

Mrs May's Conservative Manifesto says only sign a Withdrawal Agreement if there is a good Future Partnership Agreement as well

The Conservative Manifesto for the 2017 election made pledges on the matter of the EU, and has never officially been renounced or amended by the Leader. I and many others stood for election on it and supported the Brexit pledges in it. I did not support the elderly care proposals in the same Manifesto as I made clear before the election. The PM subsequently dumped these.

It might be helpful to remind the PM and others of what the Manifesto said:

“We continue to believe no deal is better than a bad deal”. The Manifesto proposed a Future Partnership Agreement but accepted it was only worth signing if it was a good one. This remains the PM's stated view.

It also said

“As we leave the EU we will no longer be members of the single market or customs union” This too remains her view, though there is now unwelcome discussion of staying in the Customs Union for longer.

The Manifesto also saw the need for linkage between the EU wish for us to sign a Withdrawal Agreement and the PM's wish to have a Future Partnership Agreement. “We believe it is necessary to agree the terms of our future partnership alongside the withdrawal, reaching agreement on both within the two years allowed by Article 50”. Here the PM has proceeded to negotiate mainly on the Withdrawal Agreement, making it impossible to agree a Future Partnership Agreement before we leave in March 2019. This surely means we cannot sign the Withdrawal Agreement they propose.