

# **BIA briefing on the Conservative Party leadership candidates**

June 2019



UK BioIndustry Association

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## The candidates



**Michael Gove MP**



**Matt Hancock MP**



**Mark Harper MP**



**Jeremy Hunt MP**



**Sajid Javid MP**



**Boris Johnson MP**



**Andrea Leadsom MP**



**Esther McVey MP**



**Dominic Raab MP**



**Rory Stewart MP**

## The election process

Candidates need at least eight MPs in order to stand in the race: one proposer; a seconder; and six other MPs. Only 10 MPs have managed to obtain the requisite eight nominations. The first ballot will require candidates to win 5% of votes in order to progress (17 MPs); the second ballot will require 10% of votes (33 MPs).

Following the second ballot, the least popular candidate is eliminated each round until two MPs remain. Four ballots are expected in the first (parliamentary) stage of the contest.

The final two candidates will then be put to the Conservative Party membership in a run-off ballot which is expected to be concluded by mid-July.

Full schedule is as follows:

- **11, 12 June:** leadership hustings organised by the back bench 1922 committee
- **13 June:** First ballot
- **17 June:** 1922 leadership hustings
- **18-20 June:** Successive ballots eliminating candidate with least votes until only two remain
- **22 June – w/c 22 July:** Postal ballot sent to party members, campaign and hustings around the country
- **W/c 22 July:** New leader expected to be announced

## Biographies

### Michael Gove

**Senior positions held:** Secretary of State for Environment; (Jun 2017 - present); Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (May 2015 - Jul 2016); Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury and Chief Whip (Jul 2014 - May 2015); and Secretary of State for Education (May 2010 - Jul 2014)

**Constituency:** Surrey Heath (2005 – present)

**BIA members in constituency:** Eli Lilly; Miltenyi Biotec; and Novartis

**Direct links to BIA:** The BIA has written to Gove in the past following his comments about Brexit and pharmaceutical regulation, and also about EU regulation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), receiving a positive reply (see below). He is also reportedly running his campaign from the same building which houses the BIA office.

**Life sciences policy interests:** Gove has in the past noted the UK's success in pharmaceuticals and, as Environment Secretary, [highlighted](#) the transformative potential of biotechnology. His department (DEFRA) took a pro-science stance on the regulation of GMOs. This followed a BIA letter to Gove asking the UK Government to urge the European Commission to introduce legislation to state that products produced through targeted mutagenesis should not be regulated in the same way as those produced by random mutagenesis.

He has also [claimed](#) that Brexit would allow Britain deregulate and be more innovative in the life sciences, in areas such as genetic modification and pharmaceuticals. He advocated scrapping “absurd” rules such as the EU's Clinical Trials Directive, which is a position not supported by the industry.

**Position on Brexit:** Though a prominent leave campaigner, Gove has not tied his hands by promising to get the UK out of the EU by October. He has promised to run as a ‘unity candidate’, indicating he would be advocating for a deal with the EU.

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### Matt Hancock

**Senior positions held:** Secretary of State for Health (Jul 2018 – present) and Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Jan 2018 – Jul 2018)

**Constituency:** West Suffolk (2010 – present)

**BIA members in constituency:** Genzyme

**Direct links to BIA:** As Health Secretary, Hancock co-Chairs the Life Sciences Council, on which the BIA holds two seats. He is the keynote speaker at the upcoming Future of Healthcare Investor Forum at the London Stock Exchange, which is supported by the BIA. He is also reportedly running his campaign from the same building which houses the BIA office.

**Life sciences policy interests:** As Health Secretary, Hancock has been an enthusiastic backer of innovation in healthcare, particularly in digital and genomics, and was in post when the [Life sciences: Sector Deal 2](#)



was published. He has also overseen the PPRS renegotiation and [stated](#) that the deal is “good for patients, good for the NHS and good for the UK life sciences industry. Cutting-edge and best value medicines will be fast-tracked, and we will cut our medicines bill by £930 million next year following tough but constructive negotiations with the pharmaceutical industry.” However, in his charge, the Health Department objected to an international agreement to reduce drug prices as part of a [resolution](#) at the World Health Organisation, crucially maintaining IP protections and commercial confidentiality.

Hancock has been intimately involved in no-deal planning for medicines supply but has not offered strong reassurances on the UK’s future relationship with the European Medicines Agency.

