

POLITICAL REPORT MAY ELECTIONS 2012

Referenda results from across Yorkshire for Elected Mayors

Bradford

No 55% Yes 45% - Elected Mayor rejected

Leeds

No 63.4% Yes 36.6% -Elected Mayor rejected

Sheffield

No 65% Yes 35% -Elected Mayor rejected

Wakefield

No 62.2% Yes 37.8% -Elected Mayor rejected

Doncaster

No 37.8% Yes 61.7% -Elected Mayor retained

Council results from across the region

West Yorkshire

LEEDS LAB No Change

Labour 63.6% 63 seats (+8)

Conservative 19.2% 19 seats (-2)

Liberal Democrat 10.1% 10 seats (-6)

Others 5.1% 5 seats

Green 2% 2 seats

BRADFORD NOC No Change

Labour 50% 45 seats (+2)

Conservative 26.7% 24 seats (-3)

Liberal Democrat 8.9% 8 seats (-3)

Others 5.6% 5 seats (-1)

Respect 5.6% 5 seats (+5)

Green 3.3% 3 seats

KIRKLEES NOC No Change

Labour 46.4% 32 seats (+5)

Conservative 26.1% 18 seats (-3)

Liberal Democrat 14.5% 10 seats (-4)

Green 7.2% 5 seats (+1)

Others 5.8% 4 seats (+1)

CALDERDALE NOC No Change

Labour 39.2% 20 seats (+7)

Conservative 33.3% 17 seats (-4)

Liberal Democrat 23.5% 12 seats (-1)

Others 3.9% 2 seats (-2)

South Yorkshire

SHEFFIELD LAB No Change

Labour 70.2% 59 seats (+9)

Liberal Democrat 27.4%

Others 1.6% 1 seat (-3)

Election fallout

Cities across Yorkshire and England have delivered a resounding rejection of David Cameron's plan to replace their council leaders with directly-elected mayors as the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats suffered a stinging election backlash from voters up and down the country.

The Prime Minister's flagship policy to drive growth in the regions by installing London-style mayors in England's largest cities lay in tatters last night, as the public rejected the plan in nine of the 10 cities holding votes including Leeds, Sheffield, Bradford and Wakefield.

I believe that the Unions campaigning against elected mayors, led by in my opinion the GMB, was a major factor in the defeat in this misguided political experiment.

Leeds

Voters in Leeds followed the trend by giving Labour 8 gains 6 from the liberal Democrats and 2 from the conservatives.

The up to date list of Councillors in Leeds after the 2012 elections.

Please note that five labour gains in 2012 are GMB members and that in the wards of Hyde Park, Middleton and Burmontofts all the elected members are GMB members. There are now 27 Councillors serving the electorate in Leeds who are GMB members.

Twenty seven out of the sixty three Leeds Labour Councillors are GMB members. GMB

Javaid Akhtar	Hyde Park and Woodhouse	
Christine Towler	Hyde Park and Woodhouse	2012 lab Gain
Gerry Harper	Hyde Park and Woodhouse	
Judith Blake	Middleton Park	
Mick Coulson	Pudsey	
Judith Cummins	Temple Newsham	2012 lab Gain
Ron Grahame	Burmontofts and Richmond Green	
Pauline Grahame	Cross Gates and Whinmoor	
Kim Groves	Middleton Park	
Caroline Gruen	Bramley and Stanningley	2012
John Hardy	Farnley and Wortley	
Alex Sobel	Moortown	2012 Lab Gain
Arif Hussain	Gipton and Harehills	
Maureen Ingham	City and Hunslet	
Asghar Khan	Burmontofts and Richmond Hill	
James Lewis	Kippax and Methley	
Richard Lewis	Pudsey	
Alison Lowe	Armley	2012
Andrea Mckenna	Garforth and Swillington	2012

David Nagle	Rothwell	2012 Labour Gain
Elisabeth Nash	City and Hunslet	2012
Brian Selby	Killenbeck and Seacroft	
Paul Truswel	Middleton Park	2012
Keith Wakefield	Kippax and Methley	Leader
Lucinda Yeadon	Kirkstall	2012
Neil Walshaw	Headingley	

Thanks to Bill Chard for collating the Leeds information

Writing in the Yorkshire Post 5 May 2012 Council Leader Keith Wakefield worried that Leeds could be “punished” by the Government for rejecting its elected mayors policy, according to council leader Keith Wakefield who claimed the referendum was distraction from the real issue of unemployment.

