# Keir Starmer faces mounting pressure after Labour’s local election setbacks and Reform UK resurgence



Keir Starmer is set to navigate a tumultuous landscape as Parliament reconvenes following the disheartening local election results, which have considerably undermined his leadership. Among the noteworthy outcomes, the surge of Reform UK is hard to overlook, with the party making a significant comeback, returning to Parliament with five Members of Parliament following recent local council victories, where they gained hundreds of new councillors.

In stark contrast, the Conservative Party, already teetering, suffered a staggering defeat, shedding 635 of the 954 council seats it defended. This cannot overshadow the concerning performance of the Labour Party, which only secured 98 out of the 296 council seats it was defending. The expectation of a dominant presence has now diminished, revealing vulnerabilities that starkly contrast the party’s triumph in the last General Election just ten months ago.

The scrutiny on Starmer is heightened by Labour's inability to retain Runcorn and Helsby, a seat previously deemed safe. Losing this by-election by merely six votes not only raises questions about Starmer's effectiveness but also his on-the-ground engagement—an apparent oversight that critiques focus on as a glaring misstep during a crucial moment where robust leadership is essential.

Starmer’s recent remarks on needing to act “further and faster” in response to the defeats have been met with skepticism. With uncertainty surrounding what these terms actually mean for Labour's policies, opponents contend that the public is not clamoring for more of the same. Instead, they desire a realignment in leadership focus, particularly concerning taxation and immigration, where many feel the current approach is leading the country astray.

As he grapples with this rapidly changing political terrain, Starmer’s approval ratings have seen an alarming decline, reportedly plummeting faster than any of his predecessors since the 1970s. While Labour MPs have shown loyalty up to this point, the recent electoral failures could intensify dissatisfaction among party members, igniting calls for a decisive change in direction. The days ahead are pivotal for Starmer; his ability to regain control or face an internal uprising over the direction of Labour hangs in the balance.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://elpais.com/internacional/2025-05-05/la-victoria-de-la-derecha-populista-de-farage-en-las-elecciones-locales-del-reino-unido-siembra-los-nervios-entre-laboristas-y-conservadores.html> - This article discusses Reform UK's significant gains in the recent local elections, including winning over 40% of the contested council seats and securing their first mayoralty in Greater Lincolnshire, highlighting the party's resurgence under Nigel Farage's leadership.
2. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/almost-half-say-keir-starmer-and-rachel-reeves-doing-bad-job-their-worst-ratings-taking-office> - Ipsos polling data reveals that nearly half of Britons believe Keir Starmer is performing poorly as Prime Minister, with a significant decline in approval ratings since taking office, indicating public dissatisfaction with his leadership.
3. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/local-elections-2023-sunak-starmer-tories-labour-b2333815.html> - The Independent reports on the 2023 local elections, detailing the Conservative Party's loss of 960 seats and control of 48 councils, with Labour gaining 22 councils, reflecting a substantial shift in the political landscape.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/9c01eeb3-72a6-4ac0-bc9a-fe54e24d8634> - This Financial Times podcast episode delves into the Conservative Party's crisis, including plummeting poll numbers and internal controversies, highlighting the party's challenges and the potential impact on public perception and leadership.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/bfc43ac2-4199-4fbb-a25a-565642def726> - The Financial Times discusses the implications of the 2023 local election results, noting Labour's significant successes and the impact of the Reform Party in splitting the right-wing vote, affecting the Conservative Party's prospects.
6. <https://www.apnews.com/article/71b0348dc6057513bb73f32385039df4> - AP News reports on the UK's local elections, highlighting the Conservative Party's historic losses and Labour's gains, suggesting a potential shift in power dynamics and raising questions about the effectiveness of current leadership.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2050952/biggest-blow-keir-starmer> - Please view link - unable to able to access data