

Answers to Questions from Labour International

by Deputy Leadership Candidates

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan MP

1. Do you agree that Labour Party members living abroad should be allowed the same membership fee concessions as we would have if we lived in the United Kingdom?

I strongly believe that Labour Party members living abroad should enjoy the same membership concessions as members living in the UK - we must grow our membership.

2. Do you support open selection for MPs in a similar way as is the norm for Councillors?

I believe that MPs should be accountable and there should be a system in place whereby members can challenge their MP if there have been issues, however we already had this system in place.

Mandatory open selections before every election will result in less time and resources fighting the Conservatives - this is something that activists have told me in seats where we lost MPs.

3. What needs to be done to grow support for the GND?

The climate crisis is the most pressing issue facing our planet and I am delighted that we have put forward a radical plan to prevent catastrophe. To foster support for the GND we must continue to collaborate with trade unions, ensuring workers are involved in the process and any transition period.

We need to put the reskilling and retraining of workers for green industries at the forefront of our proposals.

4. What should Labour's Brexit policy be now?

I campaigned passionately to Remain, however I accept the debate has moved on, and we have to accept that Brexit is now going to happen. We must continue to:

- Hold the Government's far-right Tory Brexit vision to account. We must stay closely aligned to the EU to protect jobs, save our NHS from dirty trade deals and tackle the climate crisis.
- Possibility of catastrophic no-deal is still very real - we must scrutinise every piece of Brexit legislation.
- Continue to support Freedom of Movement.

5. What should be the party policy on immigration, migration and migrant rights?

As an internationalist party, we need an immigration policy which reflects this value. I would:

- Ensure the status of all EU Nationals living in the UK.
- Support Freedom of Movement - as an NHS doctor I regularly see the contribution made by EU nurses, doctors and support staff. We are facing huge NHS staffing shortages due to fears relating to Brexit.
- Adapt the work visa system to ensure shortages in industries are filled.
- Scrap the minimum income requirement – focus on skills not earnings.

6. How would you address democracy in the party including Regional structures, the selection of candidates at regional and national level, and the role of members in formulating LP policies.

We must decentralise party structures to ensure that members have a say in how their party is run. I would ensure that there is no interference from Labour centrally regarding the selection process, letting local members decide, not someone handpicked by senior party officials in London.

CLPs need to feed into policy development. Active members across the country understand the problems affecting their areas and will have the most innovative solutions to regional problems.

7. If there are irreconcilable differences between the PLP and the majority of Labour Party members who should give way?

The Labour Party as a whole is much bigger than just the PLP and as Deputy Leader I would always appreciate that fact.

However, our Party is at its best when the whole Party is united. We need to move beyond the last few years where nasty internal debates about faction and ideological purity have alienated people from our movement. As Deputy Leader, I would work to unify our Party, from the grassroots to the PLP.

8. What role do you see for the party and its activists in delivering the LP message, including: Addressing the way the LP is portrayed in the media and Working in communities

Activists are the lifeblood of our movement and as Deputy Leader I would empower them further, that's why I launched my Grassroots Revival Manifesto. It's not just about delivering leaflets, we have social media experts, policy gurus, videographers and many other talents. I want to see us unlock the talents of our membership.

By utilising the communication skills of our members, we will ensure we are portrayed in the media as a united party with a clear vision for government.

9. What does the party need to do to move forward on the recommendations of the Chakrabarti Report with respect to antisemitism, including the LP disciplinary processes?

To move forward with the Chakrabarti Report and to tackle antisemitism in the party, I would:

- First major meeting as Deputy Leader would be with JLM.
- Separate the complaints process from head office, making it independent.
- Immediately get the new team to review all cases, acting swiftly and expelling antisemites.
- Put a time limit on when cases need to be resolved by (now and in future).
- Commit to adopt every recommendation proposed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Richard Burgon

1. Do you agree that Labour Party members living abroad should be allowed the same membership fee concessions as we would have if we lived in the United Kingdom?

