

# **Boris Johnson clings on to power after dramatic day and Michael Gove sacking**

Boris Johnson was clinging on to power last night, after a dramatic day which saw dozens of Tory MPs resign from Government posts and several of his own Cabinet Ministers tell him to resign.

But rather than heeding calls to step down as the fallout to the Christopher Pincher scandal continues, Mr. Johnson sacked Levelling Up Secretary Michael Gove late last night.

It came after Mr. Johnson had been locked in a stand-off with some of the most senior members of his Government with previous loyalists including Grant Shapps and Priti Patel among those calling on him to step aside.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng, Northern Ireland Secretary Brandon Lewis and Welsh Secretary Simon Hart were also among the Cabinet ministers telling Mr. Johnson to stand down.

Mr. Gove was reported to have told him earlier in the day that he should quit.

Similarly, in the evening, Mr. Shapps is thought to have told Mr. Johnson that he stood little chance of winning another confidence vote and should instead set out a timetable for a departure on his own terms.

The relationship between Mr. Johnson and Mr. Gove has long been complex, with the Prime Minister's leadership campaign in 2016 derailed when his rival withdrew support and decided to run himself.

Similarly, in the evening, Mr. Shapps is thought to have told Mr. Johnson that he stood little chance of winning another confidence vote and should instead set out a timetable for a departure on his own terms.

However, Mr. Johnson was said to have insisted that he wanted to continue to focus on the "hugely important issues facing the country".

A source close to Mr. Johnson said he told his colleagues there would be “chaos” if he quit and the party would almost certainly lose the next election.

The source said Mr. Johnson was “continuing to focus on delivering for the public” and addressing the “hugely important issues facing the country”.

Despite his bullishness, he could be set to face another confidence vote from his own MPs within days, if there is a change in the rules of the 1922 committee of backbench MPs next week.

More than 40 MPs have resigned from Government jobs since Tuesday night, as the pressure on the Prime Minister has ramped up in recent days as Number 10 has been engulfed by the latest scandal – the appointment and behaviour of former Deputy Chief Whip Chris Pincher. If Mr. Johnson refuses to go then his fate will ultimately lie with his MPs, if the committee’s rules are changed to allow another confidence vote within 12 months.

The committee’s executive did not make any immediate changes to the rules yesterday, but has scheduled elections for its executive committee to take place on Monday, before a result later that evening.

The new executive could decide to alter the rules, with Mr. Johnson then facing a fresh battle to remain in office.

His own former Health Secretary Sajid Javid was among those who told him “enough is enough” yesterday.

Make a resignation speech in the House of Commons, Mr. Javid said he feared the reset button was no longer working and “something is fundamentally wrong”.

“This week again, we have reason to question the truth and integrity of what we’ve all been told,” he told colleagues. “At some point, we have to conclude that enough is enough. I believe that point is now. I’m deeply concerned about how the next generation will see the Conservative Party on our current course; our reputation after 12 years in Government depends on regaining the public’s trust.

“This is not just a personal matter, the philosophy and perception of Conservatives depends on it.”

A number of Yorkshire MPs were among those who withdrew their support for

Mr. Johnson throughout the day yesterday.

MP for Pudsey Stuart Andrew said he was resigning as Housing Minister with “real sadness” and wrote in his resignation letter: “Loyalty and unity are traits that I have always endeavoured to provide for our great party.

“However, I fear I have let these override my judgement recently. There comes a time when you have to look at your own personal integrity and that time is now.”

Elmet & Rothwell MP Alec Shelbrooke, who backed the Prime Minister in last month’s confidence vote, also confirmed publicly that Mr. Johnson has now lost his support following recent events.

---

Source:

<https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/politics/boris-johnson-clings-on-to-power-after-dramatic-day-and-michael-gove-sacking-3759197>

[Disclaimer]