

Who should be the next Chancellor?

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As Andy Burnham weighs up his Chancellor choice, here's a radical thought: What about keeping Rachel Reeves?

The near-universal assumption is that he wants a clean break and it may already be too late, but here's the case for continuity.

First, **stability** counts. Reeves has market credibility built on strengthening the fiscal framework. In this year's Budget, fiscal rules have to be met in 3 years, rather than the 5 year-horizon from Jeremy Hunt, aligning more realistically with detailed spending plans. Her rules of balancing the current budget and taking financial assets into account when cutting public debt allowed a [£120bn](#) increase in public **investment** over the previous government's plans. She is forecast to meet her rules even though it required tough and unpopular choices on raising taxes to pay for public services.

Second, negativity about the UK economy is wildly overblown. Despite a dire inheritance and policy vandalism from the White House, [productivity](#) growth, our Achilles' Heel for two decades has picked up. Annually, it has run at about [1.6%](#) since the election, compared to the previous decade's 0.3%. Cue [economists](#) squabbling over whether this is due to public investment, AI, [planning](#) reforms, or a weakening jobs market. Nonetheless, the growth rebound seems real.

Third, this focus on growth must remain paramount. There has been progress in structural **reforms** such as housing planning, but the government needs to go much, much further. It requires bravery to take up welfare and tax reform again. It's no secret that the Chancellor pushed for more radical changes to disability and inheritance tax reform than Keir Starmer allowed.

The Labour party cannot sink back into its comfort zone, duck these challenges and just hope things get better. With the momentum of a new Prime Minister, it could re-start a full-throated push for growth. And this means being honest about the choices facing the country, such as how to pay for higher defence spending.

So why not Reeves herself?

And if not, the Burnham Agenda should continue her [credo](#) of stability, investment and reform.