Questions for politician interviews (Governance traps) v8

**Politicians and climate change – responsibilities for deep decarbonisation**

Q.1 Politicians are frequently considered servants of the public. Can you tell me, in your view, what expectations the public (including your constituents) has of you in your role as a politician? **(1.7)**

**Follow ups (not all will be posed)**

1. Does their expectation (of leadership) match up with the reality you have experienced? **(1.7)**
2. A common assumption is that politicians should lead on certain issues. How comfortable are you in taking the lead? Are you happy to lead or do you need backing? If so, from whom? (party/government/colleagues/the public/independent experts) **(3.4)**
3. What about those cases where your personal views differ from those of your voters, party, experts? How do you deal with this? **(3.13)**

Q.2 Thinking about the points we’ve just discussed on the public’s expectations of you leading and following, to what extent do they also apply to the issue of climate change? **(3.5)**

**Follow ups**

1. What role in climate change mitigation do you perceive the public as having? Should politicians instigate action or wait until they have evidence that the public supports it? **(3.4)**
2. [Pro-climate] How should political leaders/politicians lead in addressing climate change? (Be more outspoken? Reduce their own emissions? Etc.) Why? **(3.5)**
3. [Climate-agnostic/indifferent] What kind of impact do you think prioritising climate change in your parliamentary work would have on your chances of political or career progression? Why? **(3.8)**

Q.3 To what extent do you think *national level politicians* have the power to deliver specific policy objectives, such as Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050? **(3.7)**

1. Do you think the *government* has the knowledge/political support to deliver ambitious policy targets, such as reducing net emissions to zero by 2050? **(2.2 & 2.5)**
2. Is enough climate action already underway? **(3.1)**
3. In your opinion, which of the following two options seems riskier to you: taking rapid climate action now or delaying significant climate action until sometime in the future? Why? What influences your judgement? **(3.9)**
4. If you had the power to choose, what method of decision-making would you prefer to use to deliver climate action? (more deliberative eg climate assemblies, parliamentary, more expert-led). Why? **(3.7)**

Q.4 Who do you think *is* primarily responsible for *addressing* the issue of climate change? Politicians? Individuals? Society? Why? (**3.4**)

**Follow ups**

1. Who do you think *should* be responsible for *addressing* climate change? Everyone or the biggest emitters? Who do you think is currently taking the lead? **(3.2)**
2. Who is responsible for *causing* climate change? Politicians? Individuals? Society? Why? **(1.7)**
3. To what extent do you think you are personally responsible for tackling climate change? Why or why not? In what way? **(1.6)**
4. [Pro-climate]In your view, why do those who are responsible not take sufficient action? What is lacking? Willingness to change? Ability to change? **(3.8)**

Q.5 Who would you say most heavily shapes climate policy currently and through which means? (Scientists? Politicians? Protest groups? Industry?) Who do you think should be in control of shaping climate policy? **(2.5)**

**Follow ups**

1. Are there any forms of climate action that should be excluded from the climate policy agenda? (E.g. meat consumption? Frequent flying?) Why? **(3.13)**
2. What would encourage you to do more on climate change in your parliamentary work? **(3.8)**
3. [Pro-climate] What barriers or obstacles have you encountered when instigating climate action/policy? (Cost? Information? Leadership? Policy uncertainty? Party support? Opposition from interest groups? Opposition from fellow MPs?) **(3.8)**
4. How should (governing) politicians avoid backlash in the area of climate policy?
5. If you had your time in government again, would you do anything differently? Why?

Q.6 Is there anything else you’d like to tell me about which we haven’t already covered?

After recording has stopped.

Are there any other MPs that you think would be interested in being interviewed for our research? Are you able to introduce us?