

29 August 2019

Ruth Davidson MSP
Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

Dear Ruth,

It's with a very heavy heart that I'm writing to accept your resignation as leader of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist party.

Over the 8 years of your time as leader it is no exaggeration to say that you have utterly transformed the fortunes of our party. When you came to office, the Scottish Conservatives had 1 MP at Westminster, 15 MSPs and 115 councillors. As you leave today, we have 13 MPs, 31 MSPs and 264 councillors. This is in large part due to the energy, vision and hard work you have shown since becoming leader back in 2011.

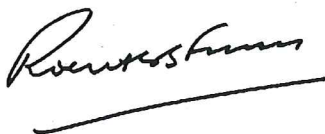
Equally, it is hard to think of another individual who has done more in recent years to defend and promote our place in the United Kingdom. You made the positive case for Scotland's place in the Union during the 2014 independence referendum. Together with Theresa May and David Mundell, you then stood up to Nicola Sturgeon's attempt to re-run the referendum in 2017. It is not just Conservative members who have appreciated the way you have thrown yourself into this vital campaign; so have hundreds of thousands of Scots who support Scotland's place in the UK, and who now want the SNP to take the threat of a second referendum off the table.

You will leave a large hole in the party as you depart, but I accept entirely your reasons for going. Public life places an enormous burden on frontline political leaders, and you have carried yours for longer than almost any other figure in post-devolution Scotland. It is characteristically honest of you to state clearly that you now believe the time is right to go. If that is how you feel, you are right to make this decision now and allow a successor to build on your work prior to the 2021 Holyrood election.

Like you, I have no doubt that the Scottish Conservative and Unionist party will continue to thrive in the future. We have a great message to give to voters in Scotland: to oppose a second referendum so that Scotland can get back to the things that matter most to all of us. I know we can count on your active support in the coming months as we take that message across Scotland.

So behalf of the all the party, let me thank you profusely for your tenacity, your spirit, and your leadership these last 8 years. People will not forget the contribution you have given and I wish you the very best in what comes next.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Forman CBE

Chairman of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party