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David Willetts



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15:50 Tuesday 30 September 2014

THE Conservatives are to hold a US-style open primary to choose a retiring MP's successor

Havant MP David Willetts announced he would step down before next May's general election.

Almost 100 people have put themselves forward to be selected as the prospective parliamentary candidate (PPC) for the safe Havant seat, which will be whittled down ahead of the open primary.

All electors in the borough, regardless of which party they support, will get the chance to hear the PPCs at the open primary next month. Tim Lines, chairman of Havant Conservative Association said: 'This is the first opportunity for the Havant electorate to choose a new Conservative prospective parliamentary candidate in 25 years. The executive committee voted unanimously to hold an open

'Electors of Havant constituency of every political persuasion, not just Conservatives listed candidates being put through a question and answer session, then ask their own questions.'

'We want the right candidate for Havant and it seems only natural to invite all of the electorate to decide the winner.'

All the candidates who have applied have been put through a rigorous parliamentary selection process carried out by the Conservative Party.

Mr Lines added: 'We have no idea whether the chosen candidate will be a local activist or a familiar national figure.'

Mr Willetts, known as 'Two Brains' due to his impressive intellect, has a 12,000 major universities and science minister until Prime Minister David Cameron's early summer announced his retirement he told *The News* he was leaving Havant in good shape, having served the constituency since 1992.

The open primary will take place at Oaklands School, Stakes Hill Road, Waterlooville, starting at 2pm to select from a final four candidates. To vote you must book tickets and take ID to the address.

To book call (023) 9247 5066 between 9am and 12.30pm, Monday to Friday, or go to havantconservatives.com/open-primary.

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