

The price of freebies

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I admit that Sabrina Carpenter is a person about whose music I know very little. For all I know, I might have never heard a song that she has either written or performed. Mention Karen Carpenter, and things might be different. That's how the passing of time works when you reach a certain age, but it also means that the performer in question would not usually get a mention on this blog.

So why has she? That is [because Rachel Reeves did, apparently](#), take at least two tickets in a corporate box at a performance Sabrina Carpenter gave in London, taking at least one of her children with her.

Let me be clear. I am not suggesting that Sabrina Carpenter has been party to any wrongdoing. She can strut her stuff on the stage if she wishes, and if the paying public wants to part with their income to enable her to do so, then that is her right. The point that I am making is that Rachel Reeves did not part with cash to attend this event. She took a freebie instead.

The optics of this are truly dire.

I am well aware that Reeves has offered, as an excuse, the fact that her security could not have been guaranteed if she had not attended in a box, and that box seats were not available for sale, and so she had to accept a donated seat instead. This, I suggest, is the comment of a politician totally out of touch with reality. The option of not attending did, after all, exist.

Vast numbers of people in this country, including all of those who have been penalised already by what Rachel Reeves has done as Chancellor, or who will be very soon, could not have attended this concert, however much their son or daughter might have wished to do so. Reeves had ensured this for them. She could, therefore, have joined their ranks, albeit for a different reason, which was that her security was at risk.

Alternatively, her husband could have taken their child who wished to go, and no one would have noticed. For the sake of the record, it is known that fathers can do such

things. It is possible. Precisely for that reason, her excuse makes absolutely no sense at all. The reality is that she wanted to attend, and she took the freebie.

To put it politely, doing so shows the most gross lack of political judgement. At a time when she is imposing austerity on millions directly, whilst threatening the financial well-being of a great many more people in this country by driving the economy into an unnecessary recession, to accept very high-value concert tickets as a consequence of her position makes her look like a person totally out of touch with the reality of life for most people in the UK.

There is a good reason for that impression being projected, of course. She is a person totally out of touch with the reality of life for most people in this country. That might now make her a typical Labour politician, but the public will not forget.

High political office comes with a price attached. One of those prices is that there are certain things that you cannot do. Reeves and Starmer do not want to pay that price, but they do want all the trappings of office. There is a word to describe that behaviour. It is greedy. That is what they are. The public has worked that out. And they have realised that these desperately greedy people are imposing hardship and austerity upon them, and others, by deliberate political choice. It is hardly surprising that Labour is losing popularity so quickly.