

Jo Swinson is new Lib Dem Deputy Leader

Jo Swinson has been elected unanimously as Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats.

The result was announced on Tuesday evening at the Liberal Democrat parliamentary party meeting.

Jo will continue in her role as Liberal Democrat Shadow Foreign Secretary.

Jo said: "I am very proud to have been elected by a newly energised and strengthened parliamentary party.

"The government has no majority and no mandate for its extreme version of Brexit, which would do such damage to the health of our economy and the fabric of our society.

"In this balanced parliament the Liberal Democrats will be a powerful influence and a strong voice for people who want to see an open, welcoming and tolerant United Kingdom."

Leader of the Liberal Democrats Tim Farron said: "Jo Swinson is a brilliant campaigner and someone I am proud to call a friend. I am in no doubt she will be a fantastic Deputy Leader of our party.

"Jo is the future of the Liberal Democrats and will make a massive difference laying out a liberal alternative to this divisive Brexit government. Her hard work as a local MP and impressive record as a minister leave us in no doubt that she will be a powerful voice for our party."

Theresa May drops plans to snatch free school meals after Lib Dem pressure

Theresa May is reported to have dropped plans to scrap free school lunches for infant pupils from tomorrow's Queen's Speech.

It comes after the Liberal Democrats strongly criticised the Conservatives during the election campaign over their manifesto plans which would have deprived 1.7 million children of free school lunches, including 700,000 living in poverty.

Liberal Democrat Shadow Education Secretary Layla Moran said:

"I'm glad Theresa May has bowed to pressure from schools and parents to keep free school lunches. I am proud that the Lib Dems introduced this when we were part of the government.

"We have seen it both help families who are just getting by as well as raise attainment.

"I hope Theresa May will now rein back on her plans to extend grammars and reduce schools funding."

Vince Cable: May must listen to Hammond's Brexit warnings instead of locking him in a cupboard again

Chancellor Philip Hammond has called for a transitional deal on Brexit to protect the economy at a speech at Mansion House, while Bank of England Governor Mark Carney has admitted that Brexit will make us all poorer.

It comes as the government is under pressure from the Liberal Democrats and business community to soften its stance on Brexit, including by protecting Britain's membership of the single market and customs union.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders today warned that a hard Brexit reverting to WTO rules would permanently damage the UK car industry.

It follows similar recent warnings from the EEF, which represents UK manufacturers, and the Chemical Industries Association.

Liberal Democrat Shadow Chancellor Vince Cable said:

"Theresa May must listen to Philip Hammond's warnings instead of locking him in the cupboard with his spreadsheets again.

"Three major industrial bodies are all now warning of the consequences of disrupting our trading arrangements with the EU by leaving the single market and customs union.

"The economic risk of an extreme Brexit is very real and its consequences would be felt by us all, from higher prices to less funding for our NHS and schools.

"Even the Bank of England has admitted that it cannot prevent Brexit from making us all poorer.

"The best way to protect the pound, lift people's incomes and secure funding

for our public services is to stay in the single market and customs union.

“The Liberal Democrats will work with other parties to protect our economy from a damaging Brexit and fight for the best possible deal.”

Tim Farron responds to Finsbury Park terror attack

Commenting on the terrorist incident near Finsbury Park mosque in north London, Liberal Democrat leader Tim Farron said: “The Finsbury Park attack is senseless barbarism. Yet again we are rocked by a horrific incident for which there is no rhyme or reason.

“People who commit these heinous acts want to divide us, force us to turn in on ourselves and fight each other. We cannot and must not let them win. Our values matter, we must stand together.

“My deepest sympathies are with the victims and their families.

“I would like to pay tribute to the bravery and dedication of the emergency services, who, yet again, have gone above and beyond to help those in need. In these moments while others run in the opposite direction, our emergency services run towards danger.”

Liberal Democrats announce Shadow Cabinet

Liberal Democrats have announced a new Shadow Cabinet. The party which gained seats in the election now have 12 MPs in the House of Commons.

Liberal Democrat Leader Tim Farron said: “I am delighted to announce our new shadow cabinet team, which brings together a wealth of experience. The party has people with a range of skills from within government, business and the charity sector.

“Together we will provide the strong opposition Britain needs to stand up to this Conservative government.”

Leader – Tim Farron MP

President – Baroness Sal Brinton

Deputy Leader – TBC
Exiting the European Union; International Trade; First Secretary of State – Tom Brake MP
Chancellor – Vince Cable MP
Foreign Secretary – Jo Swinson MP
Home Secretary – Ed Davey MP
Health Secretary – Norman Lamb MP
Education Secretary; Young People – Layla Moran MP
Communities and Local Government; Refugees – Wera Hobhouse MP
Culture, Media and Sport – Christine Jardine MP
Work and Pensions – Stephen Lloyd MP
Scotland – Jamie Stone MP
Chief Whip; Northern Ireland – Alistair Carmichael MP
Exiting the European Union (Lords) – Baroness Sarah Ludford
Energy and Climate Change – Baroness Lynne Featherstone
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – Baroness Kate Parminter
Business and Industrial Strategy – Lord Chris Fox
Defence – Baroness Judith Jolly
Transport – Baroness Jenny Randerson
International Development – Baroness Shas Sheehan
Equalities – Baroness Lorely Burt
Justice – Jonathan Marks
Wales – Baroness Christine Humphreys
Europe/ALDE Liaison – Catherine Bearder MEP
London – Caroline Pidgeon AM
Leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats – Kirsty Williams AM
Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats – Willie Rennie MSP
Leader in the House of Lords – Lord Dick Newby
Chief Whip in the House of Lords – Lord Ben Stoneham