

# Johnson says successor will launch 'huge package' of new cost-of-living help

Boris Johnson has said whoever succeeds him as prime minister will announce "another huge package of financial support" as Britain faces sky-high costs this winter.

The outgoing PM hinted at the scale of the options to ease the burden being teed up for either [Liz Truss](#) or [Rishi Sunak](#) to consider, as he insisted "we must and we will help people through the crisis".

It comes after Cabinet minister [George Eustice](#) said it is "right" that the next leader waits until they take office to weigh up all the potential moves to combat the cost-of-living crunch.

Tory leadership contenders Rishi Sunak and Liz Truss (Danny Lawson/James Manning/PA)

In an article for Mail+, Mr Johnson acknowledged the next few months will be difficult – "perhaps very tough" – as "eye-watering" energy bills take their toll, but he forecast that the UK will emerge "stronger and more prosperous (on) the other side".

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He said “colossal sums of taxpayers’ money” had already been committed to assisting people with their bills.

But he added: “Next month – whoever takes over from me – the Government will announce another huge package of financial support.”

Earlier, Mr Eustice said both leadership candidates had already set out “some specific things” they would do to ease the strain, but argued it was right that whoever secures the keys to No 10 would “want to look at all of the options properly costed” once they started in the role.

Chancellor Nadhim Zahawi has suggested people earning around £45,000 per year could be among those struggling to cope with soaring living costs as the energy price cap is hiked again.

Regulator Ofgem warned the Government on Friday it must act urgently to “match the scale of the crisis we have before us” as Britain faced the news the average household’s yearly bill will rise from £1,971 to £3,549.

Speaking to BBC Radio 4’s Today programme on Saturday, Mr Eustice said: “We announced a package of measures in June which was a £400 rebate for everyone, and then additional support for the most vulnerable.

“Both candidates have said they will do more. You don’t have long to wait, there will be a new prime minister in place in 10 days or so.

“And that is the point at which that new prime minister should look at the options and make decisions, and they’ve both made clear that this will be absolutely at the top of their in-tray.”

He added: "I think it's right that when they become prime minister, whoever it is, they will want to look at all of the options properly costed and to understand the impact of each of those options."

The i newspaper has reported Ms Truss is set to give extra winter fuel payments to pensioners to ease the burden, despite in the past insisting she was focused on tax cuts rather than "handouts".

Her rival Rishi Sunak has already said he will provide additional support targeted at the most vulnerable.

(PA Graphics) / PA Graphics

He reiterated this in an article for The Times on Saturday, arguing efforts should be focused on low-income households and pensioners, with help delivered through the welfare system, winter fuel and cold weather payments.

He said it is "right to caution against providing definitive answers before getting into Downing Street", as it is "responsible" to first have "full command of the fiscal situation".

However, the former chancellor acknowledged that providing "meaningful support" would be a "multibillion-pound undertaking".

Mr Sunak also used the piece to take a swipe at Ms Truss's "risky" strategy of "ill-targeted tax cuts".

He wrote: "Right now, Conservative members face a critical choice too: who is the best candidate to lead our country through these difficult times and on to a better future?"

"Their choice is between someone who will grip inflation, not exacerbate it, and prioritise support for the winter with a clear plan for how to do so."

Energy price cap: default tariff / PA Graphics

Ms Truss has promised “decisive action” to deliver “immediate support” if she wins the contest.

But she has so far been vague about what form this assistance might take besides slashing green levies on energy bills and reversing the controversial national insurance hike.

She has argued it is not “right” to announce her full plan before the contest is over or she has seen all the analysis being prepared in Whitehall.

Senior Tory MP [Robert Halfon](#), who is backing Mr Sunak, said on Saturday that whoever takes the reins in No 10 needs to perform a “huge-scale” intervention.

In an interview with GB News, Mr Halfon called for a new “social tariff” for vulnerable families and those who are “just about managing”.

Mr Zahawi has declared he is working “flat out” to draw up options for a plan of action for the next prime minister so they can “hit the ground running” when they take office in September.

In an interview with The Daily Telegraph, he said he was exploring ways to ensure “we help those who really need the help”.

“My concern is there are those who aren’t on benefits,” he said.

“If you are a senior nurse or a senior teacher on £45,000 a year, you’re having your energy bills go up by 80% and will probably rise even higher in the new year – it’s really hard.

“If you’re a pensioner, it’s really hard. So Universal Credit is a really effective way of targeting, but I’m looking at what else we can do to make sure we help those who really need the help. We’re looking at all the options.”