

District Councillor's Report
Mike Rice, Liberal Democrat District Councillor
5th June 2023

In my first monthly report as the Liberal Democrat District Councillor for Henley-in-Arden, I should like to thank the residents of the ancient market town for their heart-warming and impressive support at the recent local election. It's an honour and privilege to represent the town on the District Council.

I received a total of 601 votes – 58% of the turnout – representing a massive swing of 49% to the Lib Dems since the 2019 local election. The Conservatives won only 32% of the vote this time.

In the biggest change at Stratford on Avon District Council for 22 years, a total of 25 Liberal Democrat councillors were elected on 4th May. For the first time in the Council's history, it is now led by a Liberal Democrat majority. The remainder of the 41-strong chamber is made up of 12 Conservatives, three Greens and one independent. Boundary changes have meant that the council is now larger than it was before.

At the Annual Council meeting on 24th May, when all of the councillors got together for the first time, there were many brand-new members, including me amongst 11 new Lib Dems. At the meeting, I was pleased to see a good spread of ages from early 20s to much older as well as a good mix of men and women. This balance of new councillors, with the ability to bring fresh thinking to the council; and experienced councillors, able to lead and put ambitious policies into place, should be positive for the district.

I shall represent Henley on two of the Council's main committees. I have been asked to chair the Audit & Standards committee and serve on the Overview & Scrutiny committee, which met for the first time on 2nd June.

All of the new councillors are currently undergoing some of the intensive training that is essential to their new roles of representing residents effectively, contributing to the Council's policies and promoting good governance of the area. The most important part of my new job, however, will be helping the residents of Henley-in-Arden with their issues and problems.

If you have any local issues – or you would simply like to meet your new District Councillor – I shall be at the Memorial Hall between 10am and 12 midday on Saturday, 1st July. Please come along.

If you can't make the first meeting, I shall be at the Memorial Hall on the first Saturday of every month at the same times of 10.00am to 12 midday.