Yes - I fully support this being changed so that all Labour members are treated equally.

2. Do you support open selection for MPs in a similar way as is the norm for Councillors?

I fully support Open Selection so that Labour members get the chance to democratically select their parliamentary candidate before every election.

I was the first candidate in the Leadership or Deputy leadership elections to support Open Selection.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: My video on Open Selection from the first Leadership Hustings :

<https://twitter.com/richardburgon/status/1219890558962978816>)

The remaining Questions are “open” but answers are limited to 80 words. You may use bullet points and links to articles on websites.

3. What needs to be done to grow support for the GND?

As a campaigning Deputy Leader I'll refocus our campaigning around 10 key policies that are easily understood on the doorstep. While members must choose those campaigns, I'd push for the Green New Deal to be a priority.

I've already committed to working with "Labour for a Green New Deal" as Deputy Leader. I'd ensure it has the support needed to organise and educate in more CLPs and to work with local councils and mayors to push for local GND action plans.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: My article "Climate Change is a Class Issue" (<https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/f/climate-change-class-struggle-issue>)

4. What should Labour's Brexit policy be now?

We have to stop Boris Johnson using the cover of Brexit to push Thatcherism 2.0. We need to unite all communities - whether they voted Leave or Remain - to stand up to the Tories' attempt to use Brexit to push free-trade agreements with Trump - or anyone else - that would drive down wages, cut back protections for people and planet and try to replicate the awful free-market practices that are so common in the United States.

5. What should be the party policy on immigration, migration and migrant rights?

While free-movement, as defined in EU law, ends with Brexit, we will still need an open, progressive and humane migration policy.

I am very worried the Tories will attack migrant rights and engage in scapegoating to blame migrants for their failed economic policies. The recent attacks on unaccompanied child migrants' rights were disgraceful.

Over the next period, we must run strong Labour Party campaigns that tackle the myth that migrants, not the failed economic system, have caused the problems in our society.

6. How would you address democracy in the party including Regional structures, the selection of candidates at regional and national level, and the role of members in formulating LP policies?

As Deputy Leader I will fight to empower members to have much greater democratic say over our party. This would include - but is not restricted to:

- Selecting candidates through Open Selection
- Ensuring Labour Group Leaders on Councils are directly selected by members
- Greater members' say in determining the party's priority campaigns
- Ensuring Annual Conference is sovereign
- Ensuring policy passed at Conference - for example over private schools - is automatically in the manifesto
- Ensuring Labour Party conferences decisions are followed by the Shadow Cabinet.

7. If there are irreconcilable differences between the PLP and the majority of Labour Party members who should give way?

In a democratic party, our Annual Conference must be the sovereign body and all elected representatives should adhere to its policies and positions. We must be a members-led party.

MPs should respect the democratic positions of the Labour Party as decided by members and affiliates. Where there is a conflict, the democratic decisions of Party members must prevail.

It is an honour to be a Labour MP - but we must never forget we're servants of the party and members.

8. What role do you see for the party and its activists in delivering the LP message, including:

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: My Guardian article on how we overhaul our messaging and communications, campaigning and organising model
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/27/deputy-leader-labour-richard-burton?CMP=share_btn_tw

- **Addressing the way the LP is portrayed in the media (40 words)**

We need a much more professional approach to the media.

Our messaging must be clearer. Our rebuttal unit overhauled.

I successfully sued The Sun for defamation - I believe we need to more forcefully challenge biased media, for example demanding Question Time has balanced panels.

- **Working in communities (40 words)**

Labour members must be treated as more than unpaid postal workers, delivering leaflets. They must have a full say over the campaigning priorities.

Locally they must be supported by a better-resourced Campaign Unit so that they can play a full role in - and launch - local campaigns that show whose side we're on.

9. What does the party need to do to move forward on the recommendations of the Chakrabarti Report with respect to antisemitism, including the LP disciplinary processes?

