

UK

# Tory minister defends deputy chair Lee Anderson who wants to fight next election on ‘trans debate’

Mar 10 • Written by Sophie Perry

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Sarah Dines does not “accept” the narrative surrounding Lee Anderson’s comments (GOV)

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## A government minister has defended Tory MP Lee Anderson after he said his party needs to campaign on a “mix of culture wars and trans debate”.

Parliamentary under-secretary of state at the Home Office, [Sarah Dines](#), made the comment on Wednesday (8 March), during a parliamentary debate on [transphobia and hate crimes against trans people](#).

The debate was held as part of wider questions under the remit of women and equalities, including Gender Recognition Certificates (GRCs), health disparities and the gender pay gap.

[Dines](#) told veteran Labour MP [Ben Bradshaw](#) that she does not “accept the way that the narrative has been framed” about the new deputy chairman of the Conservative Party.

Anderson, who was appointed as deputy chairman in Rishi Sunak’s latest reshuffle, [came under fire](#) last month after saying the Tories should put culture wars at the heart of the next general election campaign.

Lee Anderson

The MP says the Tories will need to use “culture wars” and “the trans debate” to win voters over. (PinkNews/Getty)

The former Labour councillor – nicknamed “30p Lee” for comments he made about food poverty – told [The New Culture Form](#) that the Conservatives relied on Brexit and Jeremy Corbyn to win votes in 2019 but does not hold those cards any more.

In order to cling to power after the next election, which is expected to take place in 2024, Lee Anderson believes the party will “probably” rely on a “mix of culture wars and trans debate”.

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Dines' defence of Anderson came as openly gay MP Bradshaw questioned her on whether a "background of semi-official transphobia in England" – including Anderson's comments – has contributed to rising hate crime figures.

"With the greatest respect, I do not accept the way that the narrative has been framed about the deputy chairman of the Conservative Party," Dines said.

"We have to look at all those issues, but I welcome the increase in the reporting of the sort of offences that the right honourable member mentions, because it is only when people come forward that we can do something about it."

I asked the Government what they are doing about a 56% increase in transphobic hate crime. Pitiful response.

[pic.twitter.com/WiBX7BJjNb](https://pic.twitter.com/WiBX7BJjNb)

— Ben Bradshaw (@BenPBradshaw) March 8, 2023

Earlier in the debate the minister told the house the government "take all forms of hate crime seriously" and added that a rise in hate crime statistics from 43 per cent to 56 per cent is a "good thing" because "it means that people have more confidence in the police".

She continued: "There is more to do, but I certainly do not accept that the Government are against assisting in that area, as has been said. We are putting huge amounts of effort and education into it, from which we will reap the benefits in years to come."

PinkNews has contacted Sarah Dines for comment.

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