

Radio Berkshire debate

I did not get my wish of a debate between all 5 candidates. I held out to try and get such a debate but two candidates apparently turned down all offers. I compromised with Radio Berkshire and joined two of the other parties for a three way.

In the hour long exchanges no questions were asked about many of the local priorities I have been working on. There was nothing on traffic and congestion, or road safety and jammed junctions. There was nothing on planning and the need for a slower rate of development in the next plan period. There was nothing on the need for more and better rail services, and nothing on plans and budgets for our schools.

We did get to discuss poverty, NHS staffing, an individual migration case, climate change, as well as fake news, participation by electors in the election, participation by candidates in debates and other media oriented topics.

The programme opened with quite lengthy interviews with us over Brexit, and our past and present views on how this should be handled. I made sure we also discussed the crucial issue of the economy, setting out briefly Conservative plans for greater prosperity with a budget to boost growth early next year if there is a Conservative majority.

We need a majority government who can boost our economy now with the right budget

As feared and forecast here UK growth in the latest figures has slowed again, as has growth in most parts of the world.

I have been recommending for sometime that we need both a monetary and a fiscal stimulus. Monetary change awaits a new Governor of the Bank of England, which in turn awaits a government with a majority. Fiscal change also is waiting on such a government. The outgoing minority Conservative government did not think it could get the tax cuts through the Commons that the economy now needs to give it a boost and was apparently unable to agree with officials about a suitable new Governor.

The hung Parliament that did so much to create uncertainty and delay over Brexit did other damage as well. It diverted attention from big matters like the need for an economic boost, and made officials minded to avoid changes

on the grounds that there was no Parliamentary majority for anything worth doing.

The new government formed by a change of PM has clearly signalled they recognise the need for a budget which boosts incomes, activity and public services. We need it as soon as possible. It is a fundamental reason why we need a government with a majority on December 13th so we can get on with the changes we need. The USA has recently seen a \$150bn injection by the Central Bank into markets to give things a boost even though the USA is growing much faster than the EU or UK. The ECB is administering a Euro 20 bn a month stimulus. The UK does not need more Quantitative easing but it could do with facilities for banks prepared to lend against good projects and to consumers to buy homes and cars. Consumers could do with a post Christmas present of keeping more of their earnings to spend on their priorities.

[Waiting for treatment](#)

No-one should have to wait a long time for NHS treatment. Our hearts reach out to any child and parents who have had a bad experience. It is not what any of us wants. The government has rightly pledged more money and more staff. It is important this is well managed to prevent these unacceptable incidents in future.

[Labour knows how to borrow too much to bring on an economic collapse](#)

Some younger voters may not have studied UK economic history. There has been a depressing pattern to it all.

The 1964-70 Labour government borrowed and spent too much. It was forced into a devaluation and had to impose austerity policies to try to rally the currency.

The 1974-9 Labour government overspent and overborrowed to such an extent that they ran out of money and had to go to the IMF for a loan. There was further devaluation. The IMF imposed tough austerity conditions on the loan which then governed Labour policy.

The 1997-2010 Labour government lasted longer because for the first few years it followed inherited Conservative spending and tax plans which worked. Then it cranked up the spending and borrowing – particularly through the private

finance initiative lumbering public services with large debts- and presided over the crash of 2008-9.

The last two Labour governments both raised unemployment by around half a million people. Indeed every Labour government apart from the first short lived minority one has left office with unemployment up on where it started.

A sensible amount of credit, and borrowing for worthwhile investment, can help an economy. Excessive state credit and excessive state spending with high taxes is always a ruinous combination. It makes people worse off, leads to job losses and recession, and leave the Treasury short of tax revenues to pay the bills. The huge spending and taxing plans of the current Labour party would bring on an early crisis.

Lib Dems would let Corbyn in

Jo Swinson this morning on Radio 4 confirmed her preference to just cancel Brexit by a vote in Parliament, but conceded she did not think there would be enough MPs in the next Parliament who would do that. She no longer believes there will be a Lib Dem majority government by Friday.

This is an interesting development. Every time I see her on tv in various constituencies around the country she is flanked by Lib Dem posters setting out their catch phrase, "Winning here". It's an odd and self serving slogan. Normally parties and candidates have slogans about what they want to do for the voters.

This Lib Dem slogan asserts that they uniquely know what voters are going to do in each place as if they have some special prescience the rest of us do not share about how people will vote. It now appears that in many of these places the Lib Dem leader thinks they are not winning after all. The slogan was apparently misleading or simply a lie. It would have been more modest and sensible if their posters said "Trying to win here" or "Keen to win here". "Unlikely to win here" would be a bit of a turn off even where it was an honest assessment.

What was more bizarre was what she said about their fall back position, the wish to hold a second referendum on the EU issue. She vacillated about supporting a Labour government offering one and appeared to want to move straight to a second General election.

She would be under great pressure to accept a Labour minority government offering a second referendum. Her message of vote Lib Dem to get a hung Parliament, so we can then have a second General election to try for a different Parliament again is absurd. Why would anyone vote for a result which required another election immediately? It also looks like an attempt to cover up a likely deal with Labour were they to get their hung Parliament.

No wonder her slogan is not "Vote for a hung Parliament so you can have a second General election"

She has consistently said there are no circumstances in which she would support a Conservative government seeking to implement the result of the referendum, so that only leaves one realistic option in a hung Parliament, a Labour led government.