



15 April 2014

contact: Greg Halliwell
direct line: 01784 446267
e-mail: g.halliwell@spelthorne.gov.uk

To the Councillors of Spelthorne Borough Council

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in the **Council Chamber, Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames** on **Thursday 24 April 2014** commencing at **7.00pm** for the transaction of the following business.

Roberto Tambini
Chief Executive

Councillors are encouraged to wear their badge of past office at the Council meeting.

AGENDA

Description	Page Number
1. Signing of the Community Covenant with the Armed Forces	
To witness the signing of the Community Covenant with the Armed Forces.	
2. Apologies for absence	
To receive any apologies for non-attendance.	
3. Minutes	
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 February 2014.	1 - 19
4. Disclosures of Interest	
To receive any disclosures of interest from members in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for members.	
5. Announcements from the Mayor	
To receive any announcements from the Mayor.	
6. Announcements from the Leader	
To receive any announcements from the Leader.	
7. Announcements from the Chief Executive	
To receive any announcements from the Chief Executive.	
8. Questions from members of the public	
The Leader or his nominee to answer questions raised by members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 13.	
9. Recommendations of the Cabinet	
To consider the recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting of 25 March 2014 on the Pensions Policy Statements.	20
10. Reports from the Leader of the Council	
To receive the report from the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet at its meeting on 25 March 2014.	21
To receive the report from the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet at its meeting on 15 April 2014.	22 - 23

11. Report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee

To receive the report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee on the work of his Committee. 24

12. Report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

To receive the report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work of her Committee. 25 - 26

13. Report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee

To receive the report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee on the work of his Committee. 27

14. Motions

Under Standing Order 17, the Council has received Notice of the following Motion:

"This Council requests Abellio to restore forthwith, and in full, the 441 bus service to Stanwell."

Proposed by Councillor Chris Frazer.

Seconded by Councillor Spencer Taylor.

15. Questions on Ward Issues

The Leader or his nominee to answer questions from members on issues in their ward, in accordance with Standing Order 14.

16. General questions

The Leader or his nominee to answer questions from members on matters affecting the Borough, in accordance with Standing Order 14.

17. Appointments of Representative Trustees

To consider the appointments of representative Trustees to the following Charities:

(a). Ashford Relief in Need Charity

To consider extending the appointment of Mrs. B.A. Bartlett as a Council representative Trustee to the Ashford Relief in Need Charity from April 2014 until October 2014.

(b). Staines Parochial Charity

i) To consider the re-appointment of Ms. Elizabeth Mackendar- Moore as Council representative Trustee to the Staines Parochial Charity until December 2017.

ii) To consider the re-appointment of Councillor Mrs. Christine Bannister as a Council representative Trustee to the Staines Parochial Charity for a four year term until April 2018.

(c). Margaret Pope Educational Charity

To consider the appointment of Mr Derek Bartlett as a Council representative Trustee to the Margaret Pope Educational Charity for a three year term until April 2017.

18. Urgent Business

18. Urgent Business (cont...)

To consider any urgent business.

Minutes of the Council Meeting of Spelthorne Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames on Thursday 27 February 2014

Present:

Councillors:

Ayers F.	Forbes-Forsyth P.C. (Deputy Leader)	Pinkerton J.M.
Ayub A.	Forsbrey G.E.	Rough Mrs M.W.
Bannister C.A.	Friday A.E.	Saliagopoulos D.
Beardsmore I.J.	Gething N.	Sexton J.
Broom P.A.	Grant D.L.	Sider R.W.
Bushnell M.	Harman A.C.	Smith-Ainsley R.A.
Dale J.A.	Harvey I.T.E	Spencer C.
Davis C.A.	Madams M.J.	Spoor B.B.
Dunn R.D.	Mitchell A.J.	Watts R.L. (Leader)
Dunn S.A.	Patel Ms D.	Webb S. (Deputy Mayor)
Evans T.M.	Patterson A.C.	

Murray Litvak, Chairman of Members' Code of Conduct Committee

Miss Sue Faulkner, Vice-Chairman of Members' Code of Conduct Committee

Councillor A.C. Harman, The Mayor, in the Chair

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S.E.W. Budd, C.M. Frazer, D. Gohil, V.J. Leighton, C.V. Strong and S.D. Taylor.

30/14 Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 December 2013 and the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 16 January 2014 were approved as a correct record.

31/14 Disclosures of Interest

Councillor D. Grant declared a conflict of interest in relation to item 10, report from the Chairman of the Licensing Committee, as she is acquainted with the Soiree Restaurant owners.

32/14 Announcements from the Mayor

The Mayor expressed his heartfelt sympathy to all those residents in the Borough who had been the victims of the recent severe flooding.

He also announced that there had been a very successful boxing event held recently that was attended by over 500 people, including the former world light-heavyweight boxing champion, John Conteh, who contributed to the great success of the evening.

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33/14 Announcements from the Leader

The Leader of the Council made the following announcement:

“Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Further to the announcements I made at December’s Council about successful enforcements by the Planning and Legal departments, I want to let Council know that in January we successfully prosecuted David Green from the Isle of Wight for illegal mooring at Manor Park on 5 separate dates between May and October 2013. He was fined £50 for each of the five charges and ordered to pay another £250 in legal costs to the Council. He was also required to pay a £20 victim surcharge. I would like to express my appreciation for the diligence of the legal department in securing this prosecution and trust this will act as a deterrent to other illegal boat owners.

