

55 questions for Andy Burnham on things we need to know

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These were the notes I used to prepare for this morning's video. Usually I do not share these. Today, I thought it was worth doing so. Mark him against them in 2029.

The hook

- * We will have a new, bright, shiny and smiley Prime Minister from Manchester on Monday
- * But what will he do?
- * In truth, we have no more idea about his agenda than we did about Keir Starmer's
- * That does not augur well
- * So here are some decisions he will need to make, and will do so by default if he does not address them
- * By his actions will we know the man

Economic philosophy

- * To understand and use MMT thinking, or not
- * To use fiscal rules, or not
- * To make growth his goal, or not
- * To put well-being and flourishing at the epicentre of his agenda instead, or not
- * To tax wealth, more or not
- * To have a policy of full employment, or not
- * To leave the Bank of England independent, or not
- * To take control of interest rates, or not
- * To have genuinely integrated economic policy, or not

Housing

- * To build council houses, or not
- * To build these houses where people are, not where the government wants them, between Oxford and Cambridge, or not
- * To give councils the power to borrow to build, or not
- * To end the right to buy, or not

Energy and environment

- * To do a Green New Deal, or not
- * To build flood defences, or not
- * To do nuclear, or not
- * To allow oil and gas to continue in the North Sea, or not
- * To make every building a power station, or not

Infrastructure

- * HS2 to expand or even finish, or not
- * To allow Heathrow to expand, or not
- * To rebuild Manchester Oxford Road, or not
- * And Ely North Junction, and so much more on the rail network, or not

Utilities

- * To take control of water, or not
- * To control electricity pricing to favour consumers and not suppliers, or not
- * To invest heavily in the National Grid, or not
- * To improve regulation or not
- * To make nationalisation mandatory if standards are not met

Health

- * To eliminate the causes of so much ill health in the UK, from ultra-processed food to excessive prescribing, or not
- * To invest in support for those alienated by neoliberalism and deemed mentally unwell as a result, or not
- * To invest in midwives to let life start well, or not

- * To make hospice care an NHS provision, and right, or not

Education

- * To permit education that meets the needs of children to find out who they are, or not
- * To end the role of education in supplying pre-formed inputs for business use, or not
- * To end student loans and cancel the debt, or not
- * To free universities from the funding tyranny they now face, or not

Community

- * To invest in communities so that young people have places to go, things to do, and in alcohol free environments, or not
- * To support local government and enhance local decision making
- * To reform council tax to deliver local tax justice
- * To control the spread of second homes, requiring planning permission for use as such, or as a holiday home, and to charge for this right

Justice and social security

- * To invest in rapid criminal justice, or not
- * To provide a social safety net for people to rely on, or not.

Migration

- * To reform migration policy, or not
- * To confirm the right of refugees, or not

Democracy

- * To do proportional representation, or not
- * To end all political donations over £5,000, or not
- * To end laws that discourage voting, or not
- * To allow free votes on independence in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland every decade, or not

Civil liberties and media

- * To channel laws on control of the media
- * To give the BBC freedom without continual government interference
- * To end oppressive laws on the right to protest

- * To end the use of anti-terrorism laws on those who oppose government policy, or not.

Foreign policy

- * To undertake a proper defence review, or not
- * To stand up to Israel, or not
- * To support Palestinians, or not
- * To stand up to the USA, or not.