

Greens call for Rishi Sunak to publish tax returns in first 100 days in office



Green Party

30 January 2023

The Green Party has called on Rishi Sunak to publish his tax returns before he marks his first 100 days in office on Thursday [February 2] to increase transparency in a government that is losing the confidence of the public on a daily basis.

Following the sacking of Nadhim Zahawi as Conservative Party chairman for breaches of the ministerial code over his tax affairs, Green Party deputy leader Zack Polanski has urged the Prime Minister to publish his own tax returns, and to insist all government ministers do the same, in a bid to increase trust in politics.

Mr Sunak has previously promised he will publish them at some point, and had suggested he would do it before Christmas, but there is still no sign of them despite the fact he will reach his first 100 days milestone this week.

Green Party deputy leader Zack Polanski said:

“Rishi Sunak has spent nearly 100 days as Prime Minister yet despite his claim to clean up the image of the Conservative Party we continue to see a government lurching from crisis to crisis.

“This latest controversy with his former party chairman is another step towards the complete erosion of trust the public has in politics.

“Meanwhile, dealing with one crisis of their own making after another has left this government with little time to focus on what they should be doing – helping people through the cost of living crisis and reversing years of damage to our environment and public services.

“It is vital this government begins to rebuild the trust of the public and gets on with the important work it is currently neglecting. A small, but important, first step would be for Rishi Sunak, and all of his Cabinet, to publish their tax returns, in the interests of transparency and to be full and frank with the people they are supposed to be serving.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/nov/16/rishi-sunak-says-he-hopes-to-publish-tax-return-by-christmas>

For more information or to arrange an interview contact the press office on press@greenparty.org.uk or call 0203 691 9401

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[Green peer urges Lords to delete “pre-crime” from Public Order Bill](#)



Green Party

27 January 2023

Green Party peer Jenny Jones has urged the Lords to stop the government’s “pre-crime” laws in a vote on the Public Order Bill on Monday.

The government has proposed late amendments to the Bill that give the police power to ban protests, or a series of protests, ahead of them being held. It doesn’t matter if the organisers have never been convicted of a crime and what’s planned is non violent, the intention is enough for the police to judge it as illegal, if they feel it will ‘seriously disrupt’ someone’s life.

A protest only has to be “more than minor interference” to be counted as “serious disruption” under a government supported amendment. The judgement over what is minor, rather than “more than minor interference”, will be left to the police to predict, ahead of the proposed protest.

As these pre-crime amendments have been submitted late and in the Lords, it means the Lords can vote them out of the bill.

Green Party peer, Baroness Jenny Jones said:

“The Lords have a rare opportunity to stop the draconian shift towards pre-crime. Under these proposals, the police will be able to ban protests that they think might cause more than minor disruption.

“A government that bans strikes, introduces voter suppression and stops effective protest is destroying democracy from within. I hope the Labour peers will pull out all the stops and join with the rest of us who aim to stop pre-crime and these other draconian proposals from becoming law.”

“The practicalities of enforcing pre-crime are fraught with problems for the police. For example, the million strong protest against the Iraq War caused serious disruption, but there has never been a law that allows the police to ban such a gathering.

“The police might have to guess at the numbers attending a demonstration and what the protestors might, or might not, do. Pre-crime laws give the police a huge discretionary power to decide what is a good or a bad protest. It puts the police in the position of making political choices with government Ministers applying pressure to ban protests that are embarrassing to them.”

ENDS

For more information or to arrange an interview contact Ian Wingrove on media@jennyjones.org

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Farm payment reforms “represent a handful of lifeboats launched in the face of an oncoming tsunami”



Green Party

26 January 2023

Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay responds to the government's farming payment reform announcement [1].

Adrian Ramsay says:

"The government's long-delayed replacement for EU farm payments represents an admission of failure.

"Government has failed to grasp the scale of the nature emergency, the climate emergency and the food poverty emergency. These seismic crises threaten the very existence of our farmers and the security of our food supply.

"Never has farming been more important and yet the government has yet again failed to grasp the opportunity to make the radical yet pragmatic reforms that would help the agricultural sector meet its environmental obligations.

