



**Conference, it's now almost 18 months since David Cameron entered the doors of Number 10 together with our coalition chums to clean up Labour's mess.**

Getting our nation's finances back on the right track has been challenging. I've seen first hand the inefficiency and incompetence of Labour.

Take FireControl – John Prescott's plan to regionalise England's fire service.

His vanity project spiralled out of control, wasting half a billion pounds of taxpayers' money.

You won't hear about that on money supermarket dot com

And there's nothing to show for it – apart from a series of empty bunkers, each kitted out with deluxe chrome coffee machines costing six grand a piece.

Now that's Labour's idea of national resilience.

Come hell or high water, Labour Ministers could still demand a Venti Skinny cappuccino.

What a waste! You can get a big pack of Yorkshire Tea for a fiver...

Now if my Coalition Mucker Chris Huhne tunes in today – that's what I call a proper Tea Party, Chris.

Or take the example of Labour blowing £5,000 on my department's officials having a staff away day at a club.

Not a working men's club.

Not a Pall Mall Gentlemen's Club.

No, a different kind of gentlemen's club –

A club which features Showgirl Sensation Amber Topaz and her exotic chum, Lady Beau Peep.

I've never thought of the civil service as lost sheep,

And I'm not sure why they flocked to that establishment.

No more – I've cancelled these plush away days.

Labour Ministers were at it too.

With their corporate credit card – the so-called "Government Procurement Card" –

Labour and their staff wined and dined at the finest restaurants at your expense.

Boisdales.

The Cinammon Club.

The Wolseley.

And in the very heart of Prezza-land, close to the mouth of the Humber... Mr Chu's China Palace.

Unlike Labour, I pay for my own Chicken Chow Mein.

We are clamping down on the abuse of government credit cards and opening their spending up to public scrutiny.

Transparency will help councils save billions through better procurement, joint working, and driving out waste.

In comparison to Whitehall, local government has been the most efficient part of the public sector – especially Conservative councils.

By dismantling Labour's interfering, intrusive laws and regulations, we can do even more for less.

In a radical extension of localism, we are giving councils a new general power of competence to champion their local communities.

We've shredded Labour red tape.

And I'm tackling the gold-plating of equality rules.

Did you know... if you want to take out a copy of Mills and Boon from your local library.....In some places you're asked to fill out a sex survey on your private life.

No more. Councils won't need to undertake these expensive and intrusive questionnaires.

Use some common sense and respect people's privacy.

But in the game of Town Hall Top Trumps, there's a non-job which beats even the Civic Sex Snooper.

Taxpayer-funded full-time trade union officials.

They cost the public sector – that's taxpayers to you and me – a quarter of a billion pounds a year.

That's money taken away from frontline services.

Guess what... You won't find Labour criticising them.

Silence from Ed Miliband. His Labour councillors voted to close libraries, but keep bankrolling union officials on the rates.

And surprise, surprise.

Not a dicky bird from Labour's local government spokesperson, Jack Dromey,

No wonder.

Because that former union baron knows Labour is in hock to the unions.

In my book, that's not All Right Jack.

If unions want to raise money for Labour – do it in your own time, not on the rates.

We're going to call time on this last closed shop.

As night follows day, Labour waste your money and put up taxes.

Take council tax.

They doubled it.

We are freezing it.

Not just for one year, but two years – as we promised in Opposition.

And Labour councils charge higher council tax.

Conservative councils charge less – and deliver even better.

Had they remained in power, Labour would have hiked council taxes even more on middle England.

Labour were actively planning a council tax revaluation –

- to spy on your gardens,

- your patios,

- counting your bedrooms,

- your conservatories,

- your parking spaces,

- even a room with a view.

We've cancelled Labour's expensive council tax revaluation.

We've stopped soaring council tax bills for millions of homes.

It's not just about protecting middle England from higher taxes.

I want to stop clipboard-wielding inspectors

peering into your children's bedroom

or nosing about your bathroom.

We will protect families' civil liberties and privacy.

It wasn't just council tax hikes that Labour threatened.

Labour would impose new bin taxes on your home too.

Yet another tax for the privilege of your town hall collecting your bin.

Labour love fining for minor breaches of petty bin rules.

Handing out bigger fines than those given to convicted shoplifters...

State officials secretly going through and filming your bins.

Did you put a yoghurt pot in the wrong recycling bin?

Did you put your bin out at the wrong hour?

Watch out!

Because nobody expects the Town Hall Binquisition.

Well, it's time to place Labour's bin taxes and bin fines in the dustbin of history.

But there's more to do.

In Opposition, we also made clear promises on the frequency of rubbish collections.

Promises first announced to you at our Party Conference.

Well, as you know – Conservatives keep our promises.

The public deserve proper, decent frontline services for their council tax.

So I can announce my department will be introducing a new fund to support weekly rubbish collections.

Reversing Labour's Whitehall policy of bin cuts.

This will support those who want to improve their existing weekly collections.

And it will support switching from fortnightly to better weekly collections.

