

Rachel Reeves MP Monthly Report

News from Rachel Reeves, Labour MP for Leeds West

October 2013

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 2013

It was a hugely successful Party Conference for Ed Miliband and the Labour Party this year. Ed's rousing leader's speech confirmed to many commentators that he is a force to be reckoned with. Several major policies were announced by Labour during the conference period. These included Ed's pledge to freeze energy prices, the abolition of the hated

"bedroom tax" and promises to build 200,000 new homes by 2020.

Rachel gave a speech to the Conference floor discussing the cost of living crisis and what Labour would do differently to help ordinary families. You can read and view Rachel's full speech online at: www.rachelreeves.net.



RACHEL BECOMES SHADOW WORK AND PENSIONS SECRETARY IN LATEST LABOUR RESHUFFLE

Labour's got a new frontbench. Have you joined the team?

action.labour.org.uk/with-us

On Monday 7th October it was announced that Rachel would move from her successful post as Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury and become the new

Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, replacing Liam Byrne to head up Labour's Department for Work and Pensions team.

Rachel said following the announcement, 'I am honoured to be asked by Ed Miliband to lead the Shadow DWP team.

At a time when the government are dividing as costs spiral, Labour will stand for work, responsibility and decency'.

Other notable reshuffle changes include Tristram Hunt replacing

Stephen Twigg as Shadow Education Secretary and Diane Abbott demoted from her front bench role as Shadow Public Health Minister, replaced by Luciana Berger.

44% of the Shadow Cabinet are now female, almost hitting Ed Miliband's 50% target. Also, the 2010 intake now account for 31% of the new Shadow Cabinet.

The full list of the new Labour frontbench team can be found online at: <http://www.labour.org.uk/labour-shadow-cabinet>

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CAMPAIGNING

Kirkstall Super Saturday Sessions:

Saturday 19th October, meeting at 11am and 2pm, 12 Delacy Mount, LS5 3JF

Saturday 9th November, meeting at 11am and 2pm, 12 Delacy Mount, LS5 3JF



Campaigning in Pudsey CLP:

Saturday 19th October at 11am, meet at Aireborough Leisure Centre, Guisley, LS20 9BT.

Sunday 20th October at 2pm, meet at Tesco Express, New Road Side, Horsforth, LS18 4QD.

Saturday 26th October at 11am, meet at Farsley Library, Old Road, LS28 5DH.

Sunday 27th October at 2pm, meet at Aireborough Leisure Centre, Guisley, LS20 9BT.



SWALLOW HILL SIXTH FORMERS TALK POLITICAL PRIORITIES

Rachel visited Swallow Hill Community College this month to talk to Sixth Formers about her role as an MP. Rachel asked pupils what their priorities would be if they could be an MP for the day and many suggestions were made, including getting rid of the bedroom tax, banning English Defence League marches and reducing University fees.



At the end of the debate pupils voted and decided their top two priorities were jobs and opportunities for Young

People and reducing University fees from their current level of £9000.

PUBLIC COFFEE EVENING

On Friday 18th October Rachel will be hosting a public coffee evening at St Margaret's Church, Newlay Lane, Bramley, from 3:30pm. The purpose of the meeting is for local residents to come along and discuss any housing concerns they have.

Housing representatives from Leeds City Council and Leeds Federated Homes will be in attendance, as well as journalist Polly Toynbee who is spending the day with Rachel.

We hope to see you there!

FUNDRAISING DINNER

Rachel is hosting a Fundraising dinner with guest speaker, Chuka Umunna MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on: Thursday 24th October from 7:15pm at The Refectory, Leeds University, Woodhouse Lane LS2 9JT

All the money raised will go to Pudsey and Leeds West CLPs to help with General Election campaign but most of all it will be a very enjoyable evening!

Tickets include a pre-dinner drinks reception and three course meal with wine.

Special rate of £40 a ticket for Labour Party members. Please email reevesmp@gmail.com to book your ticket or phone Jayne on 07764 196120

LEEDS WEST LABOUR ONLINE



<https://www.facebook.com/leedswestlabour>



<https://twitter.com/LeedsWestLabour>

Reeves secures top table job in Labour shake-up

JAMES REED

POLITICAL REPORTER

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LEEDS WEST MP Rachel Reeves was one of the big winners as both the Coalition and Labour reshuffled their teams yesterday in readiness for the General Election.