We must robustly fight anti-Semitism wherever it is found - including in our Party.

We must ensure that there are more resources so that complaints can be dealt with more swiftly. Those found guilty of anti-Semitism should face tough action.

However, I have publicly expressed concern about a so-called “independent complaints procedure”. The outsourcing of our complaints procedure is something I simply can’t support.

At the same time, as the NEC stated, we must ensure freedom of expression in defence of Palestinian human rights.

Dawn Butler

1. Do you agree that Labour Party members living abroad should be allowed the same membership fee concessions as we would have if we lived in the United Kingdom?

We need to have a debate around this issue to ensure that Labour’s rules and membership rates are fair for everyone, no matter where they live. I am committed to doing that as Deputy Leader.

2. Do you support open selection for MPs in a similar way as is the norm for Councillors?

I believe that Labour members must have the final say on who their parliamentary candidates are. There also needs to be a process for ensuring that MPs attend their Labour Party members meetings.

3. What needs to be done to grow support for the GND?

Part of my CORE strategy – Campaign, Organise, Recruit, Educate – will involve supporting the elected Leader in selling the benefits of Labour policies, including a Green New Deal. I am clear that we need to take urgent action to tackle the climate and environmental emergency.

4. What should Labour’s Brexit policy be now?

Following our devastating election result I recognise that we are leaving the European Union. However I am clear that we must continue to have a close relationship with our European neighbours and partners. I believe that we need a customs union with the European Union and as close a relationship with the single market as possible. This will minimise disruption and problems as much as possible

for our economy post-Brexit and ensure we have a close economic partnership with the EU moving forward which will be good for both parties.

5. What should be the party policy on immigration, migration and migrant rights?

Regarding the EU, I have always been a passionate defender of the free movement of people and believe this is of great benefit to people both in the UK and the EU. I think it's great that people have the opportunity to work, travel and study abroad. More widely, our immigration system must be based on compassion and being an open and accepting country, where all people are respected and valued. We must do all we can to protect migrant rights.

6. How would you address democracy in the party including Regional structures, the selection of candidates at regional and national level, and the role of members in formulating LP policies.

It is so important that we reform our party in order to prepare the Labour Party for power. One way of doing that is ensuring that our NEC and other institutions be more representative and reflective of our country including our different regions. I have also supported proportional representation for internal Labour internal elections.

7. If there are irreconcilable differences between the PLP and the majority of Labour Party members who should give way?

It's not about giving way. Everyone in our party has a right to have their voice heard. We must respect all parts of our party and when there are disagreements, we must find a way to come together and reach a solution. As Deputy Leader I am committed to doing just that and uniting our party.

8. What role do you see for the party and its activists in delivering the LP message, including:

Delivering my CORE strategy will need our fantastic Labour activists. I would also ensure better access to good quality materials and social media for our members and affiliates. My priority is to improve our social media and to work with party members and Trade Unions to make it the most powerful network in the world. Imagine that we work together to understand our messages, communicating better with each other, and spreading our messages to others – through retweets, reposts and union spokespeople making more media appearances.

9. What does the party need to do to move forward on the recommendations of the Chakrabarti Report with respect to antisemitism, including the LP

disciplinary processes?

We must eradicate the scourge of anti-Semitism from our movement. We must implement the Chakrabarti recommendations, implement the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report, meet with Jewish organisations including the Jewish Labour Movement, and fully roll out the fast track system for anti-Semitism.

Ian Murray MP

1. Do you agree that Labour Party members living abroad should be allowed the same membership fee concessions as we would have if we lived in the United Kingdom?

Yes, but there is actually an argument for making it lower given there is no participation in CLPs etc.

2. Do you support open selection for MPs in a similar way as is the norm for Councillors?

No. I love my party and I serve with the confidence of my local CLP. However, my ultimate loyalty is to the people who elected me: my constituents. These are the people we are sent to parliament to represent, whose views we must listen to and act upon.

