

What's the significance of that U turn?

Published: January 12, 2026, 11:19 pm

So George Osborne's done another U turn - [on charity tax this time](#). Inevitably, [by U turning he's called it wrong](#), but that's not my point this morning. That though is not my point this morning. The detail of this U turn, and that on pasties and caravans is not in the detail of what he got right or wrong, it's rather that in his opinion he got it wrong.

If this is a man who has lost command of the details of his policy agenda; who has failed to grasp the significance of the small stuff, and who is expending considerable political capital on such things as a result, what confidence can anyone have that he ever really grasped the big stuff?

It could be said (probably fairly) that my question is politically motivated, but when it is clear that a man has such a low ability to predict the consequences of his actions but acts anyway, why should we follow his leadership on such big issues as tackling an economy in recession?

Is it reasonable to think a man who can't see that cutting tax relief for charities might alienate both those who tax avoid by using such arrangements and those charities innocently caught in the cross fire should also decide it's worth creating record unemployment, of the young and women in particular, but also across society general, simply on the basis of his judgement that this will lead to private sector economic growth?

Or is it wiser to think that he simply can't predict the consequences of his actions?

Many will now think the latter.

And in that case millions in this country will now realise that they are now paying the price for his inability.