

Former depute SNP leader stands against old party in Broxburn by-election

A veteran former SNP councillor is hoping for a return to the council chambers after being announced as the Alba party candidate for the upcoming Broxburn by-election.

Frank Anderson, who served Craigshill in Livingston for more than 30 years is to stand for the party in the 13 March by-election.

The West Lothian seat was vacated at Christmas when Diane Calder retired after serving the community for a dozen years as SNP councillor.

Mr Anderson, who is in his early seventies, was former depute leader of the SNP group on West Lothian Council. He was de-selected by the party for the 2022 council elections.

The longest serving councillor in West Lothian at the time, he had represented Craigshill and then the East Calder and East Livingston ward for 33 years.

He has since campaigned for Alba, the party set up by former SNP leader Alex Salmond.

Asked by the Local Democracy Reporting Service why he wanted to return to politics, Mr Anderson said: "I feel that too many of the current politicians forget why they were elected, it was to do their best for their constituents. They seem to

think you can 'squeeze more blood from the stone' by charging residents above inflation increases. They then talk glibly about the cost of living crisis."

If elected he said he would ensure that the "many" issues faced by local residents would be voiced within the Council and pledged to "hold officers to account to get solutions."

On the decision to stand for Alba, Mr Anderson said the SNP "left me when they evolved into a devolutionist party pursuing gender politics"

He added: "The SNP had more red lines than my old school jotters, but did nothing when they were crossed."

And suggesting that people felt "totally let down by all the main party politicians" he said "I would urge voters not to get mad but to get even. Don't stay at home mumping about councillors having lost touch. Come out on the 23th March and vote for a politician who stands by his principles. "

Seven candidates are vying for the seat, including the SNP looking to maintain its presence. Reform, which has contested all other by-elections as well as the general election last year joins the Greens and Lib Dems

The ward has four council seats: The existing councillors are one Labour, Tony Boyle, one SNP- the group leader Janet Campbell, and one Conservative Angela Doran-Timson.

Councillor Boyle retained the seat for Labour after Ann Davidson died shortly after winning the seat in Spring 2022. Councillor Doran-Timson had originally been elected for Labour before joining the Conservative group.

The full list of candidates for the Broxburn , Uphall and Winchburgh by-election is:-

Frank Anderson- Alba Party

June Andrews – Scottish Labour Party

Mike Carlin- Scottish National Party (SNP)

Chris Cotter- Scottish Greens

Oliver Thomas Ferrario- Scottish Liberal Democrats

David McLennan- Reform UK

Marnie Taylor- Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter