

How many no-confidence letters are needed for a vote? What triggers a Tory leadership poll on Boris Johnson

Boris Johnson faces the prospect of a Tory leadership challenge in the aftermath of the publication of the Sue Gray report.

Mounting numbers of Conservative MPs have publically called for the Prime Minister to go following the release of a damning investigation into Downing Street lockdown parties.

There is now growing belief that it is only a matter of time before the threshold of letters needed to trigger a no-confidence vote are reached, with some suggesting it could happen next week – but how does that process work?

How many no-confidence letters are needed?

At least 15 per cent of sitting Conservative MPs have to write a letter stating they no longer have confidence in the Prime Minister for a vote to be triggered. For Mr. Johnson that magic number is 54, as there are currently 359 Tory MPs.

The no-confidence letters are submitted to Sir Graham Brady, chairman of the 1922 Committee – the Parliamentary group representing all backbench Tory MPs.

Once the threshold is reached, the no-confidence vote would be held as a secret ballot, which typically takes place within just days of it being announced.

To survive the vote, Mr. Johnson would need to secure a simple majority – the backing of 180 Tories, or half of his MPs, plus one.

If he wins, the Prime Minister would be immune from another such vote for a year.

But if he is forced to resign, or changes tack and steps down of his own volition, the 1922 Committee would then decide the procedure and timetable for a leadership contest.

Candidates need the support of eight Tory MPs to stand – a proposer, a seconder and six others.

If more than two people can receive this, there would be a series of ballots until two MPs are left, with Tory Party members then voting on who would be the next leader, and next Prime Minister.

Would Boris Johnson win a vote of no-confidence?

Arj Singh, i's Deputy Political Editor, points out that even if a vote is called, "that does not necessarily mean the Prime Minister's time in No 10 is coming to an end" – you can read his full analysis [here](#).

He explains: "Drill into the detail and the odds still appear broadly in the Prime Minister's favour, with 123 Tory MPs in Government as ministers, according to the Institute for Government, and dozens more parliamentary private secretaries reliant on Mr. Johnson's patronage.

"That said, any confidence vote would be conducted via a secret ballot, so those on the Government payroll – including Cabinet ministers -could still vote against Mr. Johnson.

"But with the whips mobilizing in support of Mr. Johnson, and the seemingly haphazard nature of the rebellion – with one attempt at forcing a confidence vote already failing – the vote is likely to be close at the very least.

"And unlike other leaders who might see a narrow victory as a clear signal their time in No 10 is over, all of Mr Johnson's actions to date suggest he will need to be dragged kicking and screaming out of the door."

How many Tory MPs have submitted a letter of no confidence?

More than 25 MPs have publicly called on the Prime Minister to stand down, but not all of them have said they have submitted letters.

John Stevenson, MP for Carlisle, was the most recent to confirm that he had written to Sir Graham Brady, joining:

Peter Alduous, MP for Waveney

Aaron Bell, MP for Newcastle-under-Lyme

Elliot Colburn, MP for Carshalton and Wallington

Tobias Ellwood, MP for Bournemouth East

Sir Roger Gale, MP for Thanet
Stephen Hammond, MP for Wimbledon
Mark Harper, MP for Forest of Dean
Alicia Kearns, MP for Rutland and Melton
Anthony Mangnall, MP for Totnes
Nigel Mills, MP for Amber Valley
Sir Bob Neill, MP for Bromley and Chislehurst
Caroline Nokes, MP for Romsey and Southampton North
Sir Gary Streeter, MP for South Devon
Former Cabinet minister Dame Andrea Leadsom became the latest senior figure to publicly criticize Mr. Johnson.

She said that Ms. Gray's report had exposed "unacceptable failings of leadership that cannot be tolerated and are the responsibility of the Prime Minister".

In a letter to her constituents shared on social media, Dame Andrea stopped short of calling for him to go but said she and other Tory MPs "must now decide individually on what is the right course of action that will restore confidence in our Government".

Former Tory leader William Hague said the Prime Minister was in "real trouble" while another ex-leader, Sir Iain Duncan Smith, appealed to colleagues to halt their plotting until celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee are over.

Lord Hague said it was now clear that allies of Mr. Johnson who believed he had escaped unscathed after the relatively muted initial response last week to Ms. Gray's findings were mistaken.

Additional reporting from Press Association

Source:

<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/no-confidence-letters-how-many-needed-vote-boris-johnson-tory-leadership-1661093?ITO=newsnow>

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