Ms Reeves, who recently returned to work after maternity leave, is Labour's new Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary where she will lead the party's approach to benefits changes.

Last night she said she was "honoured" to be given the job.

In a move that will alarm supporters of high speed rail Maria Eagle was moved out of her role as Shadow Transport Secretary.

Ms Eagle, who has also championed giving the North control over its own rail services, used

her speech at last month's Labour Party conference to stress her support for HS2 the day after Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls had expressed serious reservations about the cost.

Labour leader Ed Miliband

YEP SAYS

+RACHEL REEVES AND MARY CREAGH MUST NOW USE THEIR INCREASED INFLUENCE TO FIGHT THE REGION'S CORNER.

What do you think? Let us know:

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has switched her to Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the role which was previously held by Wakefield MP Mary Creagh who now takes over transport.

Barnsley MP Michael Dugher a former spokesman for Gordon

Brown, was promoted to Shadow Cabinet Office minister and Jon Trickett, MP for Hemsworth, becomes Labour vice-chairman.

Mr Balls, the MP for Morley and Outwood, and Castleford's Yvette Cooper retained their posts as Shadow Chancellor and Shadow Home Secretary.

At a time when West Yorkshire councils are pressing for more control over transport spending there will be welcome for Scarborough and Whitby Tory MP Robert Goodwill's appointment to the Department for Transport.

His was one of a raft of changes made by David Cameron and Nick Clegg which focused on the junior ministerial ranks.

They included making Keighley MP Kris Hopkins, a former leader of Bradford Council, a junior local government minister.

Parties prepare for run-up to election

RESHUFFLE MOVES

James Reed and Jack Blanchard

A NUMBER of Yorkshire MPs have been promoted after both the coalition and Labour reshuffled their teams in readiness for the run-in to the General Election.

Leeds West MP Rachel Reeves was one of the big winners to become the new Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, a job taken from Liam Byrne who became the focus of repeated coalition attacks over the note he left on his Treasury desk warning "there is no money".

Last night Ms Reeves, who was promoted by Ed Miliband from Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, said she was "honoured" to be given the job.

Wakefield MP Mary Creagh, formerly shadowing Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, takes over transport.

Barnsley East MP Michael Dugher a former spokesman for Gordon Brown, was promoted to Shadow Cabinet Office Minister and Jon Trickett, MP for Hemsworth, becomes Labour vice-chairman.

At a time when Yorkshire councils are pressing for more control over transport spending there will be welcome for Scarborough and Whitby Tory MP Robert Goodwill's appointment to the Department for Transport.

His was one of a raft of changes made by David Cameron and Nick Clegg which focused on the junior ministerial ranks.

Keighley MP Kris Hopkins has been made a junior Local Government Minister.

He said: "I was very humbled when the Prime Minister asked me to take on this role, and now look forward to the challenges ahead.

"As a former leader of Bradford Council and someone who cut his political teeth in local government, I have a huge regard for the work elected representatives and officers at all levels do on behalf of the communities they serve."

A new Minister will be overseeing the Government's role in the Tour de France Grand Départ which Yorkshire hosts next year. Sports Minister Hugh Robertson has moved to the Foreign Office and is replaced by Maidstone MP Helen Grant.

There will be relief in Yorkshire that Greg Clark has retained his

HIGH-PROFILE CASUALTIES

SCOTTISH Secretary Michael Moore was the highest-profile casualty of the twin reshuffles with Nick Clegg choosing to replace him with Lib Dem chief whip Alistair Carmichael.

Mr Clegg is believed to want a more attacking approach against Scottish First Minister Alec Salmond with a year to go until the referendum on Scottish independence.

The Deputy Prime Minister also removed Jeremy Browne, who has been touted as a future Lib Dem party leader, from his role as a Home Office Minister.

Browne was replaced by Transport Minister Norman Baker who is perhaps best known for his conspiracy theories over the death of scientist David Kelly.

"cities" brief after moving from the Treasury to the Cabinet Office.

