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DEMREF 2 0 1 0

CANDIDATE **Mike Beckett**

CONSTITUENCY **Dudley North**

PARTY **Liberal Democrats**

Q. FIXED-TERM PARLIAMENTS... Do you agree with fixed-term parliaments or do you oppose them?

I support fixed-terms

Q. FREE VOTES... Do you think that there should be fewer, more or roughly the same number of free votes (votes not subject to party whip) in Parliament?

I would like considerably more free votes

Q. VOTING SYSTEM... Do you think that the present voting system for Westminster elections should be maintained or should the voting system be reformed?

I support reform of the voting system (single transferable vote)

Q. OPEN PRIMARIES... Do you agree with open primaries for candidate selection or do you oppose them?

I am ambivalent about open primaries but I do support primaries with defined electorates

Q. VOTING AGE... Do you think that the voting age should remain at 18 or should it be lowered to 16?

I believe the voting age should be lowered to 16

Q. RECALLING MPS... Are you open to the idea of having a mechanism whereby constituents can vote on the recall of their MP in instances of "serious wrongdoing" or do you oppose having such a mechanism to recall MPs?

I am open to the idea of having a mechanism to recall MPs

Q. HOUSE OF LORDS... What is your view on the composition of the House of Lords/second chamber?

I support a House of Lords/second chamber with the majority, if not all, members being elected, but I am open to the idea of additional expert appointees. Although if the Commons wont be sorted out to have proportional representation perhaps the primacy of the Commons should be passed to the House of Lords and then we can have a truly democratically elected national government, rather than the current first past the post system which disenfranchises so many voters around the country

Q. OTHER REFORMS... Please list other reforms/changes/measures that you believe would improve democracy/politics.

Election is more important than appointment and I think the number of quangos is to high - they need to be reduced with more democratic accountability. Fraud on expenses claims needs to lead to loss of office and court action which those who have allegedly stolen from the public purse need to pay back plus costs if they insist on going to court