Thank you Mr Mayor.”

34/14 Announcements from the Chief Executive

There were none.

35/14 Questions from members of the public

There were none.

36/14 Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2014-2015 – Key Decision

The Council considered the recommendation of the Cabinet on the current Treasury position, the Treasury Management Statement and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2014-15, and Prudential Indicators for 2014-2015 to 2016-2017.

Resolved that:

- (1) The proposed Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2014/15 as set out in the report of the Chief Finance Officer be approved.
- (2) The Prudential Indicators for 2014-15 to 2016-17 as set out in the report of the Chief Finance Officer be approved.

37/14 Annual Pay Policy Statement 2014-15

The Council considered the recommendation of the Cabinet on the Annual Pay Policy Statement 2014-15.

Resolved that the Annual Pay Policy Statement for 2014-15 be approved.

38/14 Draft Capital Programmer 2014-15 to 2017-18 – Key Decision

The Council considered the recommendations of the Cabinet on the Draft Capital Programme for 2014-15 to 2017-18.

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Resolved that:

- (1) The Capital Programme for 2014-15 to 2017-18 be approved.
- (2) The Prudential Indicators for 2014-16 to 2017-18 be approved.

39/14 Detailed Revenue Budget 2014-2015 – Key Decision

The Council considered the recommendation of the Cabinet on the Detailed Revenue Budget 2014-2015 and the proposed Council Tax for 2014-15.

The Mayor referred Members to the Budget Book (green cover) reflecting the decisions and recommendations made by the Cabinet on 25 February 2014.

At the invitation of the Mayor, the Council gave consent under Standing Order 19.4 for the Budget speech of each of the Group Leaders to exceed 10 minutes.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor R.L. Watts, made a statement on the Budget and Council Tax and moved the recommendations on the detailed Budget for 2014/2015 as set out in the Budget Book (green cover). This was seconded by Councillor T.J.M. Evans. The Leader of the Spelthorne Independent Party, Councillor F. Ayers and the Leader of the Liberal Democrats, Councillor I.J. Beardsmore, also made statements.

Copies of the Council Leader's, the Spelthorne Independent Party Leader's and the Liberal Democrat Leader's statements are attached to these minutes at **Appendices A, B and C** respectively.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor R.L. Watts requested, under Standing Order 21.4, that the vote be recorded.

The voting was as follows:

FOR (21)	Councillors R.L. Watts (Leader), P.C. Forbes-Forsyth (Deputy Leader), A. Ayub, P.A. Broom, J.A. Dale, C.A. Davis, T. Evans, A.E. Friday, N. Gething, A.C. Harman (Mayor), I.T.E. Harvey, M.J. Madams, A.J. Mitchell, D. Patel, J.M. Pinkerton, M.W. Rough, D. Saliagopoulos, J.R. Sexton, R.W. Sider, R.A. Smith-Ainsley, S. Webb (Deputy Mayor).
AGAINST (11)	Councillors F. Ayers, C.A. Bannister, I.J. Beardsmore, M. Bushnell, R. Dunn, S.A. Dunn, G.E. Forsbrey, D.L. Grant, A.C. Patterson, C. Spencer and B. Spoor.
ABSTAIN (0)	None

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Resolved:

- (1) To approve the growth and savings items as set out in the appendices to the report of the Chief Finance Officer;
- (2) That the Council Tax Base for the whole council area for 2014-2015. [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")] should be 36,550.50 band D equivalent dwellings and,
Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purpose for 2014-2015 is £178.97 per Band D equivalent dwelling.
- (3) To approve a 1.94% increase in the Spelthorne Borough Council element of the council tax for 2014-15. Moreover:
- The Revenue Estimates as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.
 - No money, as set out in this report, is appropriated from General Reserves in support of Spelthorne's local Council Tax for 2014-15.
 - To agree that the council tax base for the year 2014/15 is 36,555.50 Band D equivalent dwellings calculated in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, made under Section 35(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (4) That the following sums be now calculated by the Council for the year 2014-15 in accordance with Section 31 to 36 of the Local Government Act 1992.

A	67,404,718	Being the aggregate of the amount which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils
B	60,863,275	Being the aggregate of the amount which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act
C	6,541,443	Being the amount at 3(c)above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2 above) calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts)
D	£178.97	Being the amount at 3(c)above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2 above) calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts)
E	£0	Being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act
F	£178.97	Being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3 (e) above by Item T(2 above), calculated by the Council, in

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		accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings on those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
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- (5) All newly built commercial property completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016 will be exempted from empty property rates for the first 18 months, up to the state aids limits.

A discount of £1000 for shops, pubs and restaurants (excluding banks, building societies and betting shops) with a rateable value below £50,000 for two years up to the state aid limits, from 1 April 2014.

A 50 per cent business rates relief for 18 months - between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2016 - for businesses that move into retail premises (excluding banks, building societies and betting shops) that have been empty for a year or more.

