Chancellor fails to address crises facing environment and public services in Spring Budget, say Greens

15 March 2023

- **Spring Budget relies on unproven technologies to tackle climate emergency rather than practical, Green solutions**

- **Chancellor fails to give public sector workers a pay rise that matches inflation, a pay rise that they deserve.**

- **Carla Denyer: "Only the Green Party offers the economic policies that prioritise health and wellbeing and the protection of our environment over unfettered economic growth."**

Responding to the Chancellor's Spring Statement today [Wednesday 15 March], Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

"This is yet another Conservative budget that fails to address the climate emergency or the crisis facing our public services.

"Proven and effective measures to tackle the climate crisis were glaringly absent. Rather than a nationwide insulation programme, that would not only tackle greenhouse gas emissions but also keep people warm and reduce their energy bills, we get big bucks thrown at technological fixes like carbon capture and storage which isn't commercially viable and runs the risk of allowing polluters a free pass.

"And instead of meaningful investment in abundant and affordable renewables such as onshore and offshore wind, tidal and solar, we get expensive nuclear which will take many years to come on stream.

"The chancellor delivered his statement as thousands of workers walked out on strike over pay and conditions, quite rightly saying enough is enough. Jeremy Hunt failed to step up to the plate and give public sector workers a pay rise that matches inflation; the pay rise that they deserve.

"This was presented as a budget for growth. But we know from past experience that an obsessive focus on economic growth enriches the few, impoverishes many and wrecks our climate while trashing the natural world. This business

as usual approach certainly does result in growth — growth in air pollution; growth in sewage discharges into our waterways and coastline and growth in inequality.

"The sort of growth the Tories have in mind is revealed by their plans to create 12 new Investment Zones across England. Such zones will provide opportunities for tax avoidance by the wealthy, pit communities against each other — with those outside the zones subsidising services for people inside them — and undercut environmental standards.

"There were welcome incentives for small and medium sized enterprises to invest in research and development but where were the incentives to support businesses to green their operations, especially energy intensive industries?

"Only the Green Party offers the economic policies that prioritise health and wellbeing and the protection of our environment over unfettered economic growth. That is why our demands focus on restoring public services — especially our health service — and paying public sector workers properly; offering cheap or free public transport for all and measures to help businesses and communities reap the rewards of a move to a green economy."

Ahead of today's budget, the Green Party called on the Chancellor to include [1]:

- 35 hours a week of free childcare for all, from the age of nine months

- A £1 single fare on all bus routes across England with free bus travel for young people, combined with major investment in buses and services and to ensure buses work for people, rather than the profit of large companies.

- Meeting the demands of public sector workers for a pay rise that matches inflation, to help regenerate our economy and restore our public services

- Stimulating green industries and reducing the cost of energy, by offering tax incentives to businesses investing in the green economy and changing planning laws to encourage community-owned renewables.

Notes

1. https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2023/03/14/greens-set-out-fairer,-greener-plan-for-economy-ahead-of-spring-budget/

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