



**Fylde Conservatives: CPF March 18<sup>th</sup> 2013**

## **Issue discussed: immigration and its impact on Britain**

The summary below does not reflect precisely the order in which points were raised and discussed, nor is it in any way a verbatim record of what went on.

It was agreed that there are pros and cons to immigration. The difference between movement of EU citizens to the UK and non EU immigration was recognised.

The good things about immigration included the richness & diversity of the cultures that immigrants have brought to the UK along with the skills and knowledge that comes with immigration of people who come to work here.

Concerns that were raised and discussed included:

- Immigrants taking very low paid jobs, possibly even being paid less than the minimum wage thus depressing the job opportunities for indigenous citizens.
- The pressure that large numbers of immigrants bring to bear upon the social infrastructure of communities, impacting on schools, social services, health care etc.
- The possible increase in gang crime, terrorism and benefit cheating that is often reported in the popular press.
- The impact on British culture that large concentrations of immigrants can have when located in a given area or community in effect creating cultural 'ghettoes' where indigenous citizens do not feel welcome or safe. The different values of some immigrant communities were also questioned including the attitude towards women and to the family unit where some cultural values lead to relatively high birth rates.

The question as to what can be done to address these issues or concerns was discussed.

It was considered important to reduce the numbers of immigrants entering the country. Also to have a transition period before full access to welfare benefits and health care was granted and to limit the ease with which family members can simply join someone who has been admitted to the UK.

The action points proposed by the government to date were welcomed and the idea that family life should not be established here at the UK taxpayers' expense. The statement that immigrants must be able to integrate and eventually speak our language was also welcomed.

In summary the forum agreed on two key points; reduce the numbers of immigrants and integrate them into our communities.

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