

# Assembly

07 - 07 Jul 2026

Poll results

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- What are the main challenges currently facing your business? [Select up to three options].
- How concerned are you about the impact of rising labour costs on your business over the next 12 months?
- How concerned are you about the impact of the new Employment Rights Act on your business over the next 12 months?
- Thinking about the challenges your business is currently facing, what type of support would be most helpful over the next 12–24 months? [Select up to three options].
- How optimistic are you that Andy Burnham’s proposed devolution reforms (including “No 10 North” and greater powers for elected Mayors) will deliver meaningful benefits for businesses in Greater Manchester?
- Burnham has proposed a 20% cut in business rates for pubs, bars, clubs and some high-street businesses (funded by higher rates on large warehouses). How do you view this as a priority for business support?
- Andy Burnham’s proposed procurement reforms aim to favour British suppliers and tie contracts to apprenticeships/social value. What barriers

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- do you face in successfully bidding for and winning public sector contracts? [Select up to three options]
- How much positive impact do you expect Andy Burnham's proposed procurement reforms to have on your business or supply chain?
- Which element of Burnham's announced policies do you think would have positive impact on businesses in Greater Manchester? [Rank in order of impact]
- The 2024 Campaign for Business focused on five themes: Skills, Trade, Connectivity, Business Conditions, and Net Zero. How relevant do you think these themes remain for Greater Manchester businesses in 2026 and beyond?
- What should the main focus of the Skills theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be? [Select up to three options]
- What should the main focus of the Connectivity theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be? [Select up to three options]
- What should the main focus of the Business Conditions theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be? [Select up to three options]
- What should the main focus of the Trade theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be? [Select up to three options]
- What should the main focus of the Trade theme in a

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- refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be? [Select up to three options]
- Question 16 How should success of the refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be assessed?

**What are the main challenges currently facing your business? [Select up to three options].**

(1/2)

0 3 6

Rising labour / employment costs



Economic uncertainty



Energy and fuel prices



Business rates and other taxation



Skills shortages and difficulties recruiting or retaining staff



**What are the main challenges currently facing your business? [Select up to three options].**  
(2/2)

0 3 6

Cashflow pressures or access to finance



Regulatory or compliance burden



# How concerned are you about the impact of rising labour costs on your business over the next 12 months?

0 3 3

Very concerned  
24 %

Somewhat concerned  
55 %

Neutral  
9 %

Not very concerned  
9 %

Not at all concerned  
3 %

## How concerned are you about the impact of the new Employment Rights Act on your business over the next 12 months?

032

Very concerned



Somewhat concerned



Neutral



Not very concerned



Not sure



**Thinking about the challenges your business is currently facing, what type of support would be most helpful over the next 12-24 months? [Select up to three options].**

0 3 3

(1/2)

Reductions in employment costs or National Insurance contributions



Support with energy costs



Support for transitioning to net zero



Support for workforce development and training



Easier access to finance, grants or cashflow support



**Thinking about the challenges your business is currently facing, what type of support would be most helpful over the next 12–24 months?  
[Select up to three options].**

(2/2)

0 3 3

Simplified regulations and reduced administrative burden



Procurement support for winning public sector contracts



Improved transport, digital and other physical infrastructure



None of the above / My business does not need additional support



**How optimistic are you that Andy Burnham's proposed devolution reforms (including "No 10 North" and greater powers for elected Mayors) will deliver meaningful benefits for businesses in Greater Manchester?**

(1/2)

0 3 5

Very optimistic



Somewhat optimistic



Neutral



Somewhat pessimistic



**How optimistic are you that Andy Burnham's proposed devolution reforms (including "No 10 North" and greater powers for elected Mayors) will deliver meaningful benefits for businesses in Greater Manchester?**

(2/2)

0 3 5

Very pessimistic

 3 %

Other / Not sure

 3 %

**Burnham has proposed a 20% cut in business rates for pubs, bars, clubs and some high-street businesses (funded by higher rates on large warehouses). How do you view this as a priority for business support?**

(1/2)

0 3 3

Strongly support as it directly helps the high street and hospitality businesses



Support the measure but would prefer broader reform



Neutral



Oppose it as it is too narrow or creates unfairness



**Burnham has proposed a 20% cut in business rates for pubs, bars, clubs and some high-street businesses (funded by higher rates on large warehouses). How do you view this as a priority for business support?**