- (6) That Council delegates to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Leader and Finance Portfolio holder, to agree the details of a local Council Tax discount scheme for flood affected properties under Section 13a of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (7) That, with respect to business rates for business premises which have been flooded, the Council delegates to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Leader and Finance Portfolio holder to agree the details of a local discount scheme for flood affected properties under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2014-2015 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
119.31	139.20	159.08	178.97	218.74	258.51	298.28	357.94

- (8) Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the sum which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band 'D', calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different band.
- (9) That it be noted that for the year 2013-14 Surrey County Council and Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to Spelthorne Borough Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

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Precepts issued to the Council

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
i) Surrey County Council	797.22	930.09	1062.96	1195.83	1461.57	1727.31	1993.05	2391.66
ii) Surrey Police	141.12	164.64	188.16	211.68	258.72	305.76	352.80	423.36

(10) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case above the Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011, hereby sets the amounts set out in Appendix 6 as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2014-15.

(11) The Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2014-15 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(12) As the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2014-15 is excessive and therefore the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK Local Government Finance Act 1992.

40/14 Members' Allowances Scheme 2014-15

The Council considered the recommendation of the Cabinet on the report by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on the review of the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2014-15.

Resolved that:

- (1)** Members' allowances for the year 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 remain unchanged.
- (2)** A thorough review of the scheme for 2015-16 will commence in October 2014.
- (3)** The Council will engage positively with the panel in their consultation with councillors.
- (4)** The removal, from Appendix A of the current scheme, of the paragraph entitled 'Suspension of Allowances' be approved.

41/14 Calendar of Meetings for 2014-15

The Council considered the recommendation of the Cabinet on the proposed Calendar of Meetings for the Municipal year June 2014 to May 2015.

Resolved that the Calendar of Meetings for the Municipal year June 2014 to May 2015 be approved.

42/14 Reports from the Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council, Councillor R. L. Watts, presented the reports of the Cabinet meetings held on 28 January 2014 and 25 February 2014, which

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outlined the various matters the Cabinet had decided since the last Council meeting.

43/14 Report from the Chairman of the Licensing Committee

The Chairman of the Licensing Committee, Councillor R.W. Sider, presented his report which outlined the matters the Committee had decided since the last Council meeting.

44/14 Report from the Chairman of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee

The Chairman of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee, Murray Litvak, presented his report which outlined the matters the Committee had decided since the last Council meeting.

45/14 Report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor P.A. Broom, presented her report which outlined the matters the Committee had decided since the last Council meeting. She thanked the officers for their support for the Committee and the members for their work.

46/14 Report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee

The Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley, presented his report which outlined the matters the Committee had decided since the last Council meeting.

47/14 Motions

There were none.

48/14 Questions on Ward Issues

There were none.

49/14 General Questions

Under Standing Order 14, Councillor R.W. Sider, asked the following general question:

“Will the Leader and members of the Council join me in congratulating all Council staff and their associated contractors for the magnificent way in which they readily responded to the needs of the residents of our Borough during the recent flooding crisis in January and February 2014; and will they endorse my request that this congratulatory note and thanks be suitably recorded in the annals of the Council’s history.”

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Response by the Leader of the Council, Councillor R.L. Watts:

“Thank you for your question, Councillor Sider. I agree with you that we should congratulate staff and their contractors for their response to the recent flooding crisis and the needs of residents, both in terms of those who directly helped and others that kept services going so that staff could be released to assist. We will record our thanks as appropriate in the Council minutes.

The portfolio holder for emergency planning, Councillor Patel, will now address you further on this matter.”

Councillor D. Patel, portfolio Holder for Emergency Planning, addressed the Council and gave her thanks and appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the staff and the management team during a very difficult six weeks for Spelthorne. She thanked the Police, fire and rescue teams and other partner agencies who worked tirelessly to ensure the safety of residents. She also thanked the residents for their understanding, support and patience at a time which had been very difficult and praised the community spirit during this period.

Under Standing Order 14, Councillor F. Ayers, asked the following general question:

“Can Councillor Robert Watts confirm whether the Council will be offering help to those Spelthorne residents who have had their homes flooded these past few weeks, and if the answer is yes, what help is being offered?”

Response by the Leader of the Council, Councillor R.L. Watts:

“Thank you for your question, Councillor Ayers.

The Council is assisting residents who have been flooded in various ways. We have set up Flood Recovery Centres to provide information on a range of issues such as cleaning up your home, health and utility issues, which is also available on our website. Also the Flood Recovery Centres allow residents to obtain cleaning products, food and clothes donated to the Council. We are also looking at how those that had to leave their homes can be given a temporary relief from paying Council tax.

We are ensuring we pick up on central government funds for householders affected by the floods including the Repair and Renew Grant (up to £5k grant (to include cost of survey) for businesses and households). This is intended for measures to improve a property’s resilience over and above repairs which would normally be covered by insurance.

We will be administering a business rates relief scheme for businesses which have been flooded. We are still seeking to obtain the full detail from Government to enable us to implement the scheme but we anticipate we will be issuing 3 months business rates relief for those businesses which has been flooded. This will be funded by central government.

