

How should Conservatives oppose?

I have heard a couple of Shadow Cabinet members on the BBC setting out the Opposition position. They clearly found it difficult. They rightly sounded chastened by the electoral disaster that beset them. They apologised and sounded contrite.

They do however have a vital role to play. In a Parliament where 34% of the voters have such dominant representation and where the third largest party largely agrees with the government, the 121 Conservatives need to provide strong criticism where the government is wrong and a good alternative where its laws and policies will not work.

They need an early agreement amongst themselves as to why their candidates did so badly. They need to apologise for the bad errors that led to the result and move on to the current world. They should not apologise for everything and accept the blame for all the problems Labour will now expose and blame on the previous government.

The three big mistakes I think they should apologise for are the boom/ bust inflationary cycle Bank and Treasury delivered, the huge overrun of migration which they should have controlled and the collapse in public sector productivity 2020 to 2023 which pushed up taxes and worsened services.

In Opposition they should support the government's aims of the U.K. growing faster than the rest of the G7, of providing high quality public services and promoting opportunity for all. Where government does good things that support these aims they should back the government. I will set out in a later blog where they already need to oppose and warn, as early policy announcements will take Labour further from these aims.