



**HOW LABOUR  
MAKES ITS POLICY  
AND HOW TO  
GET INVOLVED**



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## HOW LABOUR MAKES ITS POLICY

Labour is a democratic socialist party. We make our policy together, through our policy development process. It is designed to involve all members, local parties, trade unions, socialist societies, elected representatives as well as the wider community.

### National Policy Forum (NPF)

This Consultation is being run by the National Policy Forum, or NPF. This is a 200 strong body of representatives from all the major groups in the Labour Party, from constituency parties and regions to affiliated trade unions, socialist societies, MPs and councillors. Its role is to shape the Labour Party's policy agenda, drawing up policy documents for agreement.

### Role of members, supporters and affiliates

Our process of consultation, deliberation and discussion means that everyone in the Labour Party can have a voice in policy making. Policy making runs from general election to general election, with updated documents produced for every Annual Conference. Members, supporters and affiliate groups make submissions to the process detailing their views. What they tell the NPF shapes the documents they write. They can do this via the Labour Policy Forum website; outlining policy discussions at CLP meetings and other party events; and responding to consultation documents such as the ones in this pack.

### Policy Commissions

The NPF is divided into eight policy commissions, each responsible for a specific area of policy. They consider the submissions from across the Labour Party, and develop detailed positions, which are then discussed at Annual Conference. They each publish policy discussion papers on important areas of policy, which members, CLPs, affiliates and the public can respond to. The commissions meet regularly throughout the year.

NPF representatives read the submissions received, and discuss them in the relevant policy

commission meetings. These discussions inform the reports they write each year which go to Annual Conference. If voted through, this becomes the basis of the manifesto.

The policy commissions welcome your views on all issues whether or not they covered in a policy document this year. Whatever your idea, send it to the NPF and it will be considered at the next meeting.

The eight policy commissions are as follows:

**Early Years, Education and Skills**

**Economy, Business & Trade**

**Environment, Energy and Culture**

**Health and Social Care**

**Housing, Local Government & Transport**

**International**

**Justice and Home Affairs**

**Work, Pensions and Equality**

## WHERE ARE WE IN THE POLICY MAKING PROCESS?

Following the snap General Election announcement in April 2017, an accelerated manifesto development process was put in place. Building on the work done through the National Policy Forum 2015-2017 this culminated in the General Election Manifesto, 'For the many not the few' which gained the support of millions of voters across the country. Now we need to build on those policies so we are ready for the next election, whenever it comes.

At a meeting of the NPF in February 2018, the policy commissions agreed a set of eight consultation papers which take an area of Labour policy to look at in further detail. These are:

- Towards a National Education Service
- The future of work
- A Greener Britain
- Tackling health inequalities
- Giving people the power to shape their local communities
- Achieving Sustainable Development Goals
- Protecting our communities and turning lives around
- Addressing in-work poverty and working age inequalities

## WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE CONSULTATION?

The 2018 Consultation will inform the NPF's work to build on the content of the 2017 Manifesto.

Each of the eight consultation papers contains some background policy information and a set of questions for our members, stakeholders and the wider public to respond to.

We want to hear the views of people who live in all parts of the country. Throughout the consultation period, we will hold a series of meetings in the regions and nations across the UK for Labour

members, supporters and others to come along and discuss these issues further. These events will take a variety of formats and will be designed to engage as many people as possible in meaningful conversations about the priority areas of policy.

Responses can take many forms, for example it could be an agreed view from a group discussion on one of the Consultation questions; a new policy proposal or perspective that has not been discussed before; or a personal experience of a policy area that helps to explain your idea.

## Role of the NPF Representatives

The NPF is made up of 206 representatives selected from the different sections of the party: members, regions, affiliates and elected politicians. The role of representatives is to draw up policy documents and to represent the views of the section of the party they come from.

Representatives are also there to support members in engaging with the policy making process, from reading and replying to submissions through to attending meetings. You can find details of NPF representatives online:

[www.policyforum.labour.org.uk/about/npf](http://www.policyforum.labour.org.uk/about/npf)

## A ROLLING PROGRAMME OF POLICY MAKING

The timetable of NPF activity this year is as follows:

Timetable of NPF activity 2018	
19 March	Consultation launches
24 June	Consultation period ends
Early July	Policy commissions update documents to reflect consultation responses
September	Documents debated at Annual Conference 2018
Winter	The policy commissions draft new consultation documents focussing on different priority areas
Early 2019	A new Consultation is launched

## GUIDE TO GETTING INVOLVED

The Consultation is open until Sunday 24 June 2018. All the submissions we receive will go to the appropriate policy commission who will consider your ideas before rewriting the documents. You can still submit after 24 June 2018 but these ideas will not inform the documents being drafted by the policy commissions to go to Annual Conference 2018.

## WAYS TO RESPOND

### Online: Creating a digital space for policy making

The easiest way to send in ideas and join the discussion is via our online home of policy making: [www.policyforum.labour.org.uk](http://www.policyforum.labour.org.uk).



You can find all the documentation contained in this pack on the website. You can focus on one document, or look at all eight, and you can answer as many or as few of the questions as you wish. The website also includes details of your local NPF representatives who are there to represent you in the policy making process.