(2/2)

0 3 3

Other / Not sure

 3 %

**Andy Burnham's proposed procurement reforms aim to favour British suppliers and tie contracts to apprenticeships/social value. What barriers do you face in successfully bidding for and winning public sector contracts? [Select up to three options]**

0 3 1

(1/2)

Complexity and bureaucracy of the tendering process



Lack of visibility or awareness of upcoming contract opportunities



Requirements (e.g. minimum turnover, insurance levels, past experience or social value) that favour larger suppliers



Cashflow challenges and slow payment terms once contracts are awarded



**Andy Burnham's proposed procurement reforms aim to favour British suppliers and tie contracts to apprenticeships/social value. What barriers do you face in successfully bidding for and winning public sector contracts? [Select up to three options]**

0 3 1

(2/2)

Difficulty navigating procurement portals and frameworks



Insufficient support and guidance for smaller businesses



Not applicable / My business does not bid for public contracts



**How much positive impact do you expect Andy Burnham's proposed procurement reforms to have on your business or supply chain?**

0 3 2

Potential positive impact



Little or no impact



Potential negative impact



Other



**Which element of Burnham’s announced policies do you think would have positive impact on businesses in Greater Manchester?  
[Rank in order of impact]**

030



**The 2024 Campaign for Business focused on five themes: Skills, Trade, Connectivity, Business Conditions, and Net Zero. How relevant do you think these themes remain for Greater Manchester businesses in 2026 and beyond?**

0 3 1

All five themes are still highly relevant and should remain the core

 6 %

The themes are still broadly right, but need updating and rewording

 77 %

The campaign needs a major refresh and new structure

 16 %

**What should the main focus of the Skills theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026-2029) be? [Select up to three options]**

0 3 1

Addressing immediate labour shortages and recruitment difficulties



Long-term reform of the skills and apprenticeship system



Prioritising emerging digital skills



Prioritising net zero and advanced technical skills for reindustrialisation



Leadership, management, and soft skills alongside technical training



**What should the main focus of the Connectivity theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be? [Select up to three options]**

0 3 2

Major inter-city rail links (e.g. Liverpool-Manchester-Leeds)



Local transport improvements and the full rollout of the Bee Network



Digital infrastructure (broadband, 5G and data connectivity)



Freight and logistics efficiency



Better connecting SMEs with major growth zones



**What should the main focus of the Business Conditions theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be? [Select up to three options]**

032

(1/2)

Reducing the overall tax and regulatory burden on businesses



81 %

Supporting the high street, and retail and hospitality sectors



44 %

Improving access to finance, grants and investment support



41 %

Better support for innovation, R&D and technology adoption (e.g. R&D tax credits, help with AI and advanced manufacturing)



31 %

Making business support simpler, less duplicated, and easier to access



47 %

**What should the main focus of the Business Conditions theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be? [Select up to three options]**

(2/2)

0 3 2

Creating greater policy certainty and long-term stability



**What should the main focus of the Trade theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026-2029) be? [Select up to three options]**

030

(1/2)

Supporting export growth in services (which make up over half of GM exports)



Reducing post-Brexit barriers and improving trade relations with the EU



A new trade arrangement with the EU to simplify customs processes and reducing regulatory friction



Helping businesses diversify into new non-EU markets



**What should the main focus of the Trade theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026-2029) be? [Select up to three options]**

0 3 0


(2/2)


Practical support for businesses to re-enter or expand in export markets




**What should the main focus of the Trade theme in a refreshed Campaign for Business (2026-2029) be? [Select up to three options]**

0 3 1

Helping businesses reduce energy costs while cutting carbon  35 %

Developing green skills to enable net zero transition  10 %

Developing supply chains for net zero transition  10 %

Positioning GM as a leader in green technology and inward investment  23 %

Practical support for retrofitting, data, and compliance  23 %

## Question 16 How should success of the refreshed Campaign for Business (2026–2029) be assessed?

031

Clear, measurable targets and regular progress reporting



Tangible improvements in business conditions (e.g. skills pipeline, export growth, investment levels)



Stronger engagement with businesses, especially SMEs



Greater influence on national and local policy decisions



Better coordination between national government, GMCA and business