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We will also be administering the Business Support grant scheme which is intended to help provide assistance to small and medium size businesses to recover from the indirect impacts of flooding such as loss of trade arising from customers not being able to get to the business for example. The Council has been given an initial allocation of £35k which we have challenged and we have been reassured by the Government that this is an initial allocation which will be revised once they have gained a better understanding from the affected councils of the impacts. We are therefore looking to achieve an increased allocation.

We are also looking to take forward certain key issues raised during the flooding, such as sewage and groundwater ingress with relevant bodies to try and improve the situation in the future.

As a professional, competent Chartered Civil Engineer, I am fully experienced in dealing with river flooding and urban drainage capacity problems. With my experience in both the UK and overseas, I will be directing our officers in liaising with the relevant parties for solutions.

Finally, it is also worth mentioning that we have been very impressed and appreciative of the donations made and volunteers who have come forward in the spirit of community cohesion to assist those affected.”

50/14 Urgent Business

There were no urgent items.

Appendix A**The Budget Speech of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Robert Watts**

Mr Mayor – I have great pleasure in presenting the Budget Report for the Municipal Year 2014-15.

Like most of the UK public sector and particularly local government, this Council is facing a challenging financial future. We have had a further £600,000 reduction in revenue support grant funding for 2014-15. Indeed we believe over the next 5 years our revenue support grant funding will reduce by over 80% and possibly by 2020 we will cease to receive any general revenue support grant.

In this context and following on from over a decade of this Council making budget savings year on year, we cannot simply make “salami slicing” efficiencies but need to invest in order to generate new sustainable ongoing streams. It is for this reason I will be setting out in detail a greater use of reserves than has been the case in recent years. The Leader of the main opposition party will not be able to claim this year that the budget speech is too similar to previous ones!

Whilst we welcome the fact that the Government has now built in council tax freeze grant funding into ongoing funding streams, with council tax freeze grant at only 1% and given the pressures we are under, after careful consideration, we are protecting our tax base by proposing an increase of 1.94% for 2014-15.

We are very mindful of the financial pressures on our residents. The proposed increase on an average band D household is equivalent to an increase of £3.41 per annum or just 7 pence extra per week. This is below the current rate of inflation.

The Council's new priorities of Economic Development, Planning and Housing and Council Assets have informed the construction of the budget. Some small growth of £16,500 has been found for the economic development budget; £450,000 of reserves are being used to resource key Staines-upon-Thames development projects which support both the economic development and asset priorities and will deliver ongoing revenue income; pressures on temporary housing have been accommodated within the budget. In the medium term we are looking at how we can use our existing assets to provide additional temporary accommodation which will ease financial pressures on the Council. The recent Peer Review endorsed the importance of ensuring that we adequately resource the delivery of our asset income generation projects and that's what we plan to do.

As is always the case, Cabinet, Management Team and Heads of Service have worked closely together to identify efficiencies and to balance the budget.

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By protecting our income base we are ensuring that the Council can continue to maintain the support it provides to the voluntary sector which by value totals nearly £400,000 per annum.

Interest rates remain at historically low levels and are likely to continue at that level for a while longer. The UK Base rate remains at just half of one percent. Additionally the Government's Funding for Lending scheme had the impact of pushing down the rates banks were prepared to pay councils. This has reduced the Council's ability to continue to deliver the high levels of investment income which it had been achieving in the past and which has previously helped fund the provision of many of the general services for the public. We have responded to this by diversifying our investment strategy to invest in equity backed and property backed funds and corporate bond funds which has helped mitigate the impact of high earning investments maturing. We have been careful to balance risk and return. Currently our core portfolio is achieving an average rate of interest of 4% which in the current climate is an excellent performance, and means we have achieved our objective of offsetting the impact of maturing European Investment Bond investments which had been earning an average of 4% per annum. Whilst we are looking carefully at how we can further broaden our range of investments to improve our investment returns, whilst balancing against risk, it is likely that for some while to come our investment income derived from cash instruments will continue to be constrained.

Additionally we have been using reserves to support the capital programme. We are restraining the scale of the capital programme for 2014-15 to £1million, conscious of our limited capital resources.

Like households and businesses, facing the impact of the recession, the Council has had to tighten its belt and seek out even more savings than the savings it has already delivered over the last few years. From last summer onwards members of the Cabinet have been working closely with the Council's Management Team and heads of service to scrutinise all services' budgets and to identify savings and additional sources of income. This has been a very thorough process. All service teams from Management Team down were asked to identify and deliver savings for the budget. There will continue to be regular quarterly monitoring throughout the coming year to ensure that we successfully deliver these savings.

It might have been tempting for us to have increased our largest fee income source by raising parking fees. However, we have listened to the concerns of our retailers and local businesses and we are not proposing any parking charge increases as part of this budget.

We will seek to build upon our existing partnerships and are putting in place more focused arrangements for driving forward partnership working with other councils and other partners both private and public sector.

The Council has continued to progress in freeing up office space at Knowle Green which can be let out to partners to generate revenue income for the council. We are looking at options with respect to the Council's future

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accommodation in order to minimise costs and maximise income and we are speaking to our friends at Surrey County Council.

The Council has now reverted fully to the national local government employers' pay award annual settlement process. We anticipate that the national award is likely to be 1% again, as was the case for 2013-14. This will be accommodated within any net increase in cost to the council tax payer. If the national award proved to be higher we would find additional offsetting efficiencies in year. In addition we are recommending again (for the sixth year) that councillors forgo any annual increase in allowances.

