What should the Government, political parties, the House of Commons and the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority be doing now to ensure better female representation in the House of Commons in 2020 and beyond?

- 29% of Members of the Commons being female in 2016 is a shambolic representation of 21st Century Britain. Therefore, the best way to go about things in my opinion is that the 2020 General Election should have a quota for half of the expected 600 seats to be contested solely by women, instructed within a statutory order issued within the Election writs. The seats involved should be chosen via a consultation through the parties and the Electoral Commission; the election following this should then revert back to mixed gender shortlists which could then enable a major study into how the electorate perceive female candidates and future recommendations which could shape possible electoral reforms.

- Encouragement to all active parties, with a desire to take office to shape Cabinet/Shadow Cabinet’s with between 40%-55% of Women; this would make UK democracy more transparent and a strong example to other third world countries who are not following suit currently.

- A greater amount of the structure that constitutes the inner workings of the Commons should have more females, particularly within senior positions – as a result it will make the structure a greater and more modern look to it then at the present time.

What are the political parties doing to ensure that female representation will increase at the next general election given the impact that the 2018 Boundary Commission Review could have?

From keeping an eye on politics as a whole, there seems to be a lack of activity on this front – probably down to the draft boundaries being published. Work must start now, for example; by the Westminster parties guaranteeing current female members of the House spaces within the selection processes; even in seats yet to be formed through the impending changes.

What further changes are needed to improve retention of women MPs?

- New electoral system through Proportional Representation which will increase chances of Women MP’s being re-elected
- Engage members to watch proceedings such as the House of Lords Chamber Event (Which I spoke within in 2015 – my speech which has elements of this particular topic can be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NQdkEREoe4) and UK Youth Parliament’s sitting within the Commons chamber; the awareness that will come about through both of these events each year will and can increase female participation, within politics and society
• UK Youth Parliament’s data from last year’s Commons sitting shows 52% of Elected Members were female and as a result shows Young People are a considerable way forward, for greater women representation.

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