

The ethnicity pay gap is unacceptable. The Lib Dems are fighting to close it.

Today, we at the Lib Dems are proud to announce our plan to introduce mandatory reporting on the ethnicity pay gap for organisations with 250 employees or more.

Why? Because we think it's shocking that racial inequality still exists in 21st century Britain, and because practical measures are needed if we want to combat it.

Employee ethnicity data is currently patchy at best and there is no uniform way to collect it, making monitoring and analysis difficult.

My colleague and friend Jo Swinson, our former Business Minister, commented: 'the country is failing to make the most of talent in the workplace. Information is powerful, and while organisations are allowed to get away with keeping patchy records, we'll never know the full extent of the gap.'

She continued: 'Transparent data on the Black and Middle Eastern pay gap will help employers focus on what they need to do to ensure equal opportunities at work for people of all ethnic backgrounds.'

The Liberal Democrats believe that every person, regardless of their ethnicity, should be allowed to reach their full potential in the workplace. We also know that equal pay makes good business sense. In fact, a report from McGregor-Smith conducted in the last Parliament said that ending ethnic minority inequality at work in Britain would boost the economy by £24 billion a year.

My party and I will keep campaigning for equality and keep holding the government to account for its inaction.

Vote Liberal Democrats this General Election.

Big beasts return to Lib Dem front line as Tim Farron announces election campaign team

The Liberal Democrats have announced a new General Election Campaign Team, with former ministers including Jo Swinson, Vince Cable and Ed Davey all returning to the Lib Dem frontbench.

I'm delighted to announce my new campaign team, which sees some big beasts of the party returning to lead our General Election fight.

The team brings together a wealth of experience from former ministers, such as Jo Swinson, Vince Cable and Ed Davey, and I'm thrilled to personally welcome them back.

From challenging the government over their disastrous Hard Brexit plans, to fighting for the NHS and social care, to protecting schools from further Tory cuts; together we will provide the strong opposition – the only opposition – with the power to steer the country in a more progressive direction.

Vote for the Liberal Democrats to change Britain's future.

Leader

Tim Farron

President

Baroness Sal Brinton

Chancellor

Vince Cable

Foreign Affairs

Tom Brake

Defence

Baroness Judith Jolly

Europe; International Trade

Nick Clegg

Europe

Baroness Sarah Ludford

Home Affairs

Lord Brian Paddick

Health

Norman Lamb

Education

Sarah Olney

Work and Pensions

Baroness Cathy Bakewell

Business

Baroness Susan Kramer

Energy and Climate Change

Lynne Featherstone

Local Government

Baroness Kath Pinnock

Transport

Baroness Jenny Randerson

Environment and Rural Affairs

Baroness Kate Parminter

International Development

Baroness Shas Sheehan

Culture Media and Sport

Baroness Jane Bonham-Carter

Equalities

Baroness Lorely Burt

Northern Ireland

Baroness Alison Suttie

Young People

Daisy Cooper

Europe/ALDE Liaison

Catherine Bearder MEP

London

Caroline Pidgeon MLA

Justice

Lord Jonathan Marks

Refugees

Amna Ahmad

First Secretary of State

Alistair Carmichael

Election Campaign Spokesperson

Ed Davey

Eluned Parrott

Jo Swinson

Leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats

Mark Williams

Cabinet Secretary for Education in Wales

Kirsty Williams AM

£6bn extra a year for the NHS and care

Today, we've announced our first election manifesto commitment; we will invest an extra £6bn a year in our NHS & Social Care system.

This new funding will be paid for through an immediate 1p rise on all rates of income tax.

This funding will be ring-fenced to be spent only on the NHS and social care and will provide vital services with the money they desperately need until a longer-term solution can be found.

This is our flagship spending commitment and our first major policy announcement for the election.

Our manifesto will also set out a 'five-point recovery plan' for NHS and social care services.

As he made the announcement, Liberal Democrat Leader, Tim Farron, said:

"Theresa May doesn't care about the NHS or social care. People are lying on trolleys in hospital corridors and she has done nothing. The truth is you can't have a strong NHS with a Hard Brexit."

"The Liberal Democrats will rescue the NHS and social care. We are prepared to be honest with people and say that we will all need to chip in a little more."

