

Firstly, I have to mention that I first knew I would be doing the congratulations was at just after 11-00 p.m. last night - so please accept my apologies for these seemingly random utterings spluttering from my vocal cords.

Councilor Batty – Smith MBE.

I will forever associate yourself with the words addressed to myself 'I hope you ARE NOT HERE once AGAIN TO MAKE TROUBLE' before the commencement of a planning meeting!

I quacked and quivered but somehow managed to carry on at the meeting hands shacking with my notes clenched tight.

To be serious Bill's dedication, fair minded approach and air of authority saw through many a contentious application. Always courteous he over many years was the exemplar of committee chairpersons.

I wholeheartedly congratulate you on your honour, is it the right word elevation.

Councilor Deborah Croney

I have two insights into Deborah – if I may be so bold as to address you by your first name.

Firstly, of course as a District Councilor, indeed leader of this council where her pragmatic, clear sighted approach enabled this then embattled council to strive forward to many a national award. To not only survive but in many ways to flourish.

Secondly, as my district councilor who attendance and diligence in taking forward the requests, the asking for helps by Pimperne Parish Council meant she was the 'go to person'

North Dorset and Pimperne owes a debt of gratitude to Deborah making this honour totally deserved.

Councilor Victor Fox

Victor and I hope you do not mind me calling you Victor has been I think in many ways the representative of I what I think of as Dorset on the council. Many a time I have chatted to Victor about Stur and the old shops for example my relatives years ago had a shop that sold the curious combination of sports goods and antiques! Victor is like that shop always looking to look forward with the modern but remembering to hold on to the best from the past. For bringing to the council good common sense and the need for continuity of values. Victor more than merits the award of Honoree Freeman.

David Milstead.

David worked tirelessly, he brought erudition to the council chamber, pragmatism to the tasks he undertook and friendship to all. In so many ways he was the embodiment of the core value of our council, in a few words 'what would be best for the people of North Dorset and how can we bring that about.' The saving of non-statutory services was achieved by an across the council drive.

As a consequence I never thought of David as having a party label, as with so many others here in North Dorset it was about a collegiate approach and for that reason he totally merits this title of honoree freeman of this council.

Councilor Michael Roake.

When I think of Michael, I think of passion, standing for no-nonsense. When residents reflect on council services, normally one of the first to spring to mind is rubbish collection. When refuse collection, re-cycling clearly needed reform. Michael brought a fierce determination that drove this through to completion. Pragmatism to ensure costs were kept under control and strength of character to withstand criticism. Not just North Dorset is in your debt but much of the county. Of course, you undertook much more as has been mentioned for which you deserve thanks.

Michael you have been a true servant of this council. And this award is rightly yours.