

We need change at the Treasury

Congratulations to Rishi Sunak. He is able and hard working, with a knowledge of the expenditure side of the Treasury from his role as Chief Secretary.

The immediate task is to challenge Treasury officials into completing the change from the Maastricht economics of austerity to a pro growth optimistic economics that chimes with the Prime Minister's vision. Boris has been clear we want growth, opportunity and levelling up. The aim is prosperity, not austerity. The purpose is more people in better paid work, more owners, a better spread of wealth and income around the whole UK.

You do not achieve that by writing the Maastricht rules back into the fiscal framework, nor by hiking taxes or trying to tax the rich out of the country. I think The PM was right to want common working between the Chancellor's team and his own. The leaks, briefings and rows about the forthcoming budget were not helpful. I expect Rishi to spend more time on persuading Treasury officials to complete their journey. They need to move on from pessimistic Hammond style economics which said the UK cannot be a success on her own and needs to beg to stay close to the EU, to an optimistic global UK approach. We need to grasp the future by investing in it. We need a bigger and more prosperous private sector, which requires lower tax rates and a holiday from yet more prescriptive regulation.