



Diana Johnson MP

Fighting for everyone in Hull North



Not enough pork in the barrel

On 3rd March the Chancellor made his budget statement. I spoke in the Budget debate which followed – see [here](#). As well as highlighting the continuing lack of a strong green industrial strategy and pressures on hard-pressed families over issues such as making the £20 Universal Credit uplift permanent, I attacked Government gerrymandering of the Towns Funds and other Whitehall pots of 'levelling up' funding under which areas of the North that elected Conservative MPs appear to be favoured ahead of the most deprived areas, such as Hull. Shortly after I made this speech, and after tabling a number of Commons Questions on the issue, it emerged that deprivation has indeed been downgraded from the funding criteria for the 'levelling up' funding. When I asked the Leader of the House of Commons, Jacob Rees Mogg, about this funding criteria, he blamed 'socialist councils and MPs' for towns and cities like Hull not receiving funding – see [here](#). Rees Mogg in effect confirmed my charge of political gerrymandering!



Violence against Women

The Home Affairs Select Committee, of which I am a member, is carrying out an inquiry on Violence Against Women and Girls, particularly focusing on the very low rates of rape convictions. There is now a growing movement around the need for the Government to do more to keep women and girls safe. The Government have re-opened their consultation on this – see [here](#). I would urge you to feed in your experiences and suggestions to the Home Office.



Hull's shot in the arm

I visited Hull's City Hall vaccination centre on 6 March and saw the excellent work of the NHS, supported by volunteers, in rolling out the vaccine programme so efficiently. Hopefully this vaccination programme will enable the economy to reopen without further lockdowns, although I remain concerned that Hull's infection rate is higher than the national average. Two issues I will now pursue are the need for a full Public Inquiry into all aspects of the COVID crisis and for a well-deserved pay increase for NHS, social care and other key workers.



Transport for the North cuts

I have continued pursuing the issue of the funding of Transport for the North, following the blatant lie from the Prime Minister in February when I asked him about cuts to its budget (see [here](#)). I had a debate in the chamber of the House of Commons on 17 March this month setting out in detail how the Prime Minister had misled the House, breaking the Ministerial Code, I used the opportunity to once again make the case for transport infrastructure and broader regeneration investment for levelling up the North – and the fact that Hull still isn't getting a fair deal. As well as Hull missing out on rail electrification, when the Government blocked a privately financed initiative for Hull in 2016, Hull has had our rail links across the Pennines gradually downgraded in recent years – even in relation to towns in the North such as Scarborough. The response from the Minister was dismissive and I will continue pursuing Ministers on these issues.



Connecting communities

In Parliament I co-chair an All-Party Parliamentary Group of MPs who have wards in their constituencies that have the highest scores in deprivation indices across the UK. They are often referred to as 'left behind' neighbourhoods. Sadly, in Hull North we have several areas that fit into this category. The APPG's latest report on what we need to do to 'level up' these areas is on connectivity - both in terms of transport and access to the internet. Orchard Park and Bransholme are areas that get a specific mention in the report. It can be read [here](#).



Policing our freedom

I voted against The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill and spoke against the parts of the Bill that seek to, in effect, make permanent the temporary COVID restrictions on the right of assembly - where protests may be 'noisy' and 'annoying'. The arrest of peaceful women attending the Clapham Common vigil for Sarah Everard was shocking to see. It could be a regular event if Tory Ministers use their 80-seat majority to force through a weakening of hard-won freedoms. My speech in the debate also focussed on the need to do more on combating violence against women and can be seen [here](#). The photo above was taken before the COVID restrictions.



Infected Blood Justice

My eleven-year campaign to secure justice for the those infected and affected by the NHS Infected Blood scandal – the biggest treatment disaster in NHS history - has taken another step forward. Alongside the continuing Public Inquiry that I helped announce in 2017, the Government has made an announcement regarding future financial support for those whose lives were ruined by receiving contaminated blood – see [here](#). This was made through a written statement on the last day before Easter Recess and did not allow questions, so I raised a Point of Order - see [here](#). I will be seeking further answers when the Commons reconvenes in mid-April.



Although I am unable to hold face-to-face surgeries at the moment during the COVID-19 pandemic, I can still take up issues for Hull North constituents.

You can contact me by either emailing johnsond@parliament.uk or calling 01482 319135.

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