

## The Funding the Future event: 28 February 2026

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We recently suggested that we were planning to hold a Funding the Future event.

When we posted polls both here and on YouTube asking how many people might be willing to come to East Anglia for such an event, 550 indicated that they would. I entirely accept this does not mean that all of them would actually book or arrive, but it made us think hard about our plans.

As a consequence of some hard work by James, in the team here, we investigated larger venues than we had initially planned, and also talked through matters with our insurers to find an arrangement that was most likely to meet our needs whilst lowering our insurance risk to the lowest level possible.

As a consequence, we have now booked a room at the Hilton Hotel in central Cambridge on Saturday, 28 February. Taking all factors into account — including all the staffing, income, training and other arrangements that we would have had to put in place if we had used either a university or school venue — this turned out to be the most cost-effective option, and it also happens to probably be the best for access.

Bookings are not open yet because we have not set up all the arrangements. However, the event is likely to run from around 12.30 until 5.30 on the day in question, giving time for travel to and from Cambridge within reasonable hours.

We will be supplying teas and coffees before the event and during the two breaks in it. There will be no food. You cannot imagine the problems that providing biscuits can cause due to potential allergy implications.

We hope the price will be less than our original target of £50. We are also planning reductions for students and young people, as well as for older people on a pension and those on benefits. We will trust people to be honest and to claim such discounts only when it is appropriate and necessary.

Unfortunately, we will not be permitting anyone under 18 to attend unless accompanied by an adult. Again, please blame regulation for this: we do not hold the relevant

qualifications in all the safeguarding issues that would arise unless we impose this restriction.

The day will be organised around three sessions.

The first will be a broad-based introduction from me on where I see the economy at present, which will, of course, discuss solutions to the problems that we face. This will be followed by a question-and-answer session and a tea and coffee break.

The second session will open with a discussion between regular commentator here, Clive Parry, and me about money, how it functions within the economy, and how bond markets work — an issue that I know many people are intrigued, confused and/or fascinated by.

The last session will be an AMA (Ask Me Anything). That said, we will ask people to submit questions in advance, not because we dislike spontaneity, but because we want to ensure a wide variety of questions are asked. Follow-ups will be permitted, of course, subject to time being available.

If this event works, we will look at other events in other parts of the country during the remainder of the year. I do not want to go overboard, but to do one of these every other month or so might be possible. Obvious venues being mentioned at present include London, somewhere in the south-west (with Bristol standing out), and maybe Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Newcastle, which will take us well into next year. Scotland and Wales might also need a look-in as we get more experienced about making arrangements from a distance.

Right now, I have no further details to provide, so it's not worth asking me more. Nor can we offer reservations in advance at present (unless you happen to be a very regular commentator on this blog, for whom we might make some exceptions). But I wanted to let you know: this is going to happen.

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