

9th March 2018

Dear John,

Many thanks for meeting recently with James Kent, Chris Skidmore and myself to discuss CPF's Paper4/2017: Youth Issues.

We all found the discussion very useful indeed and I'm glad that we have arranged to make these policy interactions with the No10 Policy Unit regular throughout the year, responding to Papers, as they are published.

As indicated in that meeting, and on behalf of Gavin Barwell as Chief of Staff, I am here enclosing formal feedback in response to several of the issues you raised.

1. In 'Section One – Time for a New Deal for a New Generation', I was very glad to see a desire to demonstrate a stronger commitment to environmental issues and animal welfare, which is already a key domestic campaigning theme for the Government. In the past eight months, Michael Gove and his team at DEFRA have wholeheartedly reignited our Party's leadership in this crucial policy area, and whether it be toughening sentences for animal cruelty, speeding up the targets for eradication of non-recyclable plastic, the potential for a plastic bottle deposit scheme, or making Britain a world leader in the promotion of clean growth technology, we are stepping up efforts to redouble our manifesto commitment to leave the environment in a better condition than we inherited it. You will have seen that in January the Prime Minister and Michael launched the 25-year Environment Plan, and ***if CPF has specific comments in response to that, I would be very happy to feed them through to DEFRA and facilitate a meeting here with our environment special adviser, John Randall.***
2. In this Section you also identify two other touchstone issues for young people: protecting the most vulnerable in society and ensuring that we have a strong provision for apprenticeships and technical education. As you will be aware, we brought forward in 2017 the Homelessness Reduction Act, which places legal duties on English councils to provide meaningful help for those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless, i.e. the most vulnerable. In addition, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster is now chairing a task force to help concentrate government's efforts on this important priority. ***Whilst your Paper doesn't make specific recommendations in this policy area, I would warmly welcome CPF views on what more can be done.***
3. In terms of provision for high quality technical education, both our commitment to 3 million apprenticeships and the introduction of T Levels, as well as the post-18 education review (see below) demonstrate our commitment to develop accessible, meaningful technical routes of education which have real parity with academic provision, which lead to quality jobs and which give Britain's skills base a much needed boost. ***Again, whilst***

***your Paper doesn't make specific recommendations in this policy area, I would welcome CPF's views – and further discussion – on how we can ensure that the breadth of our technical provision properly engages young people.***

4. There are also three specific policy ideas which you raise in this section: a national clearing house for apprenticeships, which I have commissioned our education special adviser in the Policy Unit, Mike Crowhurst to provide advice on; a 100-year Youth Bond, which I have commissioned our social justice and young people special adviser, Nero Ughwujabo to provide advice on. In terms of specific policies to help young people, you will have seen that we have already recognised the under-30 threshold in transport, announcing our intention to extend the benefits of discounted rail travel to ensure those aged 16 to 30 can access appropriate concessions. We are keen to continue to develop similar, practical policies which help young people directly in their daily lives and I would warmly encourage CPF to continue to feed through suggestions. ***I will ask Mike Crowhurst and Nero Ughwujabo to liaise with you directly on giving feedback for those two specific suggestions, and Nero can act as your point of contact to feed new suggestions for policy solutions for young people into.*** And for the purposes of clarity, we would regard young people as under 40s!
5. I read with particular interest 'Section Two: Tuition Fees'. You will be aware that on 19th February 2018 the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Education launched our review of post-18 education funding, headed by Philip Augur. Philip's panel will examine many of the issues which you raise in the Paper, with a very real focus on how we can both maintain excellence in our HE institutions, whilst also delivering value for money for students, as well as ensuring that we create genuine choice between the HE and FE routes. ***I would be very happy indeed to put you in touch with Philip Augur, who I'm sure would value the perspectives you raise in this paper. Shall I ask his office to get in touch with you?***
6. Turning to 'Section Three: Affordable Accommodation', you will be aware that between the Housing White Paper, our announcements at Conference 2017 and Budget Autumn 2017, we have made a considerable number of policy commitments in this area, not just for those seeking to own a home, but also for those in the PRS, SRS and with no home at all. MHCLG is driving delivering policy solutions, but I was especially glad that you highlighted the following policy solutions, which again, ***I will commission further work on the following and report back to you as soon as possible:***
  - The NPPF requires councils to take account of their communities' needs and promotes affordable home ownership tenures (including starter homes for younger people) but we will consider what more we can do to promote a more inclusive planning system which reflect both the needs of young people, and the way they interact with civic society and the world around them;

- Custom build registers are being put in place for every local authority but there may be more that we can do to see how self-build sits in the housing landscape as a housing option for young people (especially finance);
- Alternative investment vehicles focused on social housing;
- Wage-equivalent credits to acquire a deposit for purchase, and more broadly how we can develop a range of mechanisms to allow young people to demonstrate lower risk in terms of suitability for lending;
- Accepting payment of rent as evidence of ability to meet mortgages;
- Lifetime and multigenerational mortgages, i.e. how the mortgage market can reflect how young people actually live.

I am very glad that we have established a direct link between CPF and the policy work here in Downing Street, and I am excited to take forward the further work outlined above.

I will report back on the progress of commissioned work at our next meeting on Tuesday 27th March.

With very best wishes,

**James Marshall**

**Director of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit**

CC:

- George Freeman MP, CPF Chairman
- Chris Skidmore MP, Party Vice-Chairman (Policy)
- Rt Hon Gavin Barwell, Chief of Staff, No10
- James Kent, Deputy Director of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit (PU), No10
- Sir John Randall, PU No10 special adviser
- Mike Crowhurst, PU No10 special adviser
- Nero Ughwujabo, PU No10 special adviser