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Local Epsom LibDem leader leaves her Party

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An Epsom councillor who has been a leading Liberal Democrat in the area for over 20 years has defected to become an independent member. After several changes, including upcoming local Government reorganisation, Cllr **Julie Morris** has taken the decision to continue serving College Ward as an Independent councillor.

She has served on Epsom and Ewell Borough Council for almost 20 years, her old party described her as “experienced local champion”. A spokesperson for the party said on social media: “We want to express our gratitude for the years of service Julie has given to the Epsom and Ewell Liberal Democrats.”

Stepping into the well-worn shoes of the former leader, Cllr **James Lawrence** (also of the College Ward) will now take over. Only three Lib Dem councillors will now sit on the council, along with 25 Residents Association members, three Labour, two Conservative and now two Independent.

According to the Lib Dem website, Cllr Morris has led a number of environmental campaigns including: leading the charge against the Aldi food store plans for Epsom in 2015, a local campaign to stop builders developing back gardens, the campaign to preserve part of the Mill Road railway cutting as a wildlife sanctuary, as well as helping the residents of many roads in College ward deal with commuter parking problems.

“The Liberal Democrat group will continue to work closely with Julie for the residents of the college ward,” the spokesperson added.

Cllr Morris declined to make a statement at this time.

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