He has played a key role in the negotiation of "city deals" that have moved powers and money from Whitehall to West and South Yorkshire with discussions also ongoing over a similar deal for the Humber.

He is seen as one of the coalition Ministers who is genuinely enthusiastic about devolution to the regions.

David Cameron left the Conservative members of the Cabinet unchanged – but handed promotions to women MPs including former television presenter Esther McVey and Nicky Morgan.

Ms McVey has been pushed up the ranks at the Department for Work and Pensions to become Employment Minister, while Ms Morgan goes from assistant whip

to Economic Secretary to the Treasury.

Anna Soubry has been moved sideways from her junior ministerial role in the Department of Health to become the first female MP to be a Minister at the Ministry of Defence.

Allies of Chancellor George Osborne also fared well, with Sajid Javid made Financial Secretary to the Treasury and Matthew Hancock becoming Skills and Enterprise minister.

East Yorkshire MP Greg Knight will leave the Whips' Office just over a year after he was handed the role.

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs saw a shake-up with George Eustice – Mr Cameron's former press secretary and a prominent EU rebel – appointed Environment Minister – the expense of Richard Benyon and Lib Dem David Heath sacked in favour of Dan Rogerson.

Tory Ministers who lost their jobs included Mark Hoban, Mark Prisk, Richard Benyon, and Alistair Burt.

Last night Mr Cameron said the reshuffle had been an opportunity to bring forward some fresh talent.

"What you do is refresh the team and I've got a talented bunch of MPs and it's right some of them should be serving in the Government," he said.

"There was a mixture of people from all sorts of backgrounds and walks of life. The main thing is are they qualified to do the job and I think they will prove that."

Against expectations, Andy Burnham will continue as Shadow Health Secretary on the Labour benches where Yorkshire MPs Ed Balls and Yvette Cooper are retained as Shadow Chancellor and Shadow Home Secretary.

Fellow Yorkshire MPs Rosie Winterton, Caroline Flint and Hilary Benn also keep their Shadow Cabinet posts.

Shadow Defence Secretary Jim Murphy is shifted to oversee international development policy, with Vernon Coaker taking over defence.

Stephen Twigg was ejected from education in favour of TV historian Tristram Hunt.

Former Shipley MP Chris Leslie, who now represents Nottingham East, is promoted from shadow financial secretary to the Treasury to Shadow Chief Secretary.

Comment: Page 10.

"I was very humbled when the Prime minister asked me to take on this role."

John McTernan: The true heroes of politics



A Labour candidate campaigns door to door the kind of pavement politics that swims against a tide of cynicism and isolating technology. Picture: Getty

- by JOHN MCTERNAN

Tirelessly knocking on doors, pushing leaflets through letterboxes and contesting unwinnable seats, an army of party activists keeps the faith, writes John McTernan

‘You’re Veronica McTernan’s son, aren’t you?’ boomed a Scottish voice across the bar filled with conference delegates in the Grand Hotel in Brighton. That took me right back to my teenage years in Edinburgh, when I was defined within the Labour Party not in my own right but as an appendage of my parents. I’m a grown-up I thought, I’ve worked for three prime ministers, and I’ve got my own enemies on Twitter and everything.

The delegate went on: “Your mum, she makes the best cakes.” Agreeing, and asking how he knew, I realised that this was one of my mother’s most diligent campaign supporters. She is standing in a council by-election in the Borders today – one that she will only win if there is a miracle, or as she’d say, “a red revolution”. But that’s the point. She’s flying the flag just like she always has done. Indeed, she’s been standing in unwinnable seats for the past forty years – she’d probably have a heart attack if she won.

Once, in Morningside, someone insultingly, but rather brilliantly, wrote against her name: “Not under any circumstance.” A memorable way to spoil your ballot. But it didn’t matter – her aim was not to win, it was to give people a Labour candidate. And the seeds she sowed paid off – Edinburgh South and eventually Edinburgh Pentlands ended up with Labour MPs. The toil was rewarded. But flying the flag was an end in itself. She and hosts of people like her in every single party in the country are the true, if unsung, heroines (and heroes) of British politics.

There’s a lot said nowadays about the lack of respect for professional politicians. Almost all of it is true. When you are less respected than estate agents and loan-sharks you either need to find a different profession or a different country – or maybe both. But anyone who works in or around politics knows that despite the frailty of individual politicians there is a nobility inherent in the enterprise.

It’s not the vaulting ambition of the key players. Why on earth do MPs say they came into politics to change the world? The honest answer is that they came into it because they like to tell other people what to do. What else, in the end, is legislation or taxation but enforced conduct or confiscate earnings? And it’s not their crisp, clear and honest analysis of the world. Listen to a government minister of any party. Don’t you wish that you could believe in anything as much as they seem to believe in everything, at least everything that they are doing at any given time.

The true nobility lies with the true believers, the ones who pound the pavement week after week. The people who never seek high office or even a paid staff job. For them, politics is something between a vocation and a civic duty. They leaflet a neighbourhood, they canvass for support for their party, they raise money – without them there would be no political parties. And let’s imagine a world without political parties. I know, I know. Doesn’t seem so bad, in a way, does it? But forget the politicians, just for the moment. In the end, politics is a way we pool our differences – I trade my views about defence of the realm against yours about privatisation and someone else’s on freedom and liberty. We settle for one tribe or another and find a party that broadly represents what we want. The miracle is that it works.

Labour, Lib Dem, Tory or SNP. Members of political parties find enough of a family resemblance between their beliefs and those of their fellow believers to know that they can march under a common banner for change – or, as with Ukip, march boldly into the past. We are blessed to live in a democracy – despite all its flaws – because our political parties allow a mass of individuals to transmit their values and preferences upwards. The

alternative is the downward transmission of a monolithic ideology. And as the radicals said in the Sixties – democracy is in the streets.

It starts with my mum and her activists (and her opponents and their supporters) knocking on your door. We take for granted the fact that a total stranger can knock on your door and ask who you are going to vote for – and that we are happy to tell them. We let canvassers write it down, store the information on a computer and then use it to pester us on polling day until they know we have voted.

Think of what that says about how deep our trust in each other is. In some countries it can still be life-threatening – or at least limb-threatening – to let neighbours, let alone strangers, know how you will vote. If there is a greatness still about Britain it is surely here, where we weave and re-weave the delicate bonds of our communities at every election. For there are European countries with long traditions of democracy where door-to-door canvassing is looked at as a massive invasion of privacy. Not us.

But it's more even than that. It's an antidote to modern life. What is it that characterises how we live today? Speed – of life, of transport, of trends, of change. And cocooning by technology as well. Talking or texting on our phones as we walk down a street – and, sometimes fatally, as we drive. Doing the same on public transport, or reading our Kindle or our tablet. Listening to an iPod. Shutting ourselves off from each other in every way possible. Just as there is a fashion nowadays for slow food, we need slow communities too. And pavement politics is the basic building block of that. Walking from house to house, flat to flat. Delivering leaflets. Knocking on doors. Talking to people. Seeing the broken paving stones. Hearing about the street lights that don't work. Promising to get something done about it – and delivering. Renewing the physical capital of an area, but refreshing its social capital too.

Cynicism about politics is summed up in the phrases – “they're all the same” and “if voting changed anything they'd abolish it”. Not true. The party people you see on your doorstep – during elections, and between them – modestly and unassumingly refute those statements. They make the difference because they are the difference. Newton famously said his achievements in science were because he stood on the shoulders of giants. In politics the reverse is true, the big things are achieved because the leading politicians are supported by a host of little people – what Burke called the small battalions.

So, when my mum loses her by-election tomorrow (the count is on Friday) I will raise a glass to her and the political culture she creates. And I'll raise a glass to the members and activists of every other party too – without them our system would not work.

- John McTernan is a former communications director to former Australian prime minister Julia Gillard and was political secretary to prime minister Tony Blair

Rachel Reeves MP's speech to Labour Party Annual Conference 2013

-CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY-

Rachel Reeves MP, Labour's Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, speaking to Labour Party Annual Conference 2013 in Brighton, said:

Conference, three weeks ago I returned from maternity leave.

It's been wonderful to have that time to spend with my new baby daughter.

But it's also great to be back.

The time I've spent away from Westminster, chatting with other new mums and dads thinking about the future we all want for our children has made me more determined than ever.

