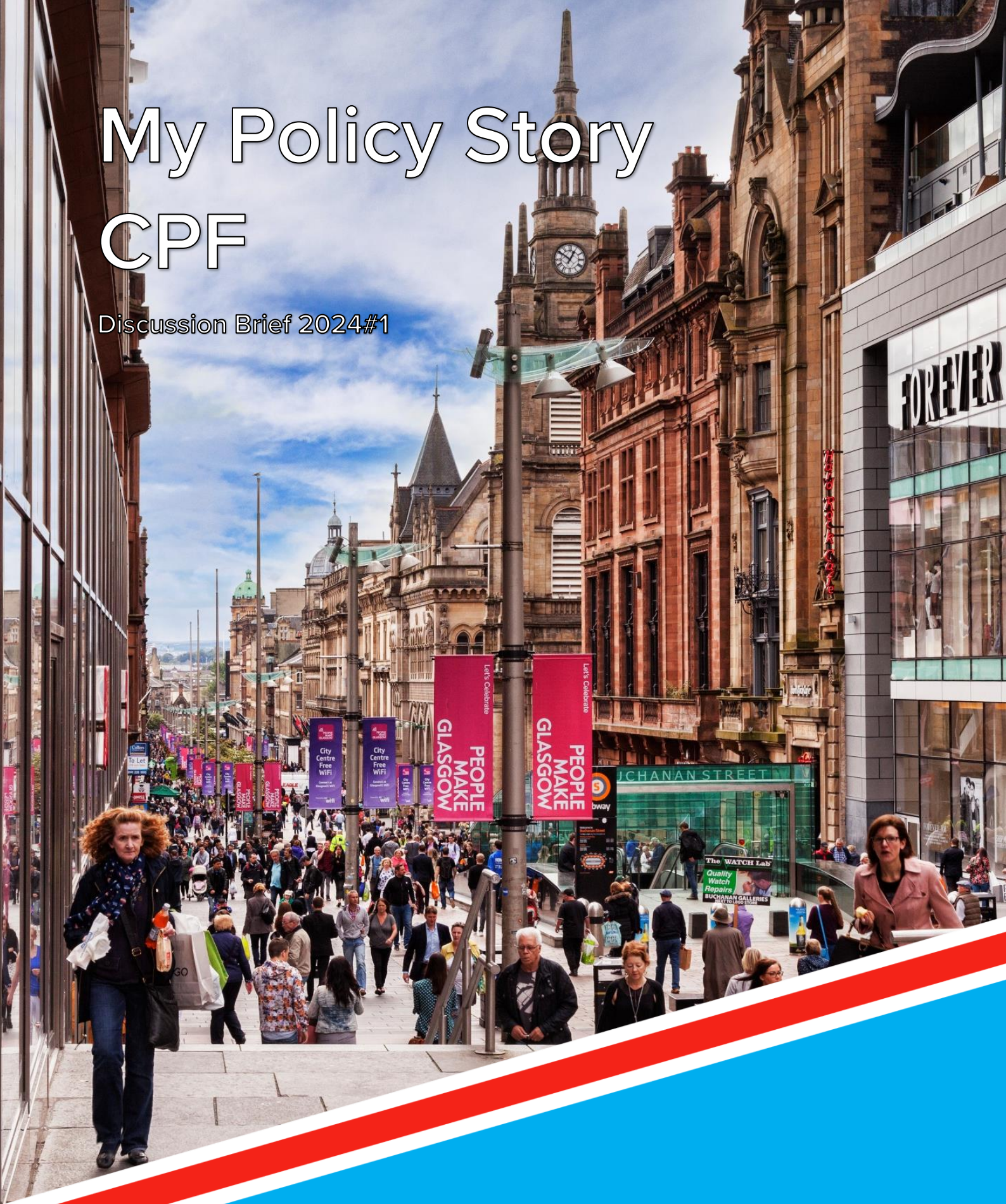


My Policy Story

CPF

Discussion Brief 2024#1



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



Dear Colleagues,

2024#1 My Policy Story

Thank you to everybody who submitted a response to our consultation on the future of the welfare state. As we anticipate the forthcoming General Election, some time in the coming year, we in the CPF want to look ahead by taking a moment to look back.

