# Angela Rayner denies coup claims amid Labour leadership tensions



Angela Rayner, the Deputy Prime Minister, finds herself at the centre of speculation regarding her leadership ambitions amid claims of a coup against current Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer. Allies of Rayner are reportedly advising party members to establish a “think-tank” aimed at promoting a more assertive centre-left agenda, funded by union support and led by her on-off partner, Sam Tarry. Tarry, a former MP for Ilford South who was deselected in 2022, is seen as a figure who could significantly influence Rayner's political trajectory.

Despite the accusations swirling around her, a source close to Rayner firmly dismissed the claims as "absolute nonsense." This assertion comes in the wake of a contentious week where Rayner publicly clashed with Starmer and Chancellor Rachel Reeves over welfare policies, including a proposal to increase taxes on savers and high earners, and a suggestion to review child benefit eligibility for middle-class families. The tensions highlight a growing rift within the Labour Party, especially as a substantial number of their MPs, approximately 170, are reportedly considering abstaining from voting on forthcoming welfare reforms.

The discord reflects broader political turmoil following sharply declining approval ratings for the government, with Labour polls showing a striking 10-point deficit against the upstart party, Reform UK. Within the fracturing party, Rayner has emerged as a figure of authenticity among traditional Labour voters, in stark contrast to Starmer’s more metropolitan image. The competition for leadership support is intensifying, notably marked by significant local election results that revealed Labour's vulnerability in its historic support base.

Concerns about cuts to public spending and other welfare reforms are palpable among many Labour members. Internal memos circulated show Rayner advocating for significant tax hikes to support public spending rather than implementing austerity measures, a stance that mirrors historical tensions within the party dating back to 2015. These internal differences were exacerbated by a recent leaked memo which outlined eight proposed tax increases aimed at generating substantial revenue, in stark opposition to Reeves’ approach prioritising cuts.

Amid these political manoeuvrings, Rayner's growing prominence is also noted by various focus groups conducted by her supporters, indicating a desire for her to appear as a serious contender for leadership in future elections. Speculation about her ambitions has been rampant since the discovery of various internet domain names linked to a potential leadership bid. Furthermore, her relationship with Tarry has rekindled interest and scrutiny, especially given past controversies over personal conduct and funding disclosures.