Almost two thirds of people voted against having a mayor in Leeds but Councillor Wakefield said he feared the city would be “punished” for its choice and called on the Government to devolve more powers to the region - an issue he will raise in the coming months,.

The turnout for the election was low with only 31 per cent of people voting on whether to abolish the existing council structure and install a new figurehead.

Councillor Wakefield said it was “quite clear” the referendum was not a major issue.

“I am delighted that the people of Leeds have made a democratic statement,” he said. “It’s time Government listened more to Northerners - it’s quite clear this whole exercise has been a distraction for people

living in Leeds, who are very concerned about unemployment, investment and transport.

“But what I think is important is that although we’ve now clarified the future of the governance of our city, we should not be punished in any way for this choice.

“We want to have discussions with the Government straight away, now that the people have decided, to talk about devolving powers - real powers - down to the city, so that we can address the economic needs of our city region.”

What is clear to the GMB and other trade unions is, now more than ever the Council Leader must work closely with the unions to fight the cuts Leeds must be at the vanguard in opposing the government’s austerity programme. The electorate of Leeds have given a resounding thumbs down to government policy, mayor and all.

Doncaster

Voters in Doncaster today voted to retain the town’s controversial mayoral system despite a campaign waged by Unions and the Labour party.

Results in full

The town’s electorate voted by a margin of 61.7 per cent in favour of an elected mayor, with 37.8 per cent voting against.

Turnout for the vote was 30 per cent, with a total of 42,196 people voting to keep the system, and 25,879 voting to scrap it.

Current elected mayor Peter Davies, an English Democrat, was not at the count to see the result, but it was welcomed by his party.

The Labour group leader Sandra Holland said she was satisfied that the people of Doncaster had been given the chance to vote, and said her party would now “move forward”.

This result was disappointing, however Labour gained 6 seats in Doncaster and there is a good chance we will see the back of Mr Davies at the next Mayoral contest.

Bradford

Council leader Ian Greenwood lost his seat last night to George Galloway’s Respect Party as the so-called Bradford Spring heralded by Mr Galloway’s election to parliament in the city continued.

Results in full

Bradford again showcased its value as a destination for hot political drama after the Respect Party - virtually unknown in the city at the start of the year - took five seats including that of the Labour leader.

Mr Greenwood lost his seat to Respect’s Alyas Karmani by just 17 votes after a night of intense drama at the Richard Dunn Sports Centre.

The city also voted against having an elected mayor, by a slim percentage margin of 55-45.

The result of the election for Mr Greenwood’s seat of Little Horton, which he has held for more than 17 years, was subjected to four recounts and was the last to be declared by some margin

The result took on an extra dramatic significance in that Labour just needed one more seat to gain overall control of the council for the first time in more than 10 years.

The council has been repeatedly hung, with Labour either running a minority administration or the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats ruling in coalition.

Aside from the drama in Little Horton the night had proved to be a successful one for Labour, having picked up seats from the Tories in Keighley East and Keighley West, and from the Lib Dems in Clayton and Fairweather Green.

Labour now hold 45 seats, one short of the 46 required for an overall majority. The Tories have 24 and the Lib Dems have eight.

However much of the focus will be directed at Respect who now hold five seats on the council, having picked up gains from the Liberal Democrats in Bradford Moor, the Tories in Heaton and Labour in the Little Horton, Manningham and City wards.

Calderdale

Talks will take place over the coming weeks and the make-up of Calderdale Council's ruling party will be announced at the Annual Council meeting on May 23.

Results in full

Overall in Calderdale Labour won seven seats at last week's local election, giving them a total of 20.

The Conservatives have 17 seats and the Liberal Democrats have 12 seats. A further two are Independent seats.

Previously the Lib Dems and Labour each had 13 seats and they formed a coalition with Lib Dem's Councillor Janet Battye leading the council with Labour's Councillor Tim Swift as her deputy.

Councillor Tim Swift, Leader of the Labour party in Calderdale, said: "Seven gains is a great result for us - more than we predicted in advance.

"I think we need to be realistic about why we gained. We did put in the footwork locally and that's helped, but what's happening nationally will have a reflection.

"There will certainly be talks about how we can go ahead with the coalition but we are the largest party and we'd hope to be looking at leading roles going forward.

"We've worked well together for the last two years and we need to talk about how we do that from now."

Councillor Swift, who represents the Town ward, said helping Calderdale residents during difficult times would be his priority.

"We need to do everything we can to support people," he added.

It was a view shared by the current Council Leader, Councilor Janet Battye, who secured her Calder seat in last week's elections.

GMB member Anne Martin was also elected in Brighouse.

Kirklees

Labour moved within touching distance of an overall majority on Kirklees Council after gaining five seats.

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Party activists celebrated wins across the district yesterday as voters turned on the Conservatives and Lib Dems.

Labour's victims included Golcar Lib Dem Christine Iredale - who had been due to become mayor later this month.

Conservative Adrian Murphy, who had been due to serve as her deputy before taking the chains of office in 2013, also lost his seat in Kirkburton.

The Tories also lost Denby Dale and Dewsbury South to Labour - but picked up Lindley from the Lib Dems to finish on 18 seats overall.

In Holme Valley North the Conservatives lost to Charles Greaves, the third independent elected in the ward.

In Dalton Labour's Naheed Mather a GMB member unseated Lib Dem Rochelle Parchment.

Kirklees Labour leader Councillor Mehboob Khan - who was easily re-elected in Greenhead - said the results showed the Conservatives had been wrong to focus their campaign on a proposal to divide the council in two.

"Splitting Kirklees was a Tory gimmick to try to detract from the key issues of creating employment and protecting health services," he said

"We campaigned on the important concerns and our policies resonated very strongly with local people."

Councillor Khan added that his 32-strong Labour group would continue to work with other parties on the 69-member council.

"I believe in these very difficult times people want politicians to work together to tackle the key issues and create employ

Labour's winners included Paul Salveson, who unseated Lib Dem Christine Iredale in Golcar.

"I feel elated," he said. "We fought a good principled campaign and focused on a combination of national and local issues."

Party colleague Graham Turner was also happy after winning in Denby Dale at the sixth attempt.

"It's a fantastic feeling," said the Skelmanthorpe man.

“It’s been a long hard struggle but I’m glad the people of Denby Dale have placed their trust in me.

Wakefield

The Conservatives lost nine seats, including that of their group leader, after today’s count.

Results in full

Labour gained all nine, and three more from independents, in what council leader Peter Box called “a great day” for the city.

He said: “The local authority has tried to produce good quality local services, but clearly national issues are also at play. I think many people in this district have been badly affected by cuts.

Ousted Conservative group leader Mark Crowther was critical of his own party. He said: “It’s massively disappointing, but I expected it, to be honest. The government has a lot to answer for. They need to sort their act out and get competent at ministerial level.

“It’s about time they got their communications strategy in order.”

The GMB had four members standing in Wakefield Michelle Johnson and Martin Johnson (no relation) Gaining seats. Graham Stokes and Mark Burns Williamson being re-elected.

Sheffield

Former Council leader Paul Scriven is amongst nine Lib Dem candidates to lose their seats to Labour in Sheffield’s local council elections.

Results in full

The council is now made up of 59 Labour councillors, 23 Lib Dem members and two Green party members.

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The result reflects the regional and national picture - where Labour has gained seats and the Lib Dems have suffered the biggest loses.

Rotherham

Labour wiped out the BNP as they retained control of Rotherham Council in the local elections - claiming 19 of the 21 seats which were contested in the borough, writes digital editor Graham Walker.

Results in full

Labour's Margaret Godfrey took the seat from the BNP in the Maltby ward.

It means the make up of Rotherham Council is now 58 seats Labour (92.1%), four Conservative (6.3%) and one Independent (1.6%)

Barnsley

Labour gained nine Barnsley seats - including a shock win in Tory Penistone - as it tightened its grip as the town's ruling party.

Results in full

It claimed 18 of the 21 contested seats, taking seven from the Barnsley Independent Group (BIG) and one Independent.

But the biggest shock saw Labour unseating the Conservative Mayor of Penistone, Steve Webber, in Penistone West. All six seats in the two Penistone wards had been Tory held for many years.

Barnsley Council now consists of 52 Labour councillors (82.5%), five Conservatives (7.9%) and six others (9.5%), who lost six seats.

Conclusions

A good day for Labour in our region. I must thank all our political team and ever GMB officer, activist and member who made this possible, especially the defeat of elected Mayors.

The GMB must continue to apply pressure to the Leadership of the party to adopt the policies supported by the trade unions, failure to do so could alienate an electorate who are sick to the back teeth of the Coalition Cameron, Osborne and austerity.

Steve Jennings MCIPD

Senior Organiser/Political Officer