Helping councils work with families to go green and provide a comprehensive service every week.

Labour oppose this scheme. No wonder, in Government they were drawing up plans to impose monthly bin collections.

The choice is clear:

- Conservatives standing up for families and frontline services.

- Or Labour and their rubbish policies.

Just as we are standing up for local families, so we will support local firms.

I grew up living above a greengrocers, helping out every week.

I know that business rates are the third biggest outgoing for local shops after rent and staff.

So we have doubled small business rate relief for two years. And we're making it easier to claim.

We have scuppered Labour's ports tax.

And we are giving councils new powers to cut business rates, to support community pubs, post offices and local shops.

We understand that local high streets are the lifeblood of the local economy, and the centre of what we call home.

So are changing Tony Blair's reckless all-you-can-drink licensing laws.

We are giving councils more powers to tackle the anti-social behaviour that blights so many of our town centres late at night.

And to help those affected by the disgraceful riots get back to business, we have created a twenty million pound High Street Support Scheme.

Over their 13 years, Labour failed business.

Their Regional Development Agencies were too distant from local firms, and squandered their budgets.

In their place, our new Local Enterprise Partnerships now have councils working hand in hand with local business.

We will allow councils to keep the money from business rates, giving them a direct stake in local enterprise.

Helping them to help business grow.

But this is also a radical devolution of local government finance, meaning councils raise the money they spend rather than being so dependent on Whitehall handouts.

And in targeted growth areas, we have over twenty new Enterprise Zones.

They will boost regeneration through simplified planning, tax breaks and super-fast broadband.

We can help the economy by building more homes too.

But under Labour, house building hit the lowest rate since the 1920s.

For those who aren't lucky enough to have the Bank of Mum and Dad, the first time buyer is now aged 37.

So we are selling off the Government's disused land and empty offices, and use it to build one hundred thousand more homes.

And we're bringing back Margaret Thatcher's Right to Buy,

And we'll use the receipts to build more affordable homes.

The planning system also has its role to play in building more homes and boosting local growth.

But it doesn't have to be at the expense of the countryside or local democracy.

Last week, Labour pledged to keep regional planning and regional quangos.

They're still wedded to regional government and Whitehall knows best.

Labour's Regional Spatial Strategies planned to bulldoze the Green Belt.

Well, we will protect it.

In the Localism Bill, we are abolishing Labour's top-down targets and putting local people in charge.

We have also given councils stronger powers to tackle 'garden grabbing'.

And we're creating a brand new local protection for green spaces.

This can safeguard the likes of playing fields, bowling greens and village greens.

Now...

You won't be surprised to learn that me and Mrs Pickles are partial to the odd scone and a warm beverage in a National Trust Tea Room.

But, the planning system needs to be improved.

Labour churned out over 1,000 pages of central planning guidance.

They made the planning regime the preserve of inspectors, pressure groups and planning lawyers.

So we're simplifying this guidance to 52 pages.

We need a system which is quicker, and provides greater certainty for local firms and local residents.

But it's not a choice between countryside or concrete.

Our countryside is one of the best things that makes Britain great, and we will protect it.

Our planning system must also have integrity.

It must be seen to be fair to all.

Labour undermined this.

They created a system where special treatment was given to travellers.

Whatever their intentions, this fuelled resentment and undermined community cohesion.

We should support those who play by the rules.

So we're providing sixty million pounds to support councils build and improve official traveller pitches.

We have given travellers on official sites stronger tenancy rights – the same as council tenants.

Treating law-abiding people equally and fairly.

But it's not right to have planning rules which gave a green light to traveller camps being dumped in the Green Belt and open countryside.

The Green Belt should be applied evenly and fairly.

So we're changing planning rules to give it more protection.

We are also giving councils stronger enforcement powers to prevent unauthorised sites like Dale Farm from ever being established in the first place.

You hear a lot about human rights these days.

But rights and responsibilities cut both ways.

It's time to respect the family life of those who have to live next door to these illegal sites.

It's time to respect the property rights of law-abiding homeowners.

We should take no lectures from far-left activists or penpushers parachuted in from some obscure United Nations agency.

The Dale Farm saga has now spent 10 years before the courts.

Justice delayed is justice denied.

It's time that planning law was enforced.

It's time to uphold the British rule of law.

Conference,

After 18 months, we've started to put our country back on track.

In government, we are following the example of so many good Conservative councils:

Doing more for less and delivering frontline services at value for money prices.

But there is still more to be do.

Our country does best when led by Conservatives.

We do best for our country

when we are true to our Conservative convictions.

Respect the law, the right to private property and personal liberty.

Scale back the waste of the state which forces up taxes and crowds out enterprise and innovation.

And above all, a basic trust in the people.

My friends,

You can feel that power is shifting – back to you, back to your communities, back in the right direction.

From the forces of officialdom to families.

From Whitehall to councils.

From quangos to neighbourhoods.

The opportunity is yours.

Together, we will shake off the shackles of Labour and Britain will be great again.