**Position on Brexit:** Hancock has stated that ‘no deal’ is not a policy choice available to the next Prime Minister, considering the current state of Parliament. He has not ruled out requesting a further Brexit delay beyond October 31, instead he has said his efforts would be focused instead on finding “a majority in parliament” to see through a deal. He has however ruled out the possibility of a second referendum.

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## Mark Harper

**Senior positions held:** Chief Whip (May 2015 – July 16)

**Constituency:** Forest of Dean (2005 – present)

**BIA members in constituency:** None

**Direct links to BIA:** None

**Life sciences policy interests:** Harper has said little of note with regard to the life sciences



**Position on Brexit:** Harper, though he voted remain, has said he accepts the result of the referendum and seems to be positioning himself as a pragmatic hardliner. He has publicly stated that he does not believe the "scare stories" about the impact a no-deal Brexit, although he has also said “I don't pretend there wouldn't be any issues to deal with, clearly there would be”. He has called for a "short, focused" extension to allow for the deal to be renegotiated but said he would be prepared to leave with no deal if that is not possible. Harper also claimed sticking to an undeliverable October 31 exit date could risk making Nigel Farage even stronger.

He said, "My view is that if you are going to try and get a deal with the European Union and get it through parliament that is not going to be possible by October 31, which means we will need an extension...I just simply don't think it's possible to get a deal done and get it through parliament by October 31 because parliament will not be sitting during the summer."

## Jeremy Hunt

**Senior positions held:** Foreign Secretary (Jul 2018 – present) and Secretary of State for Health (Sep 2012 - Jul 2018)

**Constituency:** South West Surrey

**BIA members in constituency:** None

**Direct links to BIA:** As Health Secretary, Hunt co-Chaired the Life Sciences Council, on which the BIA holds two seats.

**Life sciences policy interests:** During his tenure as Health Secretary, Hunt was involved in the Life Sciences Industrial Strategy and subsequent Sector Deals, which announced greater funding and collaboration between the sector and government. He also championed the Accelerated Access Collaborative (AAC). Hunt answered – [in a letter to the Financial Times](#) – the BIA’s early calls to seek regulatory cooperation with the European Medicines Agency.

Hunt successfully argued for an additional £20bn for the NHS and has also accused drug companies of not charging “[fair prices for drugs](#)”.

**Position on Brexit:** Hunt’s plan for Brexit isn’t clear yet. In a recent article for The Telegraph, he stated that a no-deal Brexit would be “political suicide” for his party, although he has subsequently said that he would be prepared to leave without a deal if the alternative was no Brexit. He told the Times that he now thinks a second referendum “would be a massive breach of trust with the people who voted for Brexit”. He would not call a General Election until Brexit is delivered. He has also stated that he would assemble a new Brexit renegotiating team that would include members of the Democratic Unionist Party, the ERG group of Tory Brexiteers, and Welsh and Scottish representatives: "It would include people who say if we can't get the right deal we should leave with no deal."

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## Sajid Javid

**Senior positions held:** Home Secretary (Apr 2018 – present) and Secretary of State for Business (May 2015 - Jul 2016)

**Constituency:** Bromsgrove (2010 – present)

**BIA members in constituency:** None

**Direct links to BIA:** None

**Life sciences policy interests:** As Business Secretary, Javid rejected an active industrial strategy approach, and directed Innovate UK to provide more loans in place of grants. However, he has called for corporate tax cuts to help SMEs.

Having visited GSK’s site at Stevenage in February 2019, he [outlined his post-Brexit immigration policy](#) which he said would allow pharmaceutical companies to get the skilled workers they need from abroad.

**Position on Brexit:** Having campaigned for remain and supported May’s approach, Javid has sought to reaffirm his Brexit credentials, stating that “first and foremost, we must deliver Brexit”. His plan to do that remains unclear.





## Boris Johnson

**Senior positions held:** Foreign Secretary (Jul 2016 - Jul 2018) and Mayor of London (May 2008 - May 2016)

**Constituency:** Uxbridge and South Ruislip (2015 – present), previously Henley (2001 – 2008)

**BIA members in constituency:** GSK; MSD; and PwC

**Direct links to BIA:** Johnson spoke at the BIA's UK Bioscience Forum in 2013

**Life sciences policy interests:** As Mayor of London in 2014, Johnson launched MedCity, which aimed to support London and the south east becoming the world's life sciences capital. He has also back greater NHS spending since returning to Westminster.