Since the last General Election, CPF membership has more than trebled (x3.1); members actively participating in consultations has grown by a quarter (x1.27); and the number of constituencies participating in consultations has increased by almost a third (x1.3). Since September 2022, you and other CPF Groups have provided your Ideas for the Next Manifesto and have helped to Make The Case for Conservatism—applying the Conservative values of capitalism, freedom and responsibility to the most immediate challenges facing the country: that is, the cost of living, energy security, healthcare and our global engagement. You have also helped the Party’s policymakers and leadership to understand your views on some of the longer-term challenges: deregulation, artificial intelligence, transportation and the welfare state.

In this new consultation, we invite you to reflect on Conservative policies introduced since Rishi Sunak became Prime Minister, on 25 October 2022. We want to know how you think these have affected you, your family, your community and the country. We want to know your policy story. This will then give us a context in which to discuss the further changes that you would like to see as we look ahead to the General Election and beyond.

Make sure that your Conservative Association or Federation has a date in the diary to be a part of this vital consultation—and, as usual, be sure to invite as many members and supporters as possible. Don’t forget: 50% of voters are female, so we need to listen to female voices as well. If you don’t usually have an equal representation of men and women at your meetings, then **we would challenge you to reach out to and invite female members and supporters in your constituency** to help us collect as wide a range of stories as possible. Please submit your responses to the questions in this briefing paper using the online response form published on the CPF website. The deadline for sending your response is 17th March. Following our usual break for campaigning ahead of the May elections, we expect to publish our next discussion paper on 6th May.

We look forward to hearing your policy stories,

The CPF Management Team

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Setting the scene

“Greater focus, dedicated leadership, and better-targeted resources will help us deliver our promises in the here and now, as we halve inflation, grow the economy, reduce debt, cut waiting lists, and stop the boats.”

(Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP, 7 February 2023)¹

In the last parliamentary session, the Government passed 39 bills (see Appendix for further details). Looking back over the year or so since Rishi Sunak became Prime Minister, CPF members can identify several newly-implemented government policies that either started out as CPF proposals or for which CPF has consistently campaigned. These include, but are in no way limited to the following “top dozen”:

1. Enabling young people to use the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) to search and apply for apprenticeships, alongside degrees²
2. Introducing “Returnerships” to help get older workers back to work³
3. Allowing private companies to access capital markets worldwide without floating on a stock exchange⁴
4. Introducing a statutory limit on the length of non-compete clauses in employment contracts⁵
5. Increasing the annual pension allowance and abolishing the Lifetime Allowance⁶
6. Moving to a broader-based British Baccalaureate in place of GCSEs and A-Levels, putting technical and academic education on an equal footing⁷
7. Implementing the largest ever cut to National Insurance⁸
8. Extending 30 hours of childcare a week to working parents of children aged 9 months to 4 years⁹ and paying Universal Credit childcare costs up front rather than in arrears¹⁰
9. Changing child ratios in the childcare sector from 1:4 to 1:5¹¹
10. Redirecting HS2 funding to enhance transport links across the North and Midlands¹²
11. Supporting the development of the next generation of nuclear reactors¹³ and of pioneering fusion technology¹⁴
12. Building on the Women’s Health Strategy¹⁵ and protecting women’s hard-won rights, for example by excluding from women’s prisons certain transgender offenders.¹⁶

Questions for discussion

1. In what specific ways have government policies implemented since Rishi Sunak became PM had a positive impact on your life and your family?
(Include first name and last initial if the CPF member is happy for us possibly to share their name in connection with this on social media.)
2. In what specific ways have other people in your community or area been positively impacted by government policies implemented since Rishi Sunak became PM?
3. Thinking of policies that the government has introduced, which do you believe could most benefit from modification in order to realise their full potential?
4. In as few words as possible, what single commitment or emphasis would you most like to see included in the Party’s General Election manifesto?
5. Is there any other observation you would like to make?