With Labour MPs in a state of anxiety about their electoral prospects, they are increasingly looking towards Rayner for leadership, driven by a desire to return to working-class roots and away from the perceived elitism associated with Starmer’s circle. The growing schism within the party is not only affecting its electoral strategy but also challenging its core ideological foundations. The question remains whether Rayner can effectively harness this discontent into a coherent movement that could influence Labour's direction ahead of the next general election.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746387/Angela-Rayner-coup-Labour-Chancellor-Keir-Starmer.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/may/09/labour-reshuffle-angela-rayner-takes-major-role-after-keir-starmer-standoff)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746387/Angela-Rayner-coup-Labour-Chancellor-Keir-Starmer.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/c714047c-267b-4415-af41-82ffd36be437), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/angela-rayner-labour-reshuffle-lisa-nandy-keir-starmer-levelling-up-b1104630.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/660acd4d-d768-4bb0-8ffd-711e47127002), [[6]](https://www.gbnews.com/politics/labour-reshuffle-keir-starmer-angela-rayner)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746387/Angela-Rayner-coup-Labour-Chancellor-Keir-Starmer.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/c714047c-267b-4415-af41-82ffd36be437), [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/660acd4d-d768-4bb0-8ffd-711e47127002)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746387/Angela-Rayner-coup-Labour-Chancellor-Keir-Starmer.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Rayner)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746387/Angela-Rayner-coup-Labour-Chancellor-Keir-Starmer.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/c714047c-267b-4415-af41-82ffd36be437> - A leaked memo from Angela Rayner to Rachel Reeves before the Spring Statement reveals internal Labour Party divisions over fiscal strategy. Rayner advocated for raising taxes rather than cutting public spending, positioning herself as a leading alternative should Keir Starmer step down. Rachel Reeves, the Chancellor, is reportedly reconsidering the decision to means-test the winter fuel allowance due to public backlash. This reflects broader tensions within the Labour government as it grapples with difficult fiscal choices, including university funding cuts and welfare reductions, amid resistance to tax increases. The underlying issue is the government’s struggle to reconcile austerity measures with public expectations, a tension apparent since 2015. The political risk is heightened as any reversal on the winter fuel policy could lead to further demands to abandon other austerity measures. Meanwhile, Rayner’s stance suggests a contrasting vision focused on higher taxation and increased public spending, adding to speculation about future Labour leadership dynamics. The memo highlights a fundamental philosophical divide within the government’s approach to economic policy.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/660acd4d-d768-4bb0-8ffd-711e47127002> - Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner submitted a memo to Chancellor Rachel Reeves advocating for significant tax increases ahead of the Spring Statement, exposing internal divisions within the government over economic policy. Rayner proposed eight tax hikes aimed at generating £3–£4 billion annually, including reinstating the £1 million pensions lifetime allowance, raising the corporation tax rate for banks from 28% to 30%, eliminating certain inheritance and dividend tax reliefs, and taxing property traders more heavily. The proposals sought to honor Labour’s 2024 manifesto commitment not to raise taxes on 'working people.' Despite the suggestions, Reeves opted for public spending cuts in the March 26 Spring Statement to maintain fiscal discipline. However, tax rises may be reconsidered ahead of the autumn Budget due to worsening public finances. Rayner’s leaked memo, viewed as an effort to appeal to Labour’s left wing, illustrates ongoing discontent among some MPs regarding Reeves' austerity measures, including reductions in overseas aid and tighter welfare eligibility. The memo highlights internal debate over whether increased taxation could serve as an alternative to spending cuts. Government officials declined to comment directly on the document, emphasizing that policy papers are often exchanged informally.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/may/09/labour-reshuffle-angela-rayner-takes-major-role-after-keir-starmer-standoff> - Keir Starmer handed his deputy, Angela Rayner, a major promotion on Sunday night after a day of fraught negotiations and power battles. He also sacked his shadow chancellor and promoted his close ally Rachel Reeves to the role in a move likely to further inflame tensions with the party’s left. The reshuffle of Starmer’s shadow cabinet was derailed by a prolonged standoff with Rayner, who was locked in talks with the party leader’s team for hours on Sunday. Rayner emerged with a significantly beefed-up role, handed the shadow chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster role shadowing Michael Gove, as well as a newly created post as shadow secretary for the future of work. She will also retain joint control over party matters as deputy leader.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/angela-rayner-labour-reshuffle-lisa-nandy-keir-starmer-levelling-up-b1104630.html> - Angela Rayner will now oversee a major departmental brief opposite Michael Gove. Labour deputy leader Angela Rayner is taking over the shadow levelling up brief from Lisa Nandy. Sir Keir Starmer reshuffled his top team on Monday, giving his deputy a long-awaited more high profile role in his shadow cabinet. Angela Rayner was promoted to shadow levelling up, housing and communities secretary, replacing Lisa Nandy who was demoted to shadow minister for international development. It follows calls from some Labour MPs to give Ms Rayner 'a proper job to get her teeth into' rather than her previous roles as shadow secretary of state for the future of work and chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. She will now oversee a major departmental brief opposite Michael Gove. Ms Rayner was directly elected to be deputy leader by party members, meaning she keeps that position no matter what. The Labour leader’s shake-up came as MPs returned to Parliament after the summer recess and saw the promotion of a number of Blairite MPs.
6. <https://www.gbnews.com/politics/labour-reshuffle-keir-starmer-angela-rayner> - Angela Rayner has been moved to a new brief in the Shadow Cabinet, as Sir Keir Starmer is set to swap out his top team today. She has been appointed the new Shadow Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Rayner cannot be moved from her role as Deputy Leader, given it is an elected position, but her title has been changed to Shadow Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom - signalling Starmer's determination to win a general election. She previously held several roles, including the Shadow Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Shadow Secretary of State for the Future of Work. Rayner has been appointed the new Shadow Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Pat McFadden, a former Blairite, will replace Rayner as Shadow Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and will also take on the role of National Campaign Co-ordinator.
7. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Rayner> - Angela Rayner (Bowen; born 28 March 1980) is a British politician who has served as Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government since July 2024. She has been Deputy Leader of the Labour Party since 2020 and Labour and Co-operative Member of Parliament (MP) for Ashton-under-Lyne since 2015. Ideologically she identifies as a socialist and as being part of Labour's soft left. Rayner was born and raised in Stockport, where she attended the comprehensive Avondale School. She left school aged 16 whilst pregnant and without any qualifications. She later trained in social care at Stockport College and worked for the local council as a care worker. She eventually became a trade union representative within UNISON, during which time she joined the Labour Party. She was selected to contest AshtonunderLyne in 2014 and was elected for the seat at the 2015 general election. From 2016 until 2020 Rayner held several Shadow Cabinet positions under Jeremy Corbyn. She successfully stood for the deputy leadership of the Labour Party in 2020, and held further Shadow Cabinet positions under Keir Starmer. Following Labour's victory in the 2024 general election, Rayner entered government and was appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government by Starmer in his government. Rayner's strong support base and potential as a future leader led to the New Statesman ranking her as the eighth most powerful person in British left-wing politics for 2023. The Spectator named her Politician of the Year at its annual Parliamentarian of the Year awards ceremony in 2024.