# Kemi Badenoch faces backlash over private car hire and departmental turmoil



Kemi Badenoch, the Conservative Party leader, is under fire for her controversial decision to hire a private car and driver during her time as Business Secretary. This troubling revelation, first reported by the Sunday Times, raises serious questions about her judgment, especially as the Labour government demands transparency regarding what they label an inappropriate use of taxpayer money.

The black Jaguar XJ, facilitated through a car hire firm in her Saffron Walden constituency, contravenes standard governmental protocols and has sparked intense criticism. Reports indicate that civil servants warned Badenoch about the significant security risks associated with forgoing the Government Car Service (GCS), expressing concerns that her private vehicle lacked the necessary maintenance and security guarantees, thus placing her safety—and potentially that of the public—at risk.

During an appearance on BBC's Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg, Badenoch defended her actions, claiming adherence to protocols and insisting her driver was security cleared: “I never ignored security advice… It was a contract that had been in place for about five years, and I renewed that contract.” This dismissal of valid concerns from civil servants is hardly reassuring, and calls for accountability are intensifying, especially from voices outside her party that argue public officials should uphold the highest standards of conduct.

This controversy compounds the myriad issues Badenoch has faced in her role as a senior minister. In July 2024, she faced backlash for attempting to secure funding for a personal holiday flight to the US—a request that was rightfully denied. Such missteps illustrate a troubling pattern of prioritizing personal interests over responsible public service, and skeptics question her commitment to the ministerial code designed to prevent misuse of public funds.

Furthermore, reports are emerging of poor management within the Department for Business and Trade, with at least three senior officials resigning under her leadership. The toxic work environment has raised alarms, leading to departmental meetings to address the deteriorating morale. While Badenoch vehemently denies these allegations, labeling them as part of a smear campaign against her, they contribute to a narrative of instability and dysfunction within her ranks.

Compounding Badenoch's difficulties are recent calls for her to apologize after she filmed a Conservative Party political broadcast from Parliament, raising ethical issues surrounding the use of taxpayer-funded resources. Commons Leader Lucy Powell underscored the breach of House rules that prohibits such activities without explicit permission, further questioning Badenoch’s commitment to upholding the values her party claims to represent.

Her criticisms of environmental policies, particularly her stance on electric vehicle mandates, have also fueled debate. By questioning these initiatives due to potential job losses in the UK automotive sector, she has opened a Pandora's box of discussions about the government's sincerity regarding climate commitments. Amid a public increasingly wary of the Labour government's environmental rhetoric, Badenoch's positions may further entrench voter skepticism towards mainstream parties.

As she navigates these turbulent waters, the crossroads of personal conduct, public trust, and policy direction will likely define not only her leadership but also the Conservative Party's struggle to regain footing in an increasingly polarized political landscape. The coming weeks are crucial; whether Badenoch can effectively address these mounting concerns will significantly impact her credibility and her party's image—all while the public watches closely and demands a higher standard of integrity from their leaders.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/badenoch-has-questions-to-answer-over-car-hire-security-concerns-labour-KCXDWP2FL5NCNMTDSS3WJ6JSW4/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/jul/31/kemi-badenoch-asked-to-use-taxpayers-money-to-pay-for-holiday-flight-sources-claim> - In July 2024, The Guardian reported that Kemi Badenoch, then Business Secretary, requested her department to fund a personal holiday flight to the US. The request was denied, and Badenoch ultimately paid for the trip herself. This raised concerns about adherence to the ministerial code, which prohibits ministers from using public funds for personal expenses. Badenoch's spokesperson stated that the proper process was followed, and the department confirmed that no formal complaints were made regarding the incident.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/jul/30/kemi-badenoch-accused-of-bullying-and-traumatising-staff> - In July 2024, The Guardian reported allegations that Kemi Badenoch fostered a toxic and intimidating atmosphere within the Department for Business and Trade. Sources claimed that at least three senior officials felt compelled to leave due to her behavior. The department addressed concerns about the working culture during a town hall meeting. Badenoch's spokesperson denied the allegations, describing them as 'completely false and a flagrant smear,' and emphasized her high standards and expectations.
4. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/kemi-badenoch-lucy-powell-house-of-commons-parliament-palace-of-westminster-b1210989.html> - In February 2025, The Standard reported that Kemi Badenoch faced calls to apologize for filming a Conservative Party political broadcast in Parliament. The video featured a brief clip of Speaker’s Court, part of the Palace of Westminster. Commons Leader Lucy Powell called for a 'full and speedy apology,' expressing concerns over the use of a taxpayer-funded ministerial car and filming on parliamentary grounds without permission, which contravenes House rules.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/aug/01/kemi-badenoch-casts-doubt-on-electric-car-targets-over-fears-about-job-losses> - In August 2023, The Guardian reported that Kemi Badenoch, then Business Secretary, questioned the feasibility of electric vehicle mandates due to potential job losses. She suggested that the requirement for car manufacturers to sell a certain percentage of zero-emission vehicles could hinder investment in Britain and lead to job cuts. This raised concerns about the government's commitment to its green pledges and the impact on the automotive industry.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/08/01/kemi-badenoch-raises-job-loss-concern-over-net-zero-car-ban/> - In August 2023, The Telegraph reported that Kemi Badenoch, then Business Secretary, was advocating for adjustments to net zero rules on electric cars. She expressed concerns that the zero emissions vehicle (ZEV) mandate, which required manufacturers to sell a certain percentage of zero-emission vehicles, could lead to job losses and hinder investment in the UK automotive industry. Badenoch's spokesperson indicated that she was exploring ways to address these concerns within the government's green agenda.
7. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/09/11/britain-needs-china-reach-net-zero-says-kemi-badenoch/> - In September 2023, The Telegraph reported that Kemi Badenoch, then Business Secretary, emphasized the necessity of engaging with China to achieve the UK's net zero targets. She stated that excluding Chinese-made products from the battery ecosystem would impede progress toward net zero. This statement came amid a spying controversy involving a parliamentary researcher alleged to be working for China, highlighting the complexities of UK-China relations in the context of environmental goals.