If an MP is not performing or is undermining Labour values, there are trigger ballot mechanisms in place to deal with that. What we don't need is an internal party fight in the lead up to a general election campaign at the very time we should be bringing people together and taking the fight to the Tories.

The Labour Party lost 61 seats at the last General Election and our focus must be on getting more Labour MPs elected - not kicking out the ones we already have.

It is a process that sows division and we need to get rid of all divisions.

3. What needs to be done to grow support for the GND?

Climate change is the greatest challenge of our times. I have been championing action on the climate crisis since I was elected to Parliament in 2010. In 2013, I introduced a Private Member's Bill that would have decarbonised the UK energy market by 2030. I was pleased that the party adopted this policy in 2015, 2017 and 2019. With the Tories in power for another five years, we must do all we can to grow public support for the GND.

4. What should Labour's Brexit policy be now?

Brexit is a disaster, and I deeply regret that it will be happening at the end of this week. The Labour Party should never have faced both ways on this issue. I was proud to be a founding member of the People's Vote campaign and a supporter of Best for Britain. As Deputy Leader, I want to launch a Campaign for Britain's Future which will campaign to reform the way Britain is governed after Brexit. As a party we should never rule out campaigning to go back into the EU if that is in the national interest. You can see me address some of these issues on the Andrew Marr show here: <https://twitter.com/ianmurraymp/status/1218843043010400258?s=21>

5. What should be the party policy on immigration, migration and migrant rights?

We should have an open, inclusive and tolerant approach to immigration and migrant rights. We should never be ashamed of standing up for internationalist values. I have written a detailed response on these issues for Labour for Free Movement, which you can read here: <https://twitter.com/labfreemvmt/status/1221890015778787328?s=21>

6. How would you address democracy in the party including Regional structures, the selection of candidates at regional and national level, and the role of members in formulating LP policies.

Our party is far too centralised in London and we must push as much power as possible down to nations and regions. Scotland already has full autonomy in policy and selection of candidates. That is right. Our regional directors and national General Secretaries should have far more power and influence over targeting and the use of resources in their areas. We also need to strengthen the role of Regional Communication Officers to properly target regional media.

7. If there are irreconcilable differences between the PLP and the majority of Labour Party members who should give way?

We already have a way of addressing any differences between the PLP and the membership. Party conference is our sovereign decision-making body and includes our trade unions and affiliates who are a central part of the Labour movement. Any differences should be debated through CLPs and taken to conference where a decision can be made.

8. What role do you see for the party and its activists in delivering the LP message, including:

- Addressing the way the LP is portrayed in the media

- Working in communities

Our party members have a crucial role in taking on negative portrayals of the Labour Party in the media and online. I would set up a rapid response unit to make sure our party members have the tools and evidence you need to take on negative coverage.

Perception of the Labour Party has to start at the grassroots, which is why we need Labour Party members involved in community action as well as party action. Many of our members have sustained CABs, community councils and local charities for years. Our members being actively involved provides a positive portrayal of our party. I do this locally in my own seat.

9. What does the party need to do to move forward on the recommendations of the Chakrabarti Report with respect to antisemitism, including the LP disciplinary processes?

Anti-Semitism is a stain on our party. If elected Deputy Leader, I will take personal responsibility for ensuring all are resolved all. I back an independent complaints or appeals process in order to eradicate any risk of factionalism or personal relationships influencing the outcome of investigations. I will also ensure implementation of any recommendations that the Equality and Human Rights Commission comes forward with in its upcoming report.

Angela Rayner

1. Do you agree that Labour Party members living abroad should be allowed the same membership fee concessions as we would have if we lived in the United Kingdom?

Yes

2. Do you support open selection for MPs in a similar way as is the norm for Councillors?

Conference should decide the rules on how our candidates are chosen, and I know there will be a debate which I'm happy to have. There are two critical points for me that I would want to see considered in any system for selections.

