

Kenneth Clarke and Lord Coe most popular

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Kenneth Clarke and Lord Coe most popular to lead the Conservative Party into the next election, while David Davis struggles for recognition

High profile politicians Kenneth Clarke and Sebastian Coe are preferred to David Davis in the Tory leadership race, according to a national survey from independent research agency, BMRB.

While Lord Coe is not standing for the leadership role, he has certainly not harmed his political aspirations. In winning London's bid to host the 2012 Olympics, his profile has been raised significantly enough to challenge former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Ken Clarke and beat Tory front runner David Davis in a survey of British voters.

On the question of "who do you think should be the next leader of the Conservative Party?" 18% of adults nominated Ken Clarke, while Sebastian Coe was second (17%), David Davis was third (15%).

However, it could be argued that the real "winner" is political apathy, as 44% of the nation simply "don't know" who the leader should be. This figure rose to over half of all 16-34 year olds (57% of 16-24 year olds, 53% of 25-34s). Nearly half of all women (49%) did not offer an opinion on the subject.

A different picture emerges when canvassing the views of those who voted for the Conservative Party in the last election. 32% of these Tory voters would vote for David Davis, followed by 20% for Lord Coe and 19% for Kenneth Clarke.

However even among Tory voters nearly a fifth (18%) do not have an opinion on who should lead them into the next election.

These figures would suggest that David Davis has a long way to go in boosting his profile among the general public rather than just among the Tory party faithful.

Contact

Shireen Crowe, Press Office - Tel: 020 7566 7020 Steve Cooke, Marketing Director BMRB - Tel: 020 8433 4381
steve.cooke@bmr.co.uk

Questions Which if any, of the following people do you think should be the next leader of the Conservative Party?

Base: All adults 16+

Kenneth Clarke 18%

Sebastian Coe 17%

David Davis 15%

Oliver Letwin 2%

George Osborne 1%

Someone Else 4%

Don't Know 44%

Which if any, of the following people do you think should be the next leader of the Conservative Party?

Base: All adults 18+ who voted Conservative in the last General Election

David Davis 32%

Sebastian Coe 20%

Kenneth Clarke 19%

Oliver Letwin 2%

George Osborne 1%

Someone Else 9%

Don't Know 17%

BMRB interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,010 adults in Great Britain by telephone between 8th and 10th July, 2005.

BMRB is one of the largest market research agencies in the UK and is a key operating company within the KMR Group.

KMR is a division of the Millward Brown Group, part of Kantar, the information, insight and consultancy arm of WPP.

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