

# Prime Minister Andy Burnham – New Cabinet Confirmed

Last night the UK's new Prime Minister Andy Burnham conducted a ruthless and extensive reshuffle which didn't conclude until 11pm on his first day in No.10.

The Starmer loyalists on the modernising wing of the party were the first casualties, including high profile names Rachel Reeves, Peter Kyle, Steve Reed, Darren Jones, Liz Kendall, who all return to the backbenches in what was a brutal display of political strength from Burnham. This creates a long list of potential new enemies for Burnham, who are already commenting on his decision to cut VAT on electricity bills and raising questions about how he will pay for his new policy commitments.

Rachel Reeves' successor as the new Chancellor of the Exchequer was the first appointment to be confirmed, with former Defence Secretary, John Healey taking on the role, in a move that surprised much of the Westminster Lobby after weeks of stories about a two-horse race between Ed Miliband and Shabana Mahmood.

The big winners were – unsurprisingly – the Andy Burnham allies and the 'Northern Queens' who were instrumental in charting his return to Parliament and path to No.10, including Lucy Powell, who takes the Education brief, Louise Haigh who joins the Cabinet Office and Anneliese Midgely who takes the role of Chief Whip. This is a significant rebalancing of Cabinet away from London MPs to be more representative of all corners of the country. It also sees Burnham bring back lots of those who had been sacked by Starmer.

A number of junior ministers have been invited to attend Cabinet, including Hamish Falconer (Intergovernmental Relations), Kanishka Narayan (AI) and Matthew Pennycook (Housing), taking the total number of Cabinet attendees to 28. This decision to expand the number of ministers attending cabinet reflects how important Burnham sees these ministers' remits to the wider success of the government under his leadership.

Junior ministerial roles will be confirmed over the coming days, with a strong view from business that continuity would be helpful. Given he hasn't met many of them, retaining experienced junior ministers would provide stability while Burnham assesses the performance of his new-look Cabinet, helping to ensure ministers can deliver at the pace required to match his ambitious agenda.

## Burnham's top team at a glance

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**Rt Hon John Healey**  
**Chancellor of the Exchequer**  
*New*

In what might have been one of the most politically effective resignations in recent history, the former Defence Secretary is the surprise return to Cabinet. Healey's first task will be to find the money for the Defence Investment Plan. A former Treasury Minister under Blair and Brown, Healey is seen as a safe pair of hands who can be trusted to deliver on the priorities Burnham sets for him.



**Rt Hon Ed Miliband**  
**Foreign Secretary**  
*Moved*

Ed Miliband moves to one of the great offices of state as reward for his involvement in bringing Burnham back into parliament. Having largely spent his career in domestic policy roles, some might see this as a waste of his policy talents. Although he will welcome the global stage to discuss climate deals and obligations. He will be trusted as Burnham's voice on the world stage given Burnham's eagerness to be a more domestically-focused Prime Minister.



**Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood**  
**Home Secretary**  
*Stays*

Having been the perceived frontrunner for Chancellor, Mahmood gets to keep the job she wanted and to finish the vital work she is doing on immigration reform. She helps keep a broad church of political views in Cabinet as a representative of 'Blue Labour' on Labour's more old right that is tougher on law and order.



**Rt Hon Louise Haigh**  
**Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and  
First Secretary of State**  
*New*

Burnham's right-hand woman gets second in command as First Secretary of State, and one of the widest ranging and powerful briefs at the centre of government. She has joined Burnham in access talks with the civil service and is one of the key power brokers on the soft left of the Labour Party.



**Rt Hon Anneliese Midgley**  
**Parliamentary Secretary (Chief Whip)**

***New***

Another of the 'Northern Queens' who was a key organiser and fixer for Burnham's Makerfield by-election. A union woman by background, Midgley is well liked across the Labour Party and will help drive the new consensus building approach Andy Burnham seeks to deliver.



**Rt Hon Yvette Cooper**  
**Health Secretary**

***Moves***

In what might be seen as a demotion to some, Cooper moves from Foreign Secretary to Health Secretary, where she will be responsible for delivering on Burnham's personal priorities on reforming social care and driving forward the prevention agenda, given her experience as a minister.



**Rt Hon Lucy Powell**  
**Education Secretary and Deputy Labour Leader**

***New***

Powell returns to Cabinet after being fired by Keir Starmer last year. She is close to Andy Burnham as a Manchester MP and has been a key spokesperson in recent weeks. She will be responsible for driving forward Burnham's skills agenda and picking up the tricky SEND reforms introduced under her predecessor Bridget Phillipson, who remains in the Cabinet as women and equalities minister.



**Rt Hon Pat McFadden**  
**Work and Pensions Secretary**

***Stays***

One of the great Labour survivors in various Labour governments, McFadden stays on to piece back together the failed welfare reforms that collapsed Starmer's premiership. He will continue working closely with Alan Milburn on his review on young people and work, and to take forward policy to tackle the UK's NEET crisis.



**Rt Hon Wes Streeting**  
**Defence Secretary**

*New*

Despite long calling for a leadership contest before rowing in behind Burnham, one of the members of Labour's modernising wing returns to Cabinet to lead the implementation of the Defence Investment Plan and maintain support for Ukraine.



**Rt Hon Lisa Nandy**  
**Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Secretary**

*Stays*

Another regional ally of Burnham, there was speculation that Nandy would move into the housing and communities brief. Instead, she stays in her department to deliver on the BBC Charter Review and reabsorbs the government's digital agenda to oversee AI development and its interaction with the creative industries.



**Rt Hon Angela Rayner**  
**Housing Secretary**

*New*

One of Labour's big beasts returns to Cabinet as another part of the north west coalition after having to resign over her tax affairs. She comes back to do the job she wanted - to deliver on local government reorganisation, housing and devolution. All huge priorities for Andy Burnham and a show of trust in Rayner.



**Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds**  
**Business, Innovation, Science and Trade Secretary**

*Moves*

Another Cabinet minister returns to the job they wanted. Reynolds returns to the business brief in an expanded department that has merged with the department for Science and Tech. This will be welcomed by the business community who were disappointed to see Reynolds leave to the Whips' Office last year.



**Rt Hon Miatta Fahnbulleh**  
**Energy Secretary**

*New*

Fahnbulleh moves to DESNZ in a highly promoted role, having been the first minister to resign from her role at MHCLG to force out Starmer. She is an impressive policy brain, having led work at the Cabinet Office, IPPR and New Economics Foundation, and impressed as a junior minister. She has been holding the pen on developing Burnham's policy priorities over recent months.



**Dame Angela Eagle**  
**Environment Secretary**

*Moved*

Eagle is promoted to the Secretary of State job having been a minister in the department over the last year. Eagle is an experienced minister and politician having been in parliament since 1992 and will be tasked with repairing relations with the rural community. She may have a difficult job to do, given Burnham's natural instincts may lead him to prioritise policy agendas affecting cities and towns.



**Rt Hon Heidi Alexander**  
**Transport Secretary**

*Stays*

Alexander remains one of the few to keep the post she has had since November 2024, when she replaced Louise Haigh as Transport secretary. She is another close ally of Burnham and one of the few MPs to nominate him for leader on each of the three occasions he has stood for the role. Alexander will be important in driving forward collaboration with regional mayors on transport reforms.



**Alex Norris**  
**Justice Secretary**

*New*

Former Home Office minister Alex Norris has been promoted to the role of Justice Secretary replacing David Lammy. Norris follows a similar route with a union and councillor background.

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