However we continue to be disappointed that local government is not being allowed to retain a larger proportion of business rates. For this Council potentially we retain 6.5% of the total business rates income we collect. Whilst we retain 20% of any additional business rates collected, we are also exposed to additional risks with respect to bad debts and valuation appeals. We will carefully monitor our collection performance and seek to continue the excellent collection rates achieved in recent years.

Whilst we have achieved a balanced budget for 2014-15 we know the future is looking extremely uncertain and challenging. We know the austerity period is likely to continue until at least 2020 which means we face several more years of reducing funding of probably at least 6 or 7 per cent per annum in terms of support from central government. Indeed by 2020 we may cease to be receiving any Government Revenue Support Grant. The welfare reforms, including creation of universal credit are likely to adversely impact financially on the Council. We are carefully monitoring these impacts.

As a Conservative administration we recognise the need for sound housekeeping and ensuring that our expenditure does not exceed income. With that in mind we fully support the recent motion passed by the Surrey County Council urging Central government to allow us to keep the income we do earn rather than redistributing it to other parts of the country. In the meantime in order to meet this future financial challenge we focus ever more closely on:

- maximising income from assets,
- shared working opportunities
- procurement savings
- flexible use of technology
- looking at how we deliver and prioritise services

A key priority for the Council is actively encouraging economic development. We are actively working to have a strong voice in this region's economic development through working in partnership with the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Through the LEP we are bidding for funds to improve highways infrastructure in the Borough. For example we are supporting a package of infrastructure improvements including widening Staines-upon-Thames bridge in which there is a horrible bottle-neck there every morning and we are also looking at "Runnymede roundabout" at

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Egham. We are also supporting a developing skills bid by Brooklands College, which we think is very, very important.

We undertook a rigorous and extensive economic assessment and consultation with stakeholders which we fed into the Council's first ever Economic Strategy which was approved by Council in December. This strategy has received positive feedback from external experts for its clarity and conciseness. The Economic Development Task Group, which I set up, will monitor the delivery of the Economic Strategy.

We have an action plan in place to deliver the objectives set out in the Economic Strategy. This has been well received by our business partners and demonstrates the serious ambitions Spelthorne has regarding economic prosperity.

I am delighted to say that this year the Spelthorne local economy has been making good progress. Last month we received the news that Spelthorne rose from 61st to 13th in the latest UK Competitiveness index.

However the DCLG funded project for difficult to reach properties remains on schedule with over 800 properties already receiving an enhanced service. The project officer is currently working with A2D to move a large number of properties on to weekly rubbish & recycling collections in Stanwell which is due to take place in the next couple of months, once bin areas have been built. This is in addition to other smaller scale changes in other parts of the borough.

Spelthorne councillors and staff, working in partnership with multiple other agencies, have worked extremely hard responding to the flooding situation. Whilst we are now moving into the recovery phase there is still a lot of work to be done to help affected residents put their lives back together. There are four schemes the Government suggested:

- funding measures to help householders and businesses to improve the resilience of the properties against future flooding
- business rates relief;
- council tax discount;
- a Business Support grant scheme for small and medium size enterprises to help them recover from indirect impacts of flooding.

We will be administering these schemes, which will require sensitive administration and we are still seeking full details from government. In order to give the Council the flexibility to implement an appropriate council tax discount scheme and appropriate business rates scheme we have added in additional recommendations six and seven to the budget report to give delegated authority to the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with myself and the Finance Portfolio holder.

A major issue facing the Council, the residents and businesses of the borough is the process leading up to the national decision on the future provision of additional runway capacity. Heathrow airport provides nearly 9% of the jobs for our employed residents. The future prosperity of Heathrow is vital for our local economy. At the same time we need to represent the interests of our residents to seek to mitigate adverse impacts on particular communities. This

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Council has been more pro-active in providing its residents the opportunity to understand the issues and to engage with the proposers of the different runway schemes. We ran a very well organised meeting in September at Stanwell Moor Village hall for residents and then followed up with a good debate in this chamber last month. The Davies Commission has narrowed the options and is now in a more detailed consultative process. This Council will continue to pro-actively ensure that it represents the interests of its residents and businesses.

The Council has achieved a number of projects for the benefits of the community in these particularly financially challenging times. These include:

- Well-being centre at the Greeno Centre Shepperton to support our residents with mental health issues (net budget cost £158,200).
- Supporting Families – we are held as a beacon of best practice by the Government for our new supporting families in partnership with two other boroughs (total cost in 2014-15 £351,000 all funded by Surrey County Council)
- We have recently acquired ownership from Surrey County Council of three of our parks: Sunbury Park, Manor Park and Laleham Park including Dumsey Meadow, which safeguards a significant number of open spaces or green lungs for our future generations.

We are looking to ensure that we pro-actively maintain the standards of our assets, as we know a planned approach is more cost effective than a reactive one. I am therefore pleased to say that within the Capital Programme for 2014-15 we have restored the £55,600 planned maintenance provision for works on a number of our building assets which was previously in the programme two years ago.

The Council recently undertook a Local Government Association Peer Review which was a useful exercise providing a lot of positive feedback but also highlighting some areas of potential improvement for the Cabinet and Management Team to work on in partnership. The Peer Review concluded that we had sound financial resources and recognised that we had identified the future funding threats.

I would now like to return to the detail of our budget and Council Tax proposals for 2014/15.

After excluding the £31m of housing benefits fully funded from government grant, our gross service revenue expenditure will be £22.6m. Deducting £8.9m of specific grants and fees and charges results in a net service expenditure figure of £13.7m. Our net expenditure next year, taking into account use of specific reserves and investment income is projected to be £12.2 million. Grants of approximately £3.2m and net retained business rates of approximately £2.4m produces external funding of around £5.5 million. This leaves £6.7 million to be met from the Council Tax, which, after taking account of a collection fund surplus of £188k and a tax base of 36,551

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properties at Band D, will require a Band D Council Tax of £178.97 to be levied.

As well as our own part of the Band D Council Tax there will be added the precept from Surrey County Council and the Surrey Police. Like the Council both these organisations have faced a similar decision on council tax freeze and like us they have decided they had no choice but to slightly increase their part of the council tax bill this year. These are: Surrey County Council £1,195.83 (a 1.99% increase) and Police a £211.68 (a 1.99% increase) which gives a total Band D Council tax of £1,586.48, resulting in a 1.98% increase overall.

In conclusion, I would like to place on record my thanks to Councillor Tim Evans for his valued support as the Cabinet Finance Portfolio holder and all other Cabinet Members as well as the Chief Executive and his management team especially Terry Collier and his team and all the staff for their support and assistance in preparing this budget.

I now formally move the recommendations of the Cabinet of 25 February 2014, as shown on page 1 and 2 of the Budget Book, detailing the precepts by the County Council and Surrey Police and the Band D Council Tax levy for the year 2014-15.

Thank you Mr Mayor

Council, 27 February 2014 - continued

Appendix B

The Budget Speech of the Leader of Spelthorne Independent Party, Councillor Frank Ayers

Thank you Mr Mayor and I would also like to thank Councillor Watts for making available the budget book yesterday afternoon, although if he thinks that just over 24 hours is sufficient to take into account all the contents, well that quite surprises me.

Anyway Mr Mayor before I respond to the budget I wish to have it recorded in the minutes that as the Leader of the main opposition party I requested from Councillor Watts prior sight of the budget statement presented this evening so I had sufficient time to give due consideration to the contents and comment fully. Regrettably Council Watts declined my request on personal grounds, stating and I quote 'As you have clearly commented on your latest web announcement that you feel I am incompetent I have no intention of sharing my budget with you.'

My apologies Mr Mayor, I just wanted to get that on the record.

I will now move on to the budget statement. I would like to say what a good sensible budget we have before us this evening. That is what I would like to say. Unfortunately I cannot. This is the second budget presented by Councillor Watts. Many will recall that last year there were a number of errors and omissions within the budget and when Councillor Watts was asked to explain the reasons he had no answers. One such example was the £100,000 previously identified as savings that disappeared completely, without on the night any explanation why that had happened. Of course we now know why that happened, the appointment of an assistant to the Cabinet to the cost of almost £20,000 per annum and the engagement of consultants to deliver improvement plans for Laleham Park at a substantial cost to the Council. That expenditure together equates to almost all the £100,000, previously identified savings and there was no mention of that expenditure in last year's budget.

Now this year we again have a budget which like a string vest is full of holes. We all know it's not what the budget says but it's what it doesn't say. Where the detailed reasons for the proposed use of £450,000 spend from general reserves as outlined in appendix 1 in the green book to fund a number of projects relating to the regeneration of Staines-upon-Thames town centre? What are those projects? What is being proposed? Who and how will it be taken forward? Will most of the £450,000 be paid to consultants? I suspect that the lack of information is one of two reasons. Either they do not know what, how or where exactly projects will be in Staines or like a number of items in the budget, the devil will be in the detail. Why agree to put funding of £100,000 towards the cost of a pilot enforcement scheme in partnership with the Surrey Police and the crime commissioner? I understand there is one other authority taking part in this pilot scheme. Surely it would have been much more sensible to see if that pilot scheme worked before committing any funding, therefore saving £100,000.

Council, 27 February 2014 - continued

I am however pleased to note that in 2.4 of the green book. Sorry I did manage to read some of it in the short time I had it. 'The Council recognises the impact that the flooding has had on a considerable number of homes and businesses in the Borough and some provision is being made to give some form of financial support or be it within the perimeters or funding set out by the government.'

If businesses experienced at least one day flooding can expect at least 3 months business rate relief. I would have liked to have seen the Council take this a stage further and for those residents who have had their homes flooded given 6 months Council tax rate relief. For a great many it will take at least that time for people to get their homes back to where they were before the flooding. How will we pay for it some people will say? Well we can review and put on hold the £450,000 proposed spend on the Staines regeneration projects. I'm sure our residents would appreciate such action, which if you really wanted to have a sensible regeneration programme, then £450,000 would hardly be sufficient especially when you take into account or even into consideration the revenue budget provision figure of £287,000 just for resurfacing work for the Elmsleigh car park. That really highlights that the £450,000 for regeneration will be woefully inaccurate to achieve any satisfactory results. I believe our residents whose homes were flooded would have appreciated such a positive decision being taken giving them 6 months rate relief on their council tax.

