

Advice Services Alliance Conference 4th October 2022

Briefing for Andy Burnham's Pre-Recorded Introduction

Opening remarks and introduce self

Good morning everyone and welcome to the first day of the Advice Services Alliance Conference.

I am Andy Burnham, the Mayor of Greater Manchester Combined Authority. My team at GMCA have been working with the ASA Conference planning committee and it's a pleasure to welcome you all - and to thank you for your service, advising and helping people resolve their problems in such challenging times.

Manchester is home to over 40 exceptional advice centres and for our communities', access to good advice to cope with benefit problems, sort out fuel debts, reclaim unpaid wages or tackle housing disrepair is not just a 'nice to have' but an essential to sustain and to grow them.

This Conference is both timely and important

A decade of austerity policies have impacted on the poorest in society whilst our local services and community facilities have been steadily drained of resources. Our country is now facing the biggest increases in cost of living and inflation seen in a generation, with those at the margins experiencing the greatest strain.

Advice services can, do and will continue to make a huge difference to people navigating this world, providing the support, skills and expertise to challenge these systems. You do it because you believe that everyone should be able to exercise their rights and have access to justice when things go wrong.

About the conference programme

The conference programme is impressive with a range of speakers including Lord Bellamy, member of the new Ministry of Justice ministerial team, Dame Clare Moriarty from Citizens Advice, Andrea Coomber from the Howard League and representatives from the home nations and the regions - including Elaine Morgan from my own team.

We are all here today because we share a belief that every citizen has equal right to the law. I know that much of your work is unseen and under recognised. It takes much personal commitment and strength to carry on working alongside those facing the sharpest end of austerity and the financial crisis.

So please enjoy your time at the conference. Make the most of this opportunity to think about how we can better serve those most needing our help, and find positive, sustainable solutions to the challenges for advice in 2022.

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For further information about the conference please see
<https://www.profbriefings.net/index.php/about-asa22>

For further information about the Advice Services Alliance please see
www.asauk.org.uk

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