Firstly, I would not want our affiliates and trade union members to be excluded or sidelined in any process. Secondly, I would not want to see any step back from the advances we have made under Jeremy's leadership in the number of working class, female and ethnic minority candidates and MPs.

I know from my own route to Parliament, which was thanks to the support I received from my own trade union and others, that these points are linked and that we also need to go further than just reforming processes.

I want the party to firstly put the right support packages in place to ensure that new working class candidates, along with women, BAME, LGBT+ and disabled applicants, are able to successfully seek selection.

Too often I hear from working people who stand for office that they are struggling financially or are discriminated against by employers because their job isn't 'compatible' with running for public office. As a priority, I would want the party to look at how we can enable more candidates from different backgrounds to stand for parliament. The effect of changing our processes will be limited if the pool of people still wanting to put themselves forward was limited to those who can afford to do so.

One other simple thing that we could do straight away, even in Opposition, is to look at how we choose our party's nominees to the House of Lords. At the moment, the next Party Leader could simply appoint our party's peers. I want to see our members and affiliates have a say through our democratic structures, so that we have a choice of who represents us in both Houses of Parliament.

In power, we should scrap and replace the Lords with an elected chamber but right now we can demonstrate our principles by living them.

[80 Word Limit on the following questions]

3. What needs to be done to grow support for the GND?

We must argue that not only can we save the planet but create the jobs and industries of the future - especially in the communities that lost those they once relied on. Our future role in the world should be exporting the means to save lives, not take them. As Shadow Education Secretary I've worked hard to ensure that a Labour government would prepare our young people with the skills they will need in a green, sustainable future Britain.

4. What should Labour's Brexit policy be now?

The sad truth is the Tories will now deliver their version of Brexit. We have to hold them to account while trying to heal the divisions of the last 4 years and offering a positive vision. Our top policy priority should be to develop our own vision of our place in a post-EU Britain based on Labour values and putting our energies into protecting workers' rights and environmental protections from the Johnson government and their right wing agenda.

5. What should be the party policy on immigration, migration and migrant rights?

We must defend migrants from the attacks they may face from a Tory government and in order to sustain our essential services, including our NHS and the care service that I used to work in before becoming an MP. We need to continue to campaign to end detention of those seeking asylum, ensure entitlement to legal aid for those seeking or appealing asylum claims and make sure that all unaccompanied refugee children have the right to safe passage to the UK in order to be reunited with family.

6. How would you address democracy in the party including Regional structures, the selection of candidates at regional and national level, and the role of members in formulating LP policies.

The ultimate decision makers in our party are the members and our affiliates. As a democratic socialist party we should be proud of our mass membership party and that is something I am dedicated to preserving as Deputy Leader. We need to make sure more money and resources are given to grassroots campaigns run by local parties; we also need to listen to socialist societies in policy making in their individual expert areas.

7. If there are irreconcilable differences between the PLP and the majority of Labour Party members who should give way?

If elected as Deputy Leader, I want to be the voice of the ordinary members around the Shadow Cabinet table. Members, through conference, are sovereign when it comes to policy and ultimately the PLP should be battling the Tories not the Labour membership.

8. What role do you see for the party and its activists in delivering the LP message, including:

We need to be working and properly embedded in the communities we represent, helping work for and campaign for change all year, not just at election time. We need to provide greater training for ordinary members on messaging and media management and give more space and stories to the independent online news media that isn't controlled by the millionaire press barons.

9. What does the party need to do to move forward on the recommendations of the Chakrabarti Report with respect to antisemitism, including the LP disciplinary processes?

Labour has committed to implementing the Chakrabarti report in full and this is absolutely correct. We also need to move forwards alongside the Jewish community, allowing Jewish members and experts to help shape our policies and making sure that a zero tolerance approach to any form of anti-semitism and swift action against those found to be anti-semitic is unquestionable within our movement.