Mr Mayor, this recommendation this evening is to approve a 1.94 percent Council tax increase. I suggest this increase would not be necessary, if the Council tax grant of 1 percent on offer from central government had been accepted. Some will argue that if the Council tax grant of 1 percent had been accepted there will be a budget shortfall of approximately £64,000. I believe that by dispensing with the unnecessary Cabinet assistant post and tighter control of spending we could have made up that shortfall. Therefore no Council tax increase would have been needed for 2014-15. I am sure our residents, many whose income have not keeping up with inflation, would have appreciated Spelthorne Borough Council freezing their element of the Council tax for 2014-15 however small that amount may be.

Mr Mayor, the Spelthorne Independent Party cannot support a budget, driven by a party that is losing the trust of its residents and cannot be trusted with the public purse. The budget has left us with more questions than answers and does not offer those residents and businesses, subject to flooding, the support that they deserve. Therefore we will be opposing the recommendation put before us this evening.

Thank you Mr Mayor.

Council, 27 February 2014 - continued

Appendix C

The Budget Speech of the Leader of the Liberal Democrats, Councillor Ian Beardsmore

Thank you very much Mr Mayor.

It is not possible to do a budget report when the figures have only been available for 24 hours. To attempt to do that would produce something careless and slipshod, no doubt adequate for the ruling group, but not me.

It was not as though there was any real reason for it. We all know about the flooding and the wait for government money. That should not hold up the budget book. Any vaguely competent authority would have produced a budget book on time and the lay around would have been the amendments rising from the government figures where needed. Still, that is what a vaguely competent authority would have done and if anyone accuses Spelthorne of being competent however vague is not one of them.

We have lot about the austere drivers that are forcing our hand. Well sorry, when you have been as long around as I have, and no one in this chamber has been around longer, you would actually recognise what this is. This is cheap posturing. A conservative government at the end of its term talking tough on the run up to the next election and lashing out mindlessly at soft targets, in that case local government. The only reason this budget is legal tonight is because the sensible half of the coalition refused to let the ceiling drop below 2 percent and given that something like half of the local authorities in the Country are thought to come in at over 1.5 percent it shows which part of the government actually understands the needs of local government and a great many Councils actually owe a debt of thanks for reigning in Eric Pickles on this issue.

So I am certainly not convinced that future funding is as bad as predicted, but of course it is a good way and good fears for scaring foolish people into doing foolish things. The problem Spelthorne finds itself in is that it's already squandered huge amounts of money. When we sold out our residents and gave birth to that monster that became A2D. We were one of the richest boroughs in the Country 15 years ago. Where is all that money now?

More recently we have squandered many more millions by letting developers off planning infrastructure contributions, which for those who understand are over and above S106 monies. Well it's no wonder then that we're strapped for cash and now we hear from the budget speech from the leader we are going to dig into the reserves, so we can no doubt squander more money. Are we seriously looking into new opportunities to getting more income? Well now we are in the world of SIL and that has ground to a halt allegedly because the government changes. The government produced SIL amendments in 2012, 2013, and 2014 and I'm probably the only person in this Council who is sad enough to look at them.

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Other Councils have been able to implement SIL and get money from developers. And again we come down to the budget issue. The difference between the competent can achieve and what the incompetent fail to achieve.

One thing looking at the budget book, and I have had a brief look at it. I didn't get it until yesterday afternoon. It hit me, and I think Councillor Ayers has kind of stolen my thunder on this, the £287,000 for surfacing the top deck of the Elmsleigh car park and I really would like someone to clarify for me whether the top surface is going to be 14 carat gold or 18 carat gold. It is an outrageous amount of money. Not surprising then, that the long term financial picture is bleak. Not bleak because of future government restrictors in funding. Not bleak because of our capacity to squeeze more money from our hapless residents, but bleak because the people running the Council can't do the job.

We know what will happen. Like foolish people panicked into doing foolish things. The Conservatives will fiddle our housing need and use this to create an artificial demand which will be met by selling a huge chunk of our greenbelt, which this Council just so happens to have a very useful stake in, to the effect of getting one third of the net profit.

Thus they will sell out our environment, they will sell out Sunbury just the same way they sold up and stitched up our tenants 15 years ago. Well I have a far better and far more radical idea than that. Just for once, why don't the Conservatives try and manage our finances competently.

Recommendation of the Cabinet

Cabinet meeting held on 25 March 2014

1. Pensions Policy Statements

1.1 Cabinet considered a report on the new Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS) which comes into effect on 1 April 2014.

1.2 **Resolved to recommend** that Council:

Agrees the Pensions Policy Statements and Flexible Retirement Policy as set out at Appendix 2 and 3 of the report of the Assistant Chief Executive and that the effects of the new scheme are backdated to 1 April 2014 (the date that the new LGPS regulations come into effect).

Councillor Robert Watts
Leader of the Council

24 April 2014

Report from the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet

This is my report as the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet. It is an overview of the main decisions taken by the Cabinet at its meeting on 25 March 2014.