"Farming and food produce nearly one-third of greenhouse gases and are the biggest driver of wildlife loss. Rising food prices worsen the cost-of-living catastrophe.

"The Green Party's joined-up vision would use the billions of pounds we already spend in subsidies to tackle these related crises, and ensure farmers are valued and supported.

"For instance, we would refocus farm subsidies to help farmers transition to more sustainable, diverse and environmentally friendly forms of land use, including organic farming, agroforestry and mixed farming, and away from intensive livestock farming.

"We would provide farmers with grants to allow replacement of old high-emitting carbon farming machinery with low carbon machinery, and we would legislate to give farmers greater security of tenure, so that they can invest in sustainable improvements.

"The government's national food strategy ignored the recommendations of its own advisers [2] and we ended up with a fragmented and diluted response to the needs of farmers and consumers. Now, after months of unforgivable delay, we have a repeat performance on payments.

"Farmers want to do the right thing for climate and nature – but they need a vision, and they need sensible, targeted support – and that is what is missing. Too many of the small, innovative farmers are already on the brink of bankruptcy.

"Of the 280 measures announced today, there are a few welcome individual steps, but they do not lead to a sustainable future. They represent a handful of lifeboats launched in the face of an oncoming tsunami."

NOTES:

[1]

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/therese-coffey-farmers-central-to-food-pro>

[duction-and-environmental-action](#)

[2]

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jun/13/food-plan-for-england-condemned-by-its-own-lead-adviser>

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[Green peer seeks to block new genetic engineering legislation](#)



Green Party

25 January 2023

A Green Party peer has accused the government of using a ‘marketing slogan’ to push genetically modified foods on the public ‘by the back door’.

Natalie Bennett, former Green Party leader and now Green peer, says that the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill [1], which passed through the Commons and is in its final substantive stage in the Lords today, would allow genetically engineered foods to be marketed without labelling. A government consultation showed that 88% of the public and 65% of businesses were against the proposals.

Natalie is offering a last chance for the House to exclude animals from the Bill, or to exclude non-food plants and animals (like dogs and cats) from the Bill.

Natalie Bennett said:

“‘Precision Breeding’ is a marketing slogan, not a technical or legal term and has no place in the title of the Bill or future Act. It may sound clean and targeted, but look deeper and the dangers and potential unforeseen consequences of genetic modification are there. This is genetically engineered food by the back door, and with none of the labelling that allows consumers to make a choice.

“The science of gene editing is still far too uncertain and has been insufficiently considered or understood by the government, or adequately scrutinised by parliament. The public and businesses understand the risks better than the government – a majority showed overwhelming opposition to this dangerous legislation when the government consulted on the Bill.

“After detailed, substantive and critical debate earlier in the House of Lords, we’ve seen only extremely weak amendments put forward by Labour. My final attempt to offer the government a constructive way forward is to propose a process of deliberative democracy, to allow careful considerations of the issues that the parliamentary process has failed to address, including the labelling the public so clearly wants to see.”

[1] <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3167>

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[Caroline Lucas responds to Chris Skidmore’s Net Zero Review](#)



Green Party

12 January 2023

“This review has to spell an end to ducking, dodging and delaying action”

Caroline Lucas, Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion, has the following response to Chris Skidmore’s Net Zero Review:

“If this review is to be met with any level of seriousness within Whitehall, then it has to spell an end to the Government’s current approach of ducking, dodging and delaying action.

“The overriding message from this review is one of urgency. We don’t have a moment to lose in our race to tackle the climate emergency – yet this Tory Government is content to flip-flop on fracking, greenlight new oil & gas and approve a climate-busting coal mine.

“If we are to move ‘further and faster’, as this review demands, we need every house to become its own power station. That means a turbo-charging of onshore wind and full-scale deployment of solar, with solar panels on every new roof in the country, in the transition towards clean, green, affordable renewables.

“But it also means we need to lock out climate-wrecking fossil fuels for good. This review might shy away from the truly transformative measures to end our dependence on dirty, dangerous fossil fuels. But the writing is on the wall for the fossil fuel industry – our Government needs to see it.”

ENDS

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