

# **Long-standing West Lothian councillor to step down in New Year**

**West Lothian Council will see its third by-election since August come the New Year after a senior SNP councillor announced her decision to retire.**

In the last few days before the council break from the Christmas holidays, Broxburn's Diane Calder announced her decision to stand down.

Councillor Calder said she had been "overwhelmed by kind sentiments" since announcing her decision on Tuesday afternoon.

She told the Local Democracy Reporting Service: "It has been a great honour and privilege to serve and support the communities of Broxburn, Uphall, Winchburgh, Dechmont and Ecclesmachan and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support over the years.

"I would also like to take this opportunity to say that I am extremely proud to live within our communities where there are fantastic volunteers who work tirelessly for their towns and villages and for each other and it has been extremely humbling to have been a part of this.

"I have met many inspirational people and have made many life-long friends in my time over the years in elected office and I

do hope to maintain these relationships into the future.”

Details of the by-election, including dates at which candidates should submit their names will be announced in the next few weeks.

Councillor Calder has been a long-standing SNP member representing Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh.

Councillor Calder gained the most votes- 1,990- (29% of the poll)- and was elected in the first round of the single transferable voting system used for the last council election in May 2022.

She was elected alongside fellow party member Janet Campbell, Angela Doran-Timson for the Conservatives and Ann Davidson for Labour.

Tony Boyle won a by-election for Labour shortly afterwards following the death of Mrs Davidson.

SNP group leader Councillor Janet Campbell, told the LDRS: “Diane has been an SNP councillor and a colleague for over 12 years. She has worked tirelessly for her constituents in Broxburn, Winchburgh, Uphall Dechmont and Ecclesmachan during this time. She will always work to the very best of her abilities to seek answers and to right wrongs.

“All in the SNP group will miss her as a team member but also wish her the very best now she has chosen to retire.”

By-elections took place in August in Armadale ward following the death of Councillor Stuart Borrowman and in Whitburn last month following the election of Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan as MP for Bathgate and Linlithgow.

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter