



British Independents

Local Government



Local government requires a complete overhaul. Its current structure generates significant, costly inefficiencies and severely hampers the delivery of coordinated, multi-agency services.

British Independents will move to an organisational model that, in most cases, will see the delivery of single, county-wide unitary authorities. Local authority information technology will be delivered by regional IT service centres, using shared processes, strategic IT frameworks, and [TADAG](#)-based citizen information records repositories. These two measures alone will save in excess of £2bn per year.

Police and Crime Commissioners and chief officers of public services will report directly to their local councils. British Independents will reduce the number of councillors, in most cases, to one per ward. There will be a focus on delivering services within neighbourhoods, extending the current multi-agency model to provide coordinated social care, policing and community services.

Law and Order

There is a clear preference expressed by the citizens for higher visibility of police



officers on foot. Chief Constables should be reminded that policing is a community service that should reflect the needs and wishes of the public that it serves.

Too much of modern policing has been compartmentalised with police officers receiving inadequate training, often lacking the thorough grounding in criminal law received by previous generations. This has been tolerated by successive Home Secretaries to the point that the circle is now squared with supervisory officers similarly lacking in a detailed understanding of the law. Compartmentalised processes may be convenient for performance monitoring but they fail to provide the kind of holistic police service required to maximise efficiency.

The success of Police and Community Support Officers varies considerably across the UK. Whilst they can be a useful community resource, PCSOs must not be used as 'in-fill' where a police constable is required. Often budgetary constraints are cited

as the reasons why a 'beat copper' can't be provided. The reality is that too many chief police officers lack the organisational management skills to run a complex modern organisation. Generally, highly expensive back office services like IT are in a poor state with little or no recognition of the available savings. Dealing with back office inefficiencies is the key to reassigning resource to the frontline.

British Independents recognises the need for a specialist national support team to assist chief police officers in transforming their forces independently from the predatory grasp of private sector suppliers. The current Police ICT Company is a start but it must not be used as a backdoor for privatisation. The remit of any national team should be widened to incorporate strategic business transformation, not just information technology.

British Independents is in favour of maintaining Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) but they must be made more directly accountable to the public. Specifically, all PCCs should bring the police complaints process within their offices.

Corruption and malpractice is endemic within British public services. British Independents will bring all public service regulators and ombudsmen under the roof of a Public Investigations Bureau (PIB). The PIB will allow regulators to work across services and would extend its powers to include its own criminal investigation of public bodies. So, for example, the Local Government Ombudsman and the IPCC would be departments of the PIB, with an ability to escalate to criminal investigations across constabularies and councils. In support of this strategy, the offence of misconduct in public office would be strengthened to allow criminal prosecution of any public servant who knowingly allowed harm to be caused to a member of the public.

More generally, British Independents perceives a general breakdown in discipline and order in many communities. We will bring antisocial behaviour back into the police's domain by revising public order legislation whilst insisting on a zero-tolerance policy towards the drunken louts that blight many of our towns and cities.

Education



education.

The obsession with targets and league tables must end. League tables will be abolished and SATs will go on-line to remove some of the administrative burden from teachers. Schools will be made more accountable to parents. Exercise and nutrition will become major focus points for a child's wellbeing. There will be a greater emphasis on vocational skills for further and higher

education. There is an oft-touted argument that selective education produces higher standards. The greater achievement of pupils from the private school system is also often cited as demonstrating the inadequacies of the state education system. The reality is that students in private education have a wide a range of abilities with many of its pupils not being considered academic. Private schools succeed because: they have smaller class sizes, they work longer hours, they have a culture of striving for

excellence in all areas (not just academic), and a larger proportion of pupils' parents are themselves motivated towards success.

The tick box culture of state education has encouraged headteachers to focus on the middle ground as providing the biggest performance managed bang per buck. The needs of gifted and talented children have largely been ignored, particularly those that don't fit the education system's assessment criteria. As a result, for highly intelligent children who think outside the box, state schools can be a harrowing and demotivating experience.

British Independents will ensure that: teaching assistants are encouraged to work towards a formal teaching qualification, that children have a minimum of 2.5 hours over at least three days per week of physical exercise, that part of the curriculum migrates to internet based home study, that only healthy food is served in schools, and that the administrative burden placed on teachers is significantly reduced.