Determined to get this rotten government out of office, and determined to put Ed Miliband in Number Ten Downing Street.

Conference, I know you are as angry as I am about what this government is doing to our country.

A million young people on the dole.

The longest wage squeeze in history.

More people trapped in insecure, low paid jobs.

And, after three wasted years of economic flat lining, their promise to deal with the deficit in tatters.

This is the legacy that Cameron will leave us.

This inheritance will mean difficult decisions.

It means not making promises we can't keep.

But it does not mean we leave our values at the door.

It means they matter more than ever.

Because we in the Labour Party know that when money is tight, you get your priorities straight:

You help ordinary families before cutting taxes for millionaires;

You expand free childcare before cutting taxes for banks;

You get unemployed people back to work, before letting bank bonuses get back to business as usual;

You make sure energy companies lower the bills, before walking away with record profits;

You make sure there's a primary school place for every child, wherever they live, before spending money in areas where there's already enough;

You make sure we've got enough nurses, before wasting billions on a bungled NHS reorganisation;

You put a stop to payday loan companies charging exorbitant interest rates, before more people sink into unmanageable debt;

And you get serious about tackling tax evasion and avoidance, before clobbering vulnerable families and disabled people with the bedroom tax.

Different parties - different values - different choices.

So, Conference, the fiscal challenge we face will make us bolder and braver in driving through the reforms we need.

Because in the end it's the taxpayer that picks up the bill when people can't earn enough to live on, and their children grow up in poverty, and vested interests can force up the cost of fuel, transport, credit, or housing.

Today we've been hearing about how Labour will change all this.

A compulsory jobs guarantee to end the scourge of youth unemployment.

Proper apprenticeships a condition for winning big government contracts.

A bank in every region dedicated to funding small businesses.

Childcare that means mums and dads who want to work and earn can do so.

Everyone taking their responsibility, and given a chance to play their part.

A One Nation economy will be more successful and sustainable, and it will be an economy in which those who put in the work share in the prosperity they help to create.

For me, the proudest achievement of the last Labour government was the National Minimum Wage.

It lifted millions out of working poverty, the majority of them women.

But in recent years its value has fallen behind prices, and while we know some employers may try to get around it there hasn't been a single successful prosecution in the past two years.

So I'm delighted that Ed Balls told us this morning that a Labour government will strengthen the minimum wage:

Doing more to enforce it, increasing fines for those who break the rules;

Expanding the role of the Low Pay Commission;

And ensuring that its value is restored in real terms.

And while the National Minimum Wage should always provide a robust legal minimum, it should not be the summit of our ambitions.

A year ago, in Manchester I was proud to share the platform with another mum, Fran, who works at Manchester College who told us what winning the right to the Living Wage had meant to her and her family.

Fran's children are both fantastic basketball players.

Before, money was so tight, she couldn't afford to go to the matches or get the boots they needed to compete.

Now she's had the pay rise, she can help her children realise their dreams.

The campaign for a living wage is about so much more than money, it's about the dignity of work and the sanctity of family life.

That's why I'm so proud that it's Labour councils, working with trade unions and community organisations, from Islington to Preston, Oxford to Newcastle, Cardiff to Glasgow leading the way, paying the living wage.

And it's why I'm so pleased to be working with Alan Buckle, Deputy Chair of KPMG, one of the earliest adopters of the living wage, to see how a Labour government can get more firms paying the living wage.

Because we know that better pay isn't just good for workers and their families, it also means better businesses.

And an economy that is creating more jobs, paying good wages, with real security and opportunity, means we are less reliant on public spending to secure fairness and a decent standard of living for all.

Conference, families know David Cameron has made lives harder for them.

He's presided over a cost of living crisis and he's not bringing the deficit down either.

Labour's task is to deal with both.

But that will make us more radical, not less in pursuit of our priorities.

So let no one tell you that there is no alternative, let no one tell you a Labour government can't make any difference.

Today's debate, the brilliant contributions we've heard, have proved that we have the ideas and the energy to deliver.

So let's take the message from conference floor to every corner of the United Kingdom.

Labour will deal with the cost of living crisis.

We'll deal with the deficit.

And we will ensure that every child in our country can look forward to a better future.