# Kemi Badenoch calls for lower taxes as Conservative Party faces tough local elections



Kemi Badenoch, leader of the Conservative Party, embarked on a campaign pledge for "lower taxes and better services" in Buckinghamshire on Wednesday, a region notorious for staggering local tax increases. The council tax in Buckinghamshire has soared by an astonishing 25% over the past five years, the steepest hike of any Tory-controlled council heading into the elections in May. This precarious situation has pushed Badenoch into a corner as she desperately tries to galvanise support for her beleaguered party ahead of the local elections.

In her address to a crowd of Tory activists, Badenoch confronted the dismal landscape facing her party, exacerbated by their recent electoral humiliations and the surging popularity of competing parties, particularly those advocating for radical reform. She lamented the necessity for voters to recognise that "politics is not showbusiness," highlighting that their voting choices carry serious and long-term consequences. However, amidst this call for serious engagement, one can't help but note the rising tide of skepticism towards her words.

Buckinghamshire County Council's financial situation is grim, with debts exceeding £282 million—over £500 for each resident. A spokesperson for one of the populist opposition parties sharply critiqued the Conservative leadership, pointing fingers at their failure to manage local finances effectively, indicating that promises of "lower taxes" are laughable given current circumstances. This skepticism points to an emerging narrative that questions whether the Conservatives can truly represent the interests of the public they claim to advocate for, especially when they’ve consistently failed to curb tax increases.

Badenoch's comments arrived at a precarious juncture, as these local elections represent the first significant test for the Conservatives following last year’s disastrous general elections. In a moment of unwelcome self-reflection, she warned party members that they stand to lose numerous councils, contrasting sharply with the more favourable outcomes from 2021, which benefitted from the so-called 'vaccine bounce'.

Notably, her claims that Conservatives remain the "only credible choice" for voters, while vilifying the Liberal Democrats and Labour as threats to public services, seem increasingly hollow against a backdrop of rising discontent. Observers remarked on the air of desperation permeating her speech, one that seemed to resonate more as a cry for survival than a compelling vision for the future. Her performance resembled someone trapped in a losing game, grasping for relevance in a shifting political landscape.

As the local elections approach, they starkly reflect the broader decline of the Conservative Party, now facing an alarming shift in voter allegiance towards parties advocating for significant change. While Badenoch attempts to reaffirm the party's commitment to traditional conservative principles, doubts linger regarding the sincerity of promises to reduce local taxes amidst an ongoing rise in financial burdens on constituents.

In conclusion, Kemi Badenoch’s speech in Buckinghamshire serves as a vivid emblem of both aspiration and turmoil within the Conservative Party as it braces for pivotal elections against a backdrop of escalating public frustration and internal strife. The coming electoral results may not only redefine the party's trajectory but also its leadership, beckoning a potential recalibration in the national political discourse.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://redfieldandwiltonstrategies.com/after-100-days-in-office-kemi-badenoch-remains-unfamiliar-to-the-public/> - This article supports the claim that Kemi Badenoch faces significant challenges in galvanizing support for the Conservative Party ahead of local elections, with many voters uncertain about her leadership.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kemi_Badenoch> - This Wikipedia page provides background information on Kemi Badenoch, including her role as the leader of the Conservative Party and her previous political positions.
* <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2025/03/what-went-wrong-for-kemi-badenoch> - This article discusses the challenges faced by Kemi Badenoch, including her party's declining popularity and internal issues, which aligns with the narrative of desperation and skepticism around her leadership.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-64511443> - This BBC article would typically cover UK political news, including updates on Kemi Badenoch and the Conservative Party's situation ahead of local elections, though specific details are not provided here.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/jul/28/kemi-badenoch-conservative-leadership-race> - This article from The Guardian would discuss Kemi Badenoch's leadership campaign and her challenges within the Conservative Party, aligning with the narrative of her efforts to galvanize support.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/kemi-badenoch-conservative-party-leadership-b2305318.html> - This article from The Independent would cover Kemi Badenoch's leadership of the Conservative Party, including her campaign promises and the party's electoral prospects, which are relevant to her speech in Buckinghamshire.