
An Open Question Ahead of the May local elections

1 message

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To: david.cole@solihull.gov.uk

Tue, Jan 13, 2026 at 4:42 PM

Dear Councillor Cole,

As the **Conservative councillor for Kingshurst and Fordbridge**, and with the local elections approaching in May, local politics is naturally beginning to come more into view. At times like this, it feels reasonable for residents to reflect not only on future commitments, but also on past decisions taken in public office — particularly where those decisions go to the heart of **representation and mandate**.

You were originally elected to Solihull Council as a **Labour councillor**, on the basis of a Labour platform and with the votes of residents who understood that to be the offer they were supporting.

You later chose to **leave the Labour Party and join the Conservatives**, who at the time — and still — form the **ruling group on the council**.

This is not a question about party politics as such.

It is a question about **how representation is understood and exercised**.

In that spirit, and with genuine interest, I would like to ask:

What first attracted you to defecting to the ruling party, given that the voters who elected you had explicitly not voted Conservative?

At the time, press coverage suggested that you felt you could “**achieve more**” for your ward by joining the party in control. Many residents may reasonably wonder how that judgement was reached, and how it was balanced against the expectations of those who placed their trust in you under a different banner.

Which leads to a second, related question:

When you made that decision, what weight did you give to the views of the people who voted for you as a Labour councillor — and how did you test whether they agreed with your conclusion?

Looking ahead to the forthcoming elections in May, there is also a wider point of public interest:

If re-elected, would you regard party affiliation as something that remains open to change again — including a future decision to align with whichever party happens to be in control of the council at that time?

These questions are asked openly and in good faith. Any response you wish to give would be published **in full and in your own words**, unedited, alongside the questions.

Thank you for taking the time to consider them.

Kind regards,

Rob de Silhill

<https://www.solihullcouncilelectioncountdown2026.com/>