

10 September 2014		ITEM: 5
Council		
Tribute to Councillor Andy Smith		
Wards and communities affected: West Thurrock & South Stifford	Key Decision: Not applicable	
Report of: Graham Farrant, Chief Executive		
Accountable Head of Service: Fiona Taylor, Head of Legal & Democratic Services		
Accountable Director: Graham Farrant, Chief Executive		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

This report requests the Council to pay tribute to Councillor Andy Smith, who sadly passed away on 12 August 2014.

The report also includes a proposed timetable that has been prepared by the Returning Officer for a by-election to be held.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That Members be invited to pay tribute to Councillor Andy Smith.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 On 12 August 2014, Thurrock Council was deeply saddened to learn that Councillor Andy Smith had passed away.

2.2 Councillor Smith was first elected to the Council in 1986, where he represented the Stifford Ward.

2.3 He became the Leader of the Council in 1995 and held this position until 2004. In this role, he was responsible for much of the work that led to the borough's successful bid to become a unitary authority and the start of the growth agenda which is being delivered now.

2.4 He was elected to represent the Tilbury St Chads Ward on 1 May 1997, as a member of Thurrock's first unitary council. He held this seat until 2006, when he was then elected to represent the West Thurrock and South Stifford Ward, which he did from 4 May 2006.

- 2.5 During his years as a councillor, Councillor Smith held a number of key roles in the Council. As well as being the Leader of the Council, his more recent roles included being a member of the Cabinet and covering the portfolio of Housing and Regeneration from 2011, and from 2012, he became the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways and Transportation.
- 2.6 In addition to his work to bring unitary status to Thurrock, he was praised for his work within the council, in particular around the regeneration of the borough and most notably with the introduction of the Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation, the Local Development Framework and the Local Development Order. He was also appointed to a number of outside bodies by the Council where he could raise issues and influence matters relating to regeneration and transportation within the borough.
- 2.7 The Council has received a number of messages of condolence and tributes to Councillor Smith. Some have been received from afar afield as Portugal and Italy, from European Partners on the URBACT Jobtown Project. Further tributes have also been received from the Chief Operating Officer at the Port of Tilbury and also from the Trustees of South Ockendon Community Forum.
- 2.8 All Members are invited to pay tribute to Councillor Smith.
- 2.9 As a further mark of respect, a notice of vacancy will be published by the Returning Officer following the funeral of Councillor Smith and, if requested, an election will be held and a pre-election period observed that will see some meetings being cancelled.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The Council should formally pay tribute to Councillor Andy Smith, as a mark of respect for the service he has given to the Council and to the residents of Thurrock.
- 3.2 The Returning Officer has advised that he intends to publish a Notice of Vacancy after the funeral of Councillor Smith and has prepared a proposed timetable for a by-election to be held, which is attached at **Appendix 1** to the report.
- 3.3 Should a by-election be called and subsequently arranged in line with the proposed timetable, the Chief Executive has advised that a pre-election period will be observed that will see some formal meetings of the Council being cancelled. The pre-election period would commence with the publication of the Notice of Election, which is proposed to be on 11 September 2014 and guidance for Members and Officers is available on the Council's intranet.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The Council should be afforded the opportunity to formally pay tribute to Councillor Andy Smith.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 No consultation has been undertaken in respect of this report.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
Head of Corporate Finance

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation contained within this report.

The costs associated with a by-election have not been explicitly budgeted for but will be met from within existing budgets.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Deputy Head of Legal & Democratic Services

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation contained within this report.

However, a by-election can only be called after two local government electors have requested an election to take place. The electors may be from within the borough and not just from the ward in question. If a request is received before the notice of vacancy is published, this will trigger the statutory period of 35 working days to hold the election.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Community Development Officer

There are no implications arising from this report.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None.

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – proposed timetable for a by-election in the West Thurrock and South Stifford Ward

Report Author:

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