He has [highlighted the UK's strength in cell therapies](#) and claimed post-Brexit regulatory freedom could accelerate progress. In a speech delivered on 'Uniting for Great Brexit' as part of his role as Foreign Secretary, he indicated his support for new trade deals in order to support global innovation in the life sciences sector and to attract scientific talent. However, as part of his more radical approach to Brexit, he said "f\*\*\* business" in [response](#) to industry fears of a Hard Brexit.

**Position on Brexit:** Johnson has embraced the possibility of a no-deal scenario, stating that in order to "get things done you need to be prepared to walk away." He has said he would seek to renegotiate the Irish backstop, but also willing to pull the UK out of the bloc on the 31st October if no progress has been made.

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## Andrea Leadsom

**Senior positions held:** Leader of the House of Commons (Jun 2017 - May 2019); Secretary of State for Environment (Jul 2016 - Jun 2017); and Economic Secretary (HM Treasury) (Apr 2014 - May 2015)

**Constituency:** South Northamptonshire (2010 – present)

**BIA members in constituency:** None

**Direct links to BIA:** None

**Life sciences policy interests:** Leadsom has not said much to reveal her views on the sector. She was vocal about the pricing of Orkambi, [publishing statements](#) on her interactions with Vertex and its impact on her constituents.

Speaking recently on the [Andrew Marr Show](#), she noted the importance of reaching a deal with the EU on certain areas of regulation but did not mention pharmaceuticals.

**Position on Brexit:** As one of the prominent representatives of the Vote Leave campaign in 2016, Andrea Leadsom is an avid Brexiteer who seeks to withdraw from the EU in an 'orderly fashion.' As part of her Brexit strategy, Andrea Leadsom has stated that the UK should be prepared to leave without a deal, nonetheless she has stated that she would outline a 'three-point plan' which would facilitate a renegotiation of Brexit, mostly likely along harder lines around the back-stop and the transitional period.





## Esther McVey

**Senior positions held:** Secretary of State for Work and Pensions

**Constituency:** Tatton (2017 – present), previously Wirral West (2010 – 2015)

**BIA members in constituency:** Aptus Clinical, AstraZeneca, Gentronix, Hematogenix Laboratory Services, Iduron, Medicines Discovery Catapult, Redx Pharma

**Direct links to BIA:** McVey is meeting BIA members at the BIA's 2019 Parliament Day

**Life sciences policy interests:** McVey has not been vocal about the sector but will have been exposed to its issues through the Alderley Park site in her constituency.

**Position on Brexit:**

McVey has said she could move to suspend Parliament in order to ensure Brexit is delivered by 31 October.

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## Dominic Raab

**Senior positions held:** Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union (Jul 2018 - Nov 2018)

**Constituency:** Esher and Walton (2010 – present)

**BIA members in constituency:** None

**Direct links to BIA:** The BIA corresponded with Raab in his role as Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union.

**Life sciences policy interests:** Raab has said little about the life sciences sector except in reference to pharmaceuticals and Brexit, where he has [recognised the importance](#) of frictionless cross-border trade. He is a believer in free-markets and may not favour the industrial strategy approach taken by recent governments, which has benefitted life sciences. He has also stated he would reduce spending and cut taxes in a Spending Review.

**Position on Brexit:** Raab has been quick to portray himself as a hardliner willing to take a strong approach to the EU - and is open a No Deal Brexit on 31st October. After declaring his leadership bid, he confirmed: "I would fight for a fairer deal in Brussels with negotiations to change the backstop arrangements". He has also said he would suspend Parliament in order to ensure Brexit is delivered by 31 October.



## Rory Stewart

**Senior positions held:** Secretary of State for International Development (May 2019 – present)

**Constituency:** Penrith and The Border (2010 – present)

**BIA members in constituency:** None

**Direct links to BIA:** None

**Life sciences policy interests:** Stewart has said little to indicate his views on the life sciences sector. As International Development Secretary he would have been involved in the position taken by the Health Department objecting to an international agreement to reduce drug prices as part of a [resolution](#) at the World Health Organisation, crucially maintaining IP protections and commercial confidentiality.

**Position on Brexit:** Stewart is more remain-minded than his opponents and has ruled out a no-deal Brexit, stating it would be a recipe for uncertainty. He continues to support May's Withdrawal Agreement with the EU and doesn't believe in reopening negotiations.

