

e-Agenda from Andrew Duff MEP

April 2007

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WELCOME to the third edition of e-Agenda. Its purpose is to provide party members with more regular information about our Euro MP's activities and to introduce a more interactive form of communication with the regional party than is provided for by the traditional *eastern Agenda*.

Headlines from the European Parliament

The Berlin Declaration was signed on 25 March to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome. The Declaration speaks about the values of the Union, its unique method of governance, and the challenges faced by Europe. It ends with a commitment to reaching a 'renewed common basis' for the EU in time for the European Parliamentary elections in 2009. Find the Berlin Declaration via www.andrewduff.eu.

MEPs have voted their first contribution to the tricky negotiations on the reform of the Union's financial system (*Lamassoure Report*). Complicated, obscure and old-fashioned, the present system deserves a root and branch reform. The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) supports the scrapping of the regressive and tortuous VAT stream of revenue in favour of the consolidation of national contributions based on GNI. In return for the co-financing of the CAP between the EU and member states, the controversial UK rebate could be phased out. The goal, says Andrew Duff, is to 'deliver a fair, transparent and buoyant system of revenue that can support expenditure more directly aimed at the EU's top political priorities'.

Important legislative progress is being made on slashing the cost of mobile phone roaming calls across the EU and in agreeing to liberalise payment services.

The Parliament is backing the Commission's bold action plan to deliver a common energy policy that makes real cuts into Europe's greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

Meanwhile, a controversial report by Lib Dem MEP Emma Nicholson on Kashmir makes its way through the House. Heavy lobbying from both the Pakistani and Indian governments has not deflected MEPs from seeking to achieve an impartial report focussing on the humanitarian needs and democratic aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

For official *Pre-briefings* and *Post-briefing* of each plenary session of the Parliament, Use this link:-

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/tous_les_briefing/default/default_en.htm

Latest on the Constitution

Andrew Duff has launched a new pamphlet entitled '*Constitution Plus*': *renegotiating the treaty*. Published by the Trans-European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA), it is available on www.andrewduff.eu or in hard copy from his Cambridge office.

The Westminster parliamentary weekly *House* magazine says: 'Where the Lib Dems really punch above their weight is in the European Parliament under Andrew Duff MEP, who has led the debate in Brussels on how to replace the EU constitution'.

Press Articles

Andrew writes regularly for many publications. Some of his recent articles are:-

3rd April – Berlin and After – ft.com

17th March - Liberals still need to champion the EU – Liberal Democrat News

3rd March – Ratification of the Constitution – East Anglian Daily Times

27th February – Constitution Plus – ft.com

2nd February – Fraud in the EU – North Bedfordshire Observer

30th January – Resurrecting the Constitution – ft.com

3rd January – The Impact of REACH – Cambridge Herald

3rd January – Making the Green Tax Switch – Mid Suffolk Focus

3rd January – How to save the Constitution – Liberal Democrat News

All of these articles can be found at <http://www.andrewduffmep.org.uk/articles/>

Photos

Photographs of many of Andrew's activities are usually posted on the website as they become available.

They can be found at <http://www.andrewduffmep.org.uk/photos/>

Andrew has recently been interviewed on Felixstowe TV. This can be seen at <http://www.felixstowetv.co.uk>

Andrew's Diary

Here is a diary of some of Andrew's recent events (excluding routine group and committee meetings):-

10-11 January	ALDE spokesmen visit to Berlin
12 January	Plan B debate, Paris
13 January	East of England Lib Dem executive committee
	Norfolk County Council Lib Dem group
15-18 January	Plenary session, Strasbourg
19 January	Lib Dem Political Evening, Bury St Edmunds
20 January	Meeting on Kashmir with Luton Lib Dems
24 January	Dutch parliament & Plan B debate, The Hague

25 January	Plan B debate, EU employers federation (UNICE), Brussels
25-26 January	Plan B debate & negotiations, Madrid
31 January-1 February	Plenary session, Brussels
4-5 February	Open Society Initiative, London
7 February	ALDE conference on 'open borders'
9 February	Microsoft Research, Cambridge
12-15 February	Plenary session, Strasbourg
20 February	Future of Europe debate, Cheapside, London
22 February	Lib Dem Federal Executive away-day, London
23 February	Plan B speech, Chatham House, London
26-27 February	Bertelsmann Strategy Group on Future of Europe, Berlin
28 February	Launch of 'Constitution Plus'
2-4 March	Lib Dem Spring Conference, Harrogate
6 March	Federalist Intergroup 50 th anniversary of Treaty of Rome declaration
8 March	Commission conference on economic governance in the EU
10 March	Watford Lib Dems annual dinner
12-15 March	Plenary session, Strasbourg
16 March	Meetings in Norwich, Felixstowe and Kings Lynn
24-25 March	50 th anniversary of Treaty of Rome, Berlin
3-4 April	Constitutional negotiations, Lisbon

Here is a diary of some of Andrew's future events (excluding routine group and committee meetings):-

11-12 April	Constitutional negotiations, Warsaw
23-26 April	Plenary session, Strasbourg
3 May	Council Elections, East of England
4 May	European Council for Foreign Relations, London
6 May	French presidential elections, 2 nd round
7-8 May	Constitutional negotiations, Berlin
13-15 May	COSAC meeting (national parliaments), Berlin
16-17 May	EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee, Ankara
20 May	New Politics Workshop, London
21-24 May	Plenary session, Strasbourg
6-7 June	Plenary session, Brussels
11-12 June	EP-national parliaments Forum on Future of Europe
13-14 June	ALDE spokesmen, Lisbon
18-21 June	Plenary session, Strasbourg
21-22 June	European Council
23 June	Local Government Conference, Birmingham
27 June	Pre-presidency conference, Lisbon
30 June	Lib Dem English Council, London
5 July	University conference, Madrid
9-12 July	Plenary session, Strasbourg

Queries and comments?

“Do you think that a referendum is the best way to ratify the EU constitution, or should the job be left to national parliaments?” Let Andrew know your opinion.

Email us at ea@andrewduffmep.org

If you wish to add a name to or remove a name from this list, let us know.