New schools building should focus on the community college model, linking, if needs be, to private health clubs, sports clubs, and even hotels, to provide facilities for the all of the local population. School kitchens should be a community resource, providing meals for those needing social care support, as well as those using the community college's facilities.

British Independents recognises that budgets and school places cannot stay on track whilst the UK allows mass immigration. Central to our education policy is an understanding of the requirement for proper border controls, that can only be delivered via the UK's withdrawal from political union with the EU.

Hands off our NHS!



The NHS is at the core of the British way of life. Access to healthcare for British citizens must be free at the point of service. We'll get rid of the 'targets' bureaucracy, streamline services, and restore control of healthcare to medical professionals.

No one is in any doubt that, however precious the NHS, there is much to be done in improving efficiency. Often, doctors and nurses feel powerless to effect change, so we want to ensure that they are put back in the driving seat and allowed to drive changes that they know will work.

However, there does need to be a refocus on health policy that understands that issues like obesity risk bankrupting the NHS. As any doctor will tell you, prevention is better than cure. British Independents advocates the revival of physical exercise in schools, with sport and other physically demanding activities built into the school curriculum, to provide a minimum of 2.5 hours per week over a minimum of three days.

British Independents believes that habits and culture are instilled at an early age and that our current state education system is failing our children and condemning them to a life of ill health at a cost that is unsustainable to the NHS. Joining up

education and health policies is just one area where joined-up thinking can save £billions.

Tax Reform



The UK's tax system is not fit for purpose. We'll seek a comprehensive review of taxation, to include replacing Council Tax with Income Tax, a clamp down on corporate tax dodgers, and a simplification of the tax system to reduce the burden on small businesses.

The past few years has evidenced that large corporations and rich individuals are free to abuse UK tax law to avoid and evade tax. British Independents will seek to close the loopholes and ensure that a fair share is returned to the British economy.

A complete rewrite of the tax system is necessary to eradicate the army of tax administrators and advisors that place an unnecessary and unwelcome burden on business.

Whilst we recognise the opportunity for the UK to be an independent powerhouse trading across world markets, the UK is currently hamstrung by a requirement to observe EU mandates in areas like VAT. Ultimately, if we want to be free to fix our tax system, we have to leave the EU to be able to achieve that goal.

Immigration and EU Membership



We will continue to trade with Europe whilst extricating the UK from political union with the European Union. The UK does not have an 'instant on' capability to provide services for mass immigration. Uncontrolled immigration impacts jobs, housing, schools, transport, and healthcare. We welcome those with the skills to help us prosper as a country but, in common with many other countries in the world, we will

impose a strict points-based system for immigration.

The original proposal for the Common Market that was put to the British people decades ago made no mention of tight political and legislative union. The British people have been conned by self-serving bureaucrats and large corporations that use the EU legislation as an anti-competitive club with which to beat upcoming businesses.

Sadly, a large part of our media is seemingly unable to contemplate the proposition of leaving the EU whilst, in some areas, failing to declare commercial interests in the form of EU grants. It's worth remembering that our current trade deficit with the EU is running at around £40bn per year. If we were to leave the EU, it would be the rest of Europe that was banging on our door asking for a trade deal. When did you last hear that in the mainstream media?

Public Ownership of Essential Services



Essential services should not be run for private profit. We'll bring gas, electricity, water, railways, communications infrastructure and the Royal Mail into public ownership so that profits are ploughed back into services, whilst providing coherent strategies and long term price stability for the benefit of citizens and industry.

Currently, we have an absurd situation where overseas state-owned utility companies are profiting from their shares in Britain's essential services. The myth that private is best is just that. Our bills have increased whilst a minority have taken the British tax payer to the cleaners. We have already seen evidence of well paid privatisation lobbyists finding their way into parliament to coerce and cajole their parties towards yet more lucrative sell-offs. Whenever public need is met by private greed, corruption is never far behind...

Child Protection



The UK is fast attracting a poor reputation as one of only two countries in the western world where forced adoption is a cornerstone of child protection policy. The removal of a child from its parents against their wishes is one of the most dire events that can happen to anyone, yet forced adoption is rapidly becoming the norm. Once a forced adoption has taken place, there is no recourse for the parents. They are gone forever with no contact being allowed.

