

Civil Service Reform: What the manifestos say (spot the difference!)

Summary of Key Themes

- Emphasis on citizen involvement in decision making; less central control
- Pay restraint; reduced pensions
- Changes in departmental performance management
- More public accountability & openness
- Reduce size of centre; more emphasis on delivery; new ways of working
- Efficiency savings; reduction in quangos; reduced use of consultants

Democracy

Conservative: Involve people in the political process – an online culture and debate. Re-distribution of power from the state to citizens. Make government more accountable. Cut scope of Whitehall. New online Public Reading stage for Bills.

Labour: Reform public services to put citizens in control. Use online technologies to give people a say in policy making & enable more transactions to be undertaken online.

LibDem: Empower local communities. More say/power for people.

Civil Service Pay & Pensions

Conservative: Make it easier to reward best civil servants and remove least effective. Reform civil service compensation scheme. Anyone in public sector paid more than Prime Minister to have salary signed off by HMT. Salaries & expenses of senior civil servants published online, with details of position in organisation. All central government job vacancies to be published online. Select Committees to have right to hold confirmation hearings for major public appointments including heads of quangos.

Labour: Action to control public sector pay, including 1% cap on basic pay uplifts for 2011-12 and 2012-13. New restrictions on senior pay setting. Tough reform of civil service pensions (already agreed). Any government-controlled appointment with salary £150k+ to need Ministerial sign-off. Review senior pay across the whole public sector.

LibDem: Reform public sector pensions. £400 pay rise cap on public sector pay, initially for 2 years.



Departmental Performance

Conservative: Scrap current target regime & replace with departmental business plans, with senior management accountable to more rigorous departmental boards for their performance.

Labour: Reduce number of national indicators from April 2010, with further reduction in 2011. Publish all public sector performance data on line.

LibDem: Reduce centralised targets and bureaucracy.

Openness

Conservative: New right of access to government data. New measures to enable public to scrutinise government's accounts. All public bodies to publish job titles online. Publish details of civil servants meetings with lobbyists. Publish details of all government contracts over £25k. Protect impartiality of civil service. Appoint senior private sector non-executives to departmental boards.

Labour: Open up more datasets to public. More openness on civil service pay and numbers.

LibDem: Amend Ministerial Code to prevent Ministers mistreating advisers or distorting evidence & statistics. Extend Freedom of Information.

Quangos

Conservative: Abolish all quangos that don't perform a technical function or a function that requires political impartiality or act independently to establish the facts. Examine case for giving Select Committees the right to prevent increases in quango budgets.

Labour: Abolish unnecessary arm's length bodies.

LibDem: Abolish &/or merge quangos

Costs

Conservative: Dramatically reduce cost of government. Limit number of Special Advisers. Save £2b on administration of policy, funding and regulation.

Labour: More streamlined centre. Sharply reduce spending on consultancy and marketing. Strip out waste & improve efficiency. £15b efficiency savings in 2010/11. Further £11b operational efficiencies & cross cutting savings to streamline government in 2012-13. Cut back office & property running costs (relocation; shared services; review working practices). Increased spending on front line services. Simplify regulation.

LibDem: Wholesale review of vfm in public sector, based on findings of NAO & PAC. Save £2b by reforms to cut back waste in central government and parliament. Scrap Government Offices for Regions.

