

A career woman not a career politician

My name is Caroline Attfield. I was once a career banker, working my way through what was then a very male-dominated world to management roles. In 1993, I became the first woman executive appointed by RBS. I was in charge of the Global Sales, Marketing and Distribution of all the bank's Treasury and Capital Markets products, running a business with sales revenues in the hundreds of millions and staff based in 15 dealing rooms around the globe. From outside I have seen the demise of a well-regarded Institution through Internal and external management failures.

I left full-time work in 1996 to raise my children but continued working part-time as a consultant in various roles. My children are nearly grown up now and should be ready to look out for themselves but I am deeply concerned for the financial future of their generation. Eye watering levels of debt have become a way of life both at individual and governmental level and we need a return to an understanding that budgets should be balanced within the lifetime of the people responsible for the borrowing. Nowhere is this problem more obvious than in Europe

The financial recklessness of the Blair and Brown governments has eroded our country's financial credibility. Our ability to renegotiate our role in Europe is impaired by the fact that we cannot offer the City as an example of financial competence. Yet, historically, that is exactly what it was and must be again. In London and, by extension in Europe, the Conservative party must champion financial prudence, personal accountability and sensible regulation with the objective of making the City a driver of our economy of which we might once again even be proud.