow Cabinet
Martin Rathfelder
Melanie Smallman
Sen Kandiah
Gloria Mills
June Nelson
Neeraj Patil (Dr)
Debbie Abrahams
Julie Elliott
Bill Esterson
Barry Gardiner
Teresa Pearson
Bridget Phillipson
Steve Reed
Andy Sawford
Alan Whitehead
Mary Honeyball
Richard Howitt
Anneliese Dodds
Julie Ward
Richard Corbett
Seb Dance
Grace Skelton
Richard Faulkner
Ruth Lister
Boyd Black
Keir Fitch
Louise Reecejones
Tom Burke
Agnes Tolmie
Jackie Baillie
Clare Lally
Amber Courtney
Mike Payne
Douglas Alexander
Ed Balls
Hilary Benn
Andy Burnham
Yvette Cooper
Jon Cruddas
Shadow Cabinet
Rachel Reeves
Tristram Hunt
Rosie Winterton
Nick Crofts
Sarah Gill
Karin Christiansen
Co-operative Party General Secretary
Rosie Winterton
Co-operative Party
Nick Crofts
Sarah Gill
Co-operative Party
National Executive Committee
Rosie Winterton
Johanna Baxter
Ann Black
Ken Livingstone
Eleanor Reeves
Christine Shawcroft
Kate Osamor
Harriet Harman
Glenis Willmott
Alice Perry
Jim McMahon
Ed Miliband
David Watts
Margaret Beckett
Steve Rotheram
John Healey
Jonathan Ashworth
Angela Eagle
Sadiq Khan
Conor McGinn
Keith Vaz
Diana Holland
Keith Birch
Jennie Formby
Andi Fox
Jim Kennedy
Andy Kerr
Susan Lewis
Paddy Lillis
Rachael Maskell
Martin Mayer
Wendy Nichols
Cath Speight
National Executive Committee  Mary Turner
National Executive Committee  Carwyn Jones
National Executive Committee  Bex Bailey