

Consultation with Conservative members over Leadership of our party

I am consulting widely over who would be best as the final two candidates for members to vote on in the forthcoming contest. Nominations close on June 10th, to be followed by a short and intensive series of votes over the following days to reduce what might be a long list down to just 2 for final selection in a members' ballot.

The idea is that as the Leader has the difficult job of leading of the Parliamentary party it is best for MPs to get it down to two, so either will have a reasonable starting level of MP support on election. I am happy to take advice from members, and to put worries of members to particular candidates. There are plenty of conversations going on between MPs already, before the contest proper starts. All the candidates are of course well known to me as we have been working together as colleagues for a considerable time. In an ideal world the MPs and the members agree on the best two, with the members then deciding between them.

I do not yet have one preferred candidate, so I am open to persuasion and advice. Some of them seem to me to be unlikely to attract much support and to lack the skills and or platform to be suitable. I doubt all the current would be runners will put in nomination papers.