Appendix

Bills that received Royal Assent during the last parliamentary session include:

- The **Illegal Migration Act 2023**, putting fairness back at the heart of the immigration system, blocking asylum based on the mode of entry.¹⁷
- The **Strikes (Minimum Service Level) Act**, ensuring the public can access essential public services in the face of political strike action.¹⁸
- The **Energy Act**, strengthening energy security, supporting the delivery of net zero and ensuring households bills are affordable in the long-term.¹⁹
- The **Trade (Australia and New Zealand) Act**, removing tariffs on all UK goods exports to Australia and New Zealand, and slashing red tape for digital trade and work visas.²⁰
- The **Finance Act 2023** and the **Finance (No2) Act 2023**, delivering a Budget that works to halve inflation, grow the economy and reduce debt, including tax cuts to incentivise business investment, simplify the tax system and deliver pension reform.²¹
- The **Public Order Act 2023**, clamping down on seriously disruptive protests including Just Stop Oil's militant techniques, enabling the public to go about their daily lives.²²
- The **Online Safety Act**, protecting children from harmful content online and holding social media companies to account, while also protecting free speech.²³
- The **Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act**, cracking down on economic crime and dirty money in the UK.²⁴
- The **Energy Prices Act 2022**, reducing domestic energy prices and encouraging the efficient use and supply of energy.²⁵
- The **Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023**, repealing certain EU law and enabling us to pass laws that help grow the economy and work for Britain's interests.²⁶
- The **Financial Services and Markets Act 2023**, unleashing our world-leading financial services sector with post-Brexit reforms.²⁷
- The **Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Act 2023**, strengthening our food supply and supporting farmers by unlocking key technologies to improve UK food security, reduce pesticide use and enhance climate-resilience in our crops.²⁸
- The **Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023**, ensuring universities protect and promote freedom of speech on campus.²⁹
- The **Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022**, delivering a balanced package of measures for Northern Ireland on identity and language.³⁰
- The **Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act**, speeding up the planning system to build more homes, holding developers to account, cutting bureaucracy and encouraging more councils to put in place plans to enable the building of new homes.³¹
- The **Lifelong Learning Act 2023**, transforming the student finance system and opening up opportunities for adults to study in a way that works for them, enabling people from all backgrounds to access education.³²
- The **National Security Act 2023**, protecting the British public by making it harder for states to target the UK with hostile acts, including espionage, foreign interference (including in our political system), sabotage, and acts that endanger life.³³
- The **Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023**, modernising the business rates system to encourage property improvements and support more frequent revaluations, making them fairer and more responsive to changes in the market.³⁴

- The **Procurement Act**, delivering simpler procurement processes to support small businesses and innovation, and protect against national security risks in public contracts.³⁵
- The **Seafarers' Wage Act 2023**, ensuring that those who work on vessels operating an international service will not be paid less than the National Minimum Wage.³⁶
- The **Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023**, strengthening powers to tackle failing social landlords and improving support for tenants living in unsafe homes, including strict time limits to address hazards such as damp and mould.³⁷
- The **Social Security (Additional Payments) Act 2022** and **Social Security (Additional Payments) Act 2023**, providing vital cost of living support to vulnerable households.³⁸
- The **Social Security (Special Rules for End of Life) Act 2022**, enabling vital financial support to be accessed six months earlier for people nearing the end of their life.³⁹
- The **Stamp Duty Land Tax (Temporary Relief) Act 2023**, reducing the amount of tax paid for many house buyers until 31 March 2025.⁴⁰
- The **UK Infrastructure Bank Act**, confirming the UK Infrastructure Bank's independence.⁴¹
- The **Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023**, giving electronic documents the same legal status as physical documents, boosting the UK economy by £1 billion and making trade more efficient and cheaper for firms.⁴²
- The **Energy (Oil and Gas) Profits Levy Act 2022**, helping us fund cost of living support for families and business, such as paying half of families' energy bills last winter.⁴³

Sources and Further Details

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