"It is not too late to change Britain's future. The Conservatives want absolute power, Labour are too weak to stand up to them, so we will. The Liberal Democrats will be the strong opposition Britain needs."

Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Health, Norman Lamb, added:

"The NHS was once the envy of the world and this pledge is the first step in restoring it to where it should be."

"A penny on the pound to save the NHS is money well spent in our view."

"Simply providing more money on its own is not enough and that's why this is just the first step in our plan to protect health and care services long-term."

"We also need to do much more to keep people fit and healthy and out of hospital, and that is why this new funding will be targeted to those areas that have the greatest impact on patient care such as social care, general practice, mental health and public health."

This our five-step plan for the NHS & Social Care:

1. Introduce a 1% raise in income tax, generating £6bn a year

2. Ring-fence ALL of this for the NHS and care, investing efficiently and effectively in social care, primary care, mental health and public health
 3. Consolidate all health and care taxes into a single, dedicated Health and Care Tax, showing on people's payslips exactly what we spend it on
 4. Establish a cross-party health and care convention, consulting and working with patients, the public, NHS staff and care workers, to ensure our systems are sustainable and integrated
 5. Introduce an independent agency to monitor health and care budgets, which would report every three years on how much money the system needs to flourish
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Local & Mayoral Election Results

In today's Local and Mayoral elections we have made good progress – gaining on vote share and topping the polls in lots of seats that we can gain in June. However, I know it doesn't feel that way for those brilliant campaigners who haven't got the result they deserve.

As we're looking at the results coming in, there are two clear stories emerging:

First is a message of hope.

Our projected national vote share is up 7% – the largest vote increase of any party. In many parts of the UK, the Lib Dems won more councillors and took a big step to winning on 8th June.

With many results still to come in, we've topped the polls in Cheltenham, St Albans, Cambridge, North East Fife, Cardiff Central, Bath, Edinburgh West, Eastleigh, Oxford West & Abingdon, Watford and Eastbourne.

We've made gains in many more areas that are key to winning on 8th June.

While Labour and UKIP have been swept aside, we are still standing strong.

The second story is about the Conservatives.

They have had a good day. They turned this local election into a national one changing the dynamic of the election. They won over most of the people that voted UKIP in the past.

Some Lib Dems lost their seats to this unholy alliance – even though our vote went up. My thoughts are with our candidates and campaigners in those areas.

When the dust settles at the end of the day, the scene will be set for the General Election.

On one side will be the Conservatives, their plans for a damaging, dangerous Brexit and heartless cuts to our schools and NHS, which will only be made worse by a large majority and our communities taken for granted.

The other side is the Liberal Democrats. We offer a path of hope for a Britain. We need a different approach to Europe, we must invest in our NHS and ensure every child can go to a good school.

We have a message of hope to fight their message of fear.

Together we can change Britain's future.

Lib Dems on course to make scores of gains at general election

Liberal Democrats are on course to make scores of gains at the general election and establish themselves as the real opposition to the Conservatives, based on the local election results in so far.

Seats as diverse as Bath, Cambridge, Cardiff Central, Cheltenham, Eastleigh, Eastbourne, Edinburgh West, St Albans and Watford would fall to the Liberal Democrats on the basis of the results so far. This would more than double the size of the Liberal Democrat parliamentary party.

The Liberal Democrats topped the polls in Eastbourne despite Theresa May's visit, and early signs are they are surging ahead in Scottish seats such as East Dunbartonshire and NE Fife.

Tim Farron, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, said:

"These results tell a clear and stark message. Labour has collapsed. They cannot win the General Election.

"If you want a strong opposition to this government, we are the party for you.

"A strong opposition can change Britain's future. A strong opposition to stand up to Theresa May's divisive Brexit plans that will cost jobs and put up prices. A strong opposition to keep us in the Single Market. A strong opposition to rescue the NHS from Conservative neglect. A strong opposition to stop Theresa May cutting schools to the bone. A strong opposition to fight for you and your community.

"Labour has failed as an opposition and handed Theresa May a blank cheque to do as she pleases. The voters have delivered their verdict on Jeremy Corbyn.

"The Liberal Democrats are the only party that can challenge Theresa May. We

will be the strong opposition that will stand up for you.”