On the website, in addition to a number of current functions, there will be a range of tools to extend further access for our members and supporters, and create an online space for policy making. These tools include:

**Online webinars** featuring Q&As on Labour's policy making process, including on how to use the Labour Policy Forum website

**Online discussions** featuring a range of content to give members more insight into the policy areas discussed in the consultation documents

**News & Events** this section enables members to find out more about specific policies, upcoming policy forum events and the overall work of the National Policy Forum

**Twitter** be sure to follow [@Labpolicyforum](https://twitter.com/Labpolicyforum), and encourage your members to do so. Our Twitter page contains regular updates on key policy areas, events and more.

Labour will be running an awareness campaign on social media with the hashtag **#NPFConsultation2018**. Running your own social media messaging with this hashtag will help us let members know the Consultation is happening.

If CLPs would like to use the Consultation logo in any social media or emails, CLP Secretaries can email Labour Policy Development for a copy [policydevelopment@labour.org.uk](mailto:policydevelopment@labour.org.uk)



### At your CLP/Branch

Many members, new and old, joined our party to get involved in policy discussions, the policy making process and local meetings provide a great opportunity to have a debate and take people's views. Why not ask your CLP if they will hold a discussion on one or two of the topics at a future meeting? Or you could hold a special discussion before heading off for a campaigning session.

### Hold an event

If there is appetite for it, you could see if it would be worth joining up with other CLPs/branches nearby for a larger discussion. You could speak to your regional office about any events they might already be holding on the Consultation. Otherwise you could suggest holding one in your area and inviting

local party members, supporters and other people in the area who might be interested in hearing what Labour has to say.

Your NPF representatives are happy to help support events and attend meetings. You can find out who your NPF representatives are and contact them via the Labour Policy Forum site:

[www.policyforum.labour.org.uk/about/npf](http://www.policyforum.labour.org.uk/about/npf)

## ORGANISING YOUR EVENT

Here are some things to think about when holding an event:

### Dates & times

Holding an event after work is easier for some people particularly if the event will be part of your CLP or BLP meeting, however for bigger events a daytime event at the weekend might be better.

It's a good idea to check with your regional office to make sure your proposed date doesn't clash with anything.

### Venue

Choose a centrally-located venue that people will find it easy to get to. Think about who you are expecting your audience to be and ask your regional office about potential venues in your area, they will also have useful advice on considering issues such as disability access for your members.

### Decide which issue(s) you are discussing

Instead of discussing all eight documents, you may wish to focus in on one or two of particular interest to those in your location. Depending on how many people you are expecting at your event, and how much time you have, you may wish to split up into groups to discuss different documents, or different sections of the same document.

### Engaging your local community

You may wish to think about if you could invite a local expert along, or other people in the community with particular experience or views on the issue to speak at the event and/or take part in discussions; for instance a local employer or someone who works in a public service, like a school, university or hospital.

The more people whose ideas we hear the better, so don't be afraid to open your event up to people from outside your local party. Why not invite along supporters, people who have voted Labour in the past and other people who are interested in hearing what we have to say?

## ADVERTISING YOUR EVENT

Don't forget to check with your regional office to make sure your proposed date doesn't clash with anything.

### Online

You can advertise your event for members online using the Labour events page [events.labour.org.uk](http://events.labour.org.uk)

The Labour Policy Forum website

[www.policyforum.labour.org.uk](http://www.policyforum.labour.org.uk) also publish some event dates.

### Social Media

If you're putting your event on social media don't forget to include the hashtag [#NPFConsultation2018](https://twitter.com/NPFConsultation2018)

## AT THE MEETING

Make sure you have someone to chair the meeting and a note taker(s) so that people's views are recorded and they can be sent into the Consultation. It's a good idea to let people know a little bit about the Consultation and what will happen after the meeting, you can refer to sections above on the policy making process as a guide.

Your meeting could begin with opening remarks from an NPF representative or local expert; followed by small group discussions on the Consultation documents. The questions included in each document are designed to provoke a broad ranging discussion, in which people's views and examples of personal experiences are encouraged.

As a rough guide we suggest 30 to 45 minutes discussion for each paper. Following the group discussions, it is always a good idea to choose someone from each group to feedback their ideas. These ideas can be written up and sent as the basis of your submission to the NPF.

You can also encourage people to visit [www.policyforum.labour.org.uk](http://www.policyforum.labour.org.uk) and input their ideas directly.

### **Submitting your notes**

As notes taken during a discussion can sometimes be written at speed, we recommend that you choose one or two people to write up these notes. This could include a section on what was discussed and then what was agreed in the smaller groups and then the meeting as a whole. A writing pad is included in this to make notes on during discussions.

The best and easiest way to submit your response is via our online home of policy making [www.policyforum.labour.org.uk](http://www.policyforum.labour.org.uk). Here your ideas will be sent to the NPF but will also be posted on the website for other members and CLPs to read, who may comment on your ideas and develop the discussion further.

Ask your CLP Secretary to submit group notes to the Labour Policy Forum, and select the 'CLP' option so the policy commissions know these ideas have been discussed at local party level.

You are also encouraged to submit your own notes and ideas following the meeting. Many people often have an experience or story that provides useful insight for the NPF representatives.

Written notes from the meeting can be posted to us at:

The Labour Party,  
Policy Unit, Southside,  
105 Victoria Street,  
London,  
SW1E 6QT

### **GET IN TOUCH**

If you have any questions about any of the information contained in this toolkit, please email us at [policydevelopment@labour.org.uk](mailto:policydevelopment@labour.org.uk)