Of course, there are genuine instances where there is no alternative but British Independents believes that forced adoption should be the very last alternative and that proceedings must be subject to proper scrutiny instead of being hidden behind an overly secretive legal process.

Ministers will point out that forced adoption is just one facet of a child protection regime that is considered to be robust and focused on the needs of children. However, the evidence points to the contrary. Government targets for adoption are incentivising local authorities to maintain a consistent supply of easy to adopt children. Often the private sector, including US venture capitalists, drives the ramp up in local authority interventions for profit. Supported by the secrecy of the family justice system, local authorities have a blank cheque for legal fees compared to families who are often left defenceless, without legal aid or representation.

Whilst government and its media outlets currently trumpet an upsurge in adoption statistics, what they don't tell you is that adoptions have increased spectacularly for babies and young children but the rate for older, 'hard to place' children, whom the targets were supposed to assist, has fallen through the floor. The UK may have a robust child protection system but it's the only one in the world from which parents are fleeing the country in their hundreds.

British Independents will remove the target culture, open up the family justice system to public scrutiny, and prosecute professionals who abuse their authority. The existing criminal offence of misconduct in public office will be strengthened to include anyone who knowingly causes or allows a child to suffer harm, even when another agency is involved. A new regulatory framework will deliver a coherent, cross-agency capability to hold all public officials properly to account.

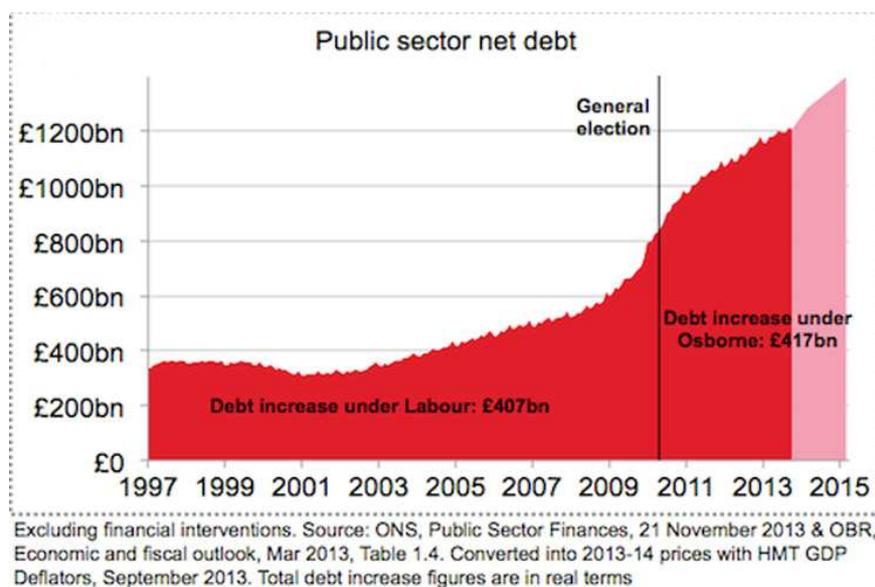
FOOTNOTE: Our party leader, David Gale, is the voluntary CEO of KidsForCashUK.org and has been involved in exposing corruption, malpractice and collusion within local authority children's services, the police, and the courts. He continues to be at the forefront of the drive to expose paedophiles and, working with victims, was recently successful in his public call to Leicestershire's Police and Crime Commissioner for a review of historic sex abuse cases. As such, it may be construed that he has an personal interest in this policy, and you'd be right. So here is that interest declared.

Economy



Do you know the difference between the national deficit and the national debt? Not many do but successive governments have conned the British people by persistently talking about 'reducing the deficit' when the reality is that debt is increasing dramatically. There is an urgent need to begin the process of down-sizing government, to include the eradication of entire departments.

The figures speak for themselves.



What's really happening is that whilst overall debt is increasing, the burden of the deficit is being passed from the public to the private purse. It is a con trick on an epic scale.

