

Conservative Values in Policy-Making

CPF

Discussion Brief 2024#3



CPF Discussion Briefs exist to stimulate debate. They do not necessarily represent the views of the Conservative Party.



Dear Colleagues,

2024#3 Conservative Values in Policy-Making

For 18 months ahead of the general election, CPF groups offered their suggestions for the Party's manifesto. This included meetings of CPF members with the PM's top policy advisers in Downing Street during the two months ahead of the election being called. As a result of this input:

- 3-in-5 (60%) commitments in the Party's manifesto could be traced back to ideas proposed by CPF groups
- 1-in-3 (32%) of the CPF Members' suggestions were reflected in the published manifesto

You can find a "CPF Top 40" of these manifesto commitments in the appendix to this consultation.

Since the general election, several CPF Members have suggested that the CPF consider how policy-making works and that we "discuss, deliberate and outline the future direction, values and leadership of the Party, from an activist/member perspective." That is what this consultation briefing seeks to enable in a constructive and forward-looking manner.

Please submit your responses to the questions in this briefing paper using the online response form published alongside the paper on the CPF website. The deadline for sending your response is 9am Friday 27th September. Findings will be discussed at Party conference.

We look forward to hearing your ideas,

The CPF Management Team

John Hayward
CPF Manager

Penny-Anne O'Donnell
Voluntary Director

John Penrose
Chairman

Fleur Butler
Vice-Chairman

www.conservativepolicyforum.com
[@ConservativePF](https://twitter.com/ConservativePF)

Setting the scene

The Constitution of the Conservative & Unionist Party states that “Its purpose is to sustain and promote within the Nation the objects and values of the Conservative Party”. From Sir Robert Peel’s 1835 Tamworth Manifesto¹ to Michael Ancram’s 2007 booklet “*Still a Conservative: Conservative beliefs and principles for the Twenty-first Century*”, the Party has regularly attempted to set out its values—to define what makes us Conservatives. In theory—and ideally in practice—these values are the unchanging set of principles that explain who we are and that should be evident in all that we do as a Party. They are applied afresh by each new generation as we develop new policies in response to emerging challenges, ensuring that the Conservative movement stays relevant and up to date. With the Party choosing a new leader, now is a good time to re-examine these foundations.

In 2017-18, over 1,200 CPF members and about 4,000 wider Party members helped us to identify the common set of values that define who we are and inspire our policies:

1. Pro-freedom (freedom of choice, liberty, free speech)
2. Pro-defence (strong national defence, security, safety)
3. Pro-justice (rule of law, justice)
4. Pro-enterprise (living within our means, support for responsible free market economy)
5. Pro-democracy (patriotism, limited government, pro-family, sovereignty, localism)
6. Principled (fairness, integrity, pragmatism, respect)
7. Responsible (personal responsibility and self-reliance)
8. Forward-looking
9. Pro-opportunity (equality of opportunity for all, aspiration, empowerment, education, social mobility)
10. Compassionate (prioritising the vulnerable, social justice, civic-minded)
11. Pro-community (diversity, tolerance, inclusive, openness, international)

Questions for discussion

1. On a scale of 0-10, to what extent do you think each of the values identified by Party members through the 2017-18 CPF consultation should define the Party and its activities?
2. If you could add one more value to the list, what would it be?
3. How important to you are the aspects of each value identified in brackets (e.g. for “pro-freedom”: *freedom of choice, liberty and free speech*)? are there any extra aspects that you think are missing?
4. On a scale of 0-10, to what extent do you think each of the following stakeholders are involved in the process of (i) making and (ii) presenting the Party’s values and policies:

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------|
| a. Party leader | e. Ministers’ special advisers | i. Voters |
| b. Cabinet members | f. CCHQ’s Conservative Research Department (CRD) | j. The media |
| c. Backbench MPs/Parliamentary candidates | g. Party/CPF members | k. Think tanks |
| d. Members of the House of Lords | h. Party donors | l. Civil servants |
| | | m. QUANGOs |
5. In what ways do you think the Party could improve how it develops and applies the Party’s values and policy?
6. In what ways do you think the CPF could improve how we identify, refine and promote Conservative policy ideas?
7. How might these values be better embedded in all aspects of the Party and its activities?

Appendix: CPF “Top 40” Influence on the 2024 Conservative Manifesto

1. “End the unfairness in Child Benefit by moving to a household system”
2. “Cut the cost of net zero for consumers by taking a more pragmatic approach”
3. “Give young people the skills and opportunities they deserve by introducing National Service for all school leavers”
4. “Curb the number of poor-quality university degrees that leave young people worse off”
5. “Boost defence spending to our new NATO standard of 2.5% of GDP”
6. “Introduce a legal cap on migration”
7. “Protect female-only spaces and competitiveness in sport by making clear that sex means biological sex in the Equality Act”
8. “Permanently abolish Stamp Duty for homes up to £425,000 for first time buyers”
9. “Back drivers by stopping road pricing, reversing the London Mayor’s ULEZ expansion and applying local referendums to new 20mph zones and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods”
10. “Back farmers with a legal target and additional investment for food security, and protecting our best agricultural land from solar farms”
11. “Protect the UK’s internal market and the integrity of our United Kingdom”
12. “Introduce controls on all ‘Equality, Diversity and Inclusion’ initiatives and spending”
13. “Deliver a Family Hub in every local authority in England”
14. “Support the BBC World Service”
15. “Encourage dentists to take on new NHS patients”
16. “Cut waste and bureaucracy in the NHS”
17. “Gather new evidence on the impact of ultra-processed food to support people to make healthier choices”
18. “Use AI to free up doctors’ and nurses’ time for frontline patient care”
19. “Recruit 8,000 more full time, fully warranted police officers dedicated to neighbourhood policing”
20. “Increase the use of community payback, so criminals pay their debt to society and communities witness justice being served”
21. “Turn criminals away from the cycle of reoffending, investing in rehabilitative services such as drug treatment, education and employment”
22. “Provide incentives to invest in our North Sea”
23. “Approve two new fleets of Small Modular Reactors to rapidly expand nuclear power”
24. “Secure the future of steelmaking across the UK”
25. “Ensure that green levies on household bills are lower”
26. “Reform energy standing charges to keep them as low as possible”
27. “Ensure democratic consent for onshore wind”
28. “Provide a fast-track route through the planning system for new homes on previously developed land”
29. “Support local and smaller builders by requiring councils to set land aside for them and lifting Section 106 burdens on more smaller sites”
30. “Ensure councils have the powers they need to manage the uncontrolled growth of holiday lets”
31. “Create more Freeports and Business Rates Retention zones”
32. “Roll out the National Parking Platform to simplify paying for parking”
33. “Build no new smart motorways”
34. “Reform outdated working practices in the rail industry”
35. “Roll out mobile pay as you go contactless rail tickets nationwide”

36. “Support UK agri-food and drink attachés in our embassies abroad”
37. “Support our inshore fishing fleet”
38. “Oppose state regulation and control of the press”
39. “Continue to oppose Scotland independence”
40. “Cut taxes for working people”

References

Union flag on cover by James Giddins on Unsplash

¹ The Tamworth Manifesto, 18 December 1834, WikiSource, https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Tamworth_Manifesto