Cabinet meeting on 25 March 2014

1. Annual Grants Awards 2014-15

1.1 We considered a report on the annual grants awards for 2014-15

1.2 We agreed to:

- The Grants awards for 2014-15.
- Note all other support to the voluntary, charity sector.
- Note the performance of our key partners (over £10k per annum).
- Confirm that any residual better neighbourhood grants that are not spent by 28 February 2015 be distributed by the Leader of the Council to other worthy causes.

2. Food and Health and Safety Service Plans 2014-15

2.1 We considered a report on the Council's proposed Food and Health and Safety Service Plans for 2014-15.

2.2 We agreed to adopt the proposed Service Plans for 2014-15.

Councillor Robert Watts
Leader of the Council

24 April 2014

Report from the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet

This is my report as the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet. It is an overview of the main business considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 15 April 2014.

1. Petition on the flooding of the River Ash

- 1.1 Cabinet received and noted a petition on the flooding of the River Ash. Mr. Martin Cherrett spoke on behalf of the petitioners.
- 1.2 The Leader of the Council and Councillors Davis, Forbes-Forsyth, Leighton, Mitchell and Saliagopoulos expressed their heartfelt sympathy and support for all those affected by the recent flooding.
- 1.3 The Leader confirmed that the Council will continue to press the relevant bodies for answers but expects them to attend the public meeting on 5 June, which will give residents the opportunity to ask questions directly of Thames Water and the Environment Agency.

2. Petition on the pilot introduction of cows to Sunbury Park

- 2.1 Cabinet received and noted a petition on the pilot introduction of cows to Sunbury Park. Ms. Catherine Wheatley and Ms. Sophie Langella spoke on behalf of the petitioners, and Ms. Langella also read out statements on behalf of the Association of Professional Dog Walkers and the Kennel Club.
- 2.2 Cabinet agreed to the introduction of a group of grazing cows in Sunbury Park, as a pilot, to assist in park maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity. The pilot will be reviewed after six months.

3. Park properties

- 3.1 We considered a report on the use of the flats in Long Lane Recreation Park and Staines Park Pavilion.
- 3.2 We agreed to:
 - Approve the use of Long Lane Recreation flat and Staines Park Pavilion flat to be used as temporary accommodation.
 - Approve a supplementary capital estimate of £38,450 for work to be carried out to ensure the facilities are fit for purpose.
 - A contingency fund of £5,000 per year for maintenance including any new tenancy handover.
 - Authorise the Assistant Chief Executive, Liz Borthwick, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs. Jean Pinkerton, to approve any issues to enable the flats to be occupied.

- The two flats being managed, at cost, on behalf of Spelthorne Council either by A2Dominion or another, suitable social housing provider.
- 4. External financial provision for Disabled Facilities Grants, Home Improvement Agencies and Handy Person Services**
- 4.1 We considered a report on the proposed new funding arrangements for Disabled Facilities Grants, Home Improvement Agencies and Handy Person Services.
- 4.2 We agreed to:
- Enter into a contract with Surrey County Council, for one year initially, for the management of the Home Improvement Agency Service and Handy Person Service contracts on SCC's behalf
 - The exception to Contract Standing Orders for the need to go out to tender at this time.
- 5. Proposed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire License Fees for 2014-15**
- 5.1 We considered an urgent item on the proposed License fees for 2014-15.
- 5.2 We agreed to approve the proposed fees for 2014-15.

Councillor Robert Watts
Leader of the Council

24 April 2014

Report of the Chairman on the work of the Audit Committee

The Audit Committee held a meeting on 27 March 2014 and considered the following items of business.

1. Corporate Risk Management

The Committee noted and accepted the quarterly update on the Corporate Risk Register.

The Committee received an update from the Head of Street Scene on the provision of internal horticultural expertise to manage the grounds maintenance contract and tree maintenance works.

The Committee requested the attendance of the Head of Corporate Governance at the next Audit Committee on 26 June 2014 to outline the steps taken to mitigate the risks associated with information governance. Additionally the Committee requested the attendance of the Assistant Chief Executive to outline steps taken to improve performance management arrangements.

The Committee also drew attention to the recent flooding and requested the presence of the Risk and Resilience Manager at the Audit Committee to be held on 18 September 2014 to answer queries relating to Emergency Planning.

2. External Audit – Certification of Grants and Returns 2012-2013

The Committee noted a report on the External Auditors Certification of grants and returns 2012/13 from the Council's external auditor KPMG.

3. Internal Audit Plan 2014-2015

The Committee noted the Internal Audit Plan 2014-2015.

4. Committee Work Programme 2014-2015

The Committee approved its Work Programme for the 2014-2015 Municipal year.

Councillor Dipak Gohil
Chairman of the Audit Committee

24 April 2014

Report of the Chairman on the Work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met once since the last Council meeting and this report gives an overview of the issues considered.

1. Financial Reports

- 1.1 The Committee noted two financial monitoring reports setting out expenditure for the period April 2013 to January 2014 and the forecast outturn position for both capital and revenue spend.
- 1.2 In relation to capital, £1.279m had been spent to date with a projected outturn spend anticipated of £1.540m which represented 81% of the revised budget.
- 1.3 In respect of revenue, the forecast outturn at net expenditure level was £12.368m. After