Meanwhile, the banks, whose greed caused the crash, have escaped virtually unscathed. British Independents recognises the danger in allowing banks to become 'too big to fail'. It is now the case that many are regarded as 'too big to jail'. We would seek a restructuring of banking groups to deliver direct accountability of individual companies. Where banks abuse their market dominance across their operating companies, we would split them up. Never again must the British economy and the British people be held hostage to the short term profiteering of city spivs.

Britain is one of the world's leading innovators and whilst we have some shining examples of success, too many good ideas end up being manufactured elsewhere. Our overall focus would be to encourage Britain's manufacturing industry to invest in the UK by ensuring a tax framework that recognises the importance of remaining competitive on the global stage. Our wealth is dependent upon what we sell. If we don't invest in manufacturing, we have no sustainable means of improving our economy.

Defence



"If you want peace, prepare for war." Britain's conventional defences have been depleted by successive governments to the point where there is now a real danger that we have been left defenceless. The ability to be able to respond with conventional, non-nuclear force, is an absolute requirement that is being ignored.

Whilst much of recent conflict has been instigated by the corporate interests that infest the US and UK administrations, conventional forces have reduced to the point where a potential adversary might reasonably conclude that we would be unable to respond to an attack.

In the modern age, the intercontinental ballistic missile carrying nuclear warheads has become redundant. The cost of maintaining Trident is currently running at over £3bn per year. Yet we insist on sending our armed forces into theatre without the requisite equipment, we fail to support them once they're there, and we throw them on the scrap heap when they return. It is a national disgrace.

British Independents would scrap the Trident missile programme and rebuild our armed forces with a clean sheet vision, whilst removing the expensive bureaucratic encumbrance that is the Ministry of Defence.

Transport



Transport policy in the UK has become a free for all. A lack of strategic planning and a dogmatic focus on privatisation has led to spiralling costs and a rail transport system that takes more in subsidy than British Rail ever did. Motorists

contribute nearly £40bn per year in motoring related taxes, the vast majority of which plays no part in maintaining our road network.

As our economic situation improves, British Independents will seek to ring-fence a growing proportion of motoring related taxation for reinvestment in the transport infrastructure. We will encourage the use of new technology to remove the requirement for heavy, tax subsidised buses to rumble around our streets without passengers for a large proportion of the time. The technology exists to allow smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles to be available on demand for prescribed routes during non-peak times.

We would introduce a national 20 mph speed limit for dense residential areas and an absolute right of way for pedestrians and cyclists in those same areas. We would increase the motorway maximum speed limit to 80mph within a variable speed limit framework.

British Independents will return the railways to public ownership and reinvest profits to expand our conventional railways. We will scrap HS2 and HS3 which are yesterday's solution to yesterday's problem. We would move to change the UK's culture so that more business meetings are conducted using video conferencing technology.

One of the keys to improving transport in the UK is to control our borders. If three million more are allowed to come to the UK, no one should be at all surprised when there is a consequential impact on our transport capacity. Our policy of leaving the EU and putting in place proper border controls will have a significant impact on all of the UK's infrastructure, including transport.

Parliament



Turkeys seldom vote for Christmas but the scale and costs of government needs to be reduced. British Independents will reduce the number of MPs and local authority councillors. We will introduce secure electronic voting so that MPs can spend more time in their constituencies working on behalf of their constituents. The need for a second home for MPs will be removed.

We will seek to introduce modern information technology into parliament so that, for example, committee work can use video conferencing technology. We will bring social media technology into parliament, so that the electorate can be consulted by parliament on a more timely basis.

We will encourage a wider pool of talent for the House of Lords which will be strengthened as part of the checks and balances on the activities of government. We will remove the link between state and religion, as well as removing the automatic entitlement for Lords Spiritual to have a seat in the House of Lords. Religion should play no part in matters of government or state and should be a matter solely for the private lives of individuals.

We would seek to reduce the legislative timetable in parliament to allow proper debate and formulation of policies by cross party consensus. Questions asked in parliament would be subjected to a requirement for honest, straightforward answers. British Independents will dispense with tradition wherever it impacts efficiency. There would be an outright ban on MPs attending lobby group social events, as well as a lifetime ban on MPs accepting any paid position within any organisation linked to policy areas previously governed by that MP.