

Theresa May formally resigns as Conservative leader, triggering race for Number 10

Theresa May has formally resigned as leader of the Conservative party - officially triggering the race to succeed her in Downing Street.



Theresa May setting out her departure date Credit: PA Images

The Prime Minister handed her resignation letter to Charles Walker and Dame Cheryl Gillan, the acting chairs of the powerful 1922 Committee of Tory backbenchers, this afternoon.

It means Mrs May is now the acting leader of the Conservative party, under Electoral Commission rules, and remains as Prime Minister until a replacement is found.

Eleven candidates are fighting to succeed Mrs May in Downing Street, with Boris Johnson the current frontrunner.

The winner is set to be announced in the week of 22 July.

After the exchange of letters this afternoon, the 1922 Committee bosses said

nominations for the contest had formally opened. They close at 5pm on Monday.

Mrs May fired the starting gun on the Tory leadership race two weeks ago when she announced outside Number 10 that she was quitting over her failure to deliver Brexit.

"I tried three times I believe it was right to persevere even when the odds against success seemed high," she said.

"But it is now clear to me that it is in the best interest of the country for a new Prime Minister to lead that effort."

In a clear warning to her successor not to pursue a no-deal Brexit, Mrs May said "compromise is not a dirty word".

"It is and will always remain a matter of deep regret to me that I have not been able to deliver Brexit," she said. "It will be for my successor to seek a way forward that honours the result of the referendum.

"To succeed he or she will have to find consensus in parliament where I have not such a consensus can only be reached if those on all sides of the debate are willing to compromise."

MPs will whittle down the 11 candidates until two remain, which the Tory membership will choose between.

The first round of voting by MPs will take place on 13 June and the second on 18 June, with up to three further ballots expected to take place.

Source:

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/conservative-party/theresa-may/news/104426/theresa-may-formally-resigns>

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