

The Conservative leadership election

I have not yet decided who to back in the leadership election. I want to see who does put in Nomination papers, and want to hear their answers to two simple questions. I would also like to hear from Conservative members in Wokingham which two candidates they would most like to see on the final ballot paper at the end of the MP phase of the race.

The questions to candidates are

1. How will you get us out of the EU by or before October 31?
2. How will you develop a programme to expand our economy, raise living standards, raise our reputation in the world and restore our self confidence as a nation, using all the new freedoms we will have once out of the EU?

I will also write a few blogs on progress in the race. Today I will assess Rory Stewart's offer.

Mr Stewart has provided the most persistent advocacy of the May deal which has just gone down to the most crushing defeat in the history of the party. The only Conservative plank for the Euro election was that Withdrawal Agreement and it was opposed by more than 90% of the voters.

Mr Stewart thinks 17.4 million people were wrong to vote to just leave. He spent time in recent weeks telling me I was wrong not to understand the brilliance of the Withdrawal Agreement. He being a very intelligent man and an important part of the establishment exudes confidence in the Remain view and seems to think those of us who disagree lack understanding. He has an old fashioned last century view of UK politics, defining pro EU Libdem voters as centrists Conservative need to attract, whilst ignoring the 17.4 m Leave voters. He says he wants to unite the Conservative party yet he also says he could not serve in a Boris Johnson led government.