**District and County Report May 2025**

**Cllr Paul Arnott**

Dear Councillors and Clerks

County

Following the county elections on 1st May, the political make-up of the 60-member council has changed significantly. Sixty seats in 58 council divisions were up for election in Devon – two divisions, Exmouth and Broadclyst, have two elected councillors each. The Liberal Democrats (Lib Dems) won most seats, 27. Reform UK won 18 seats. The Conservative Party, which previously had overall control, won 7 seats, the Green Party 6 and 2 independents. The Labour Party won no seats.

I am very grateful to have been given a substantial majority over 700 with more than 2000 votes. As an aside, in the parliamentary constituency of Honiton & Sidmouth, the 6 seats contested returned 4 Liberal Democrats and two well-respected Independents. No other parties are represented.

There is no business to report to the parishes at this stage as the new council is not constituted until the AGM on 22nd May.

However, early issues are likely to concern Children’s Services, where a long-delayed report is just being published, Local Government Reorganisation and Adult Social Care. It is worth noting that of the council’s budget, 85% goes on “people services”. The legacy challenges across the piece are of great significance.

District

Similarly, district business has been constrained during the pre-election period due to the many district councillors also standing for county and the need to avoid political advantage or disadvantage. There will be much more to report in my June bulletin.

Communications between Parishes/Towns and Councillors

I will be writing next week to all chairs and clerks to open a dialogue with your councils regarding how better to communicate. While the physical presence of an upper tier councillor is traditional, technology promises more modern means of contact.