

I'm not surprised

Published: January 12, 2026, 11:13 pm

The is the South Shields election result:

And at present these are the council election results:

I am not surprised by either. The Labour vote in South Shields stuck in proportionate terms when it should have increased. The Coalition was decimated. UKIP gained. Unsurprisingly, so too did Labour in council results where, also unsurprisingly, the Lib Dems have fared better proportionately than the Tories because they have better organisation on the ground.

I am surprised the Coalition was decimated as much as it was in South Shields. There must be fear in the hearts of many Coalition MPs this morning.

I'm not surprised Labour was returned there.

I'm not surprised Labour is winning council seats.

But most of all I'm not surprised at UKIP. I only have to talk to people here in Norfolk to know how disaffected they are with the government and politics in general. To put it bluntly, they're worried and they need hope and since the Lib Dems now provide no refuge and Labour isn't saying anything of substance they're willing to listen to someone, however bizarre his policies, who seems to offer some certainty in a world there appears to be little.

I hope this is UKIP's moment and they now fade as the reality of their politics (or lack of them) is appreciated as they take some serious offices and have to mount credible political positions.

But most of all I hope Labour realises that without a narrative it too is in the wilderness.

Farage delivers one, however incoherent it is. Labour has to deliver one too. The only difference is it must be coherent. And that requires more work.

It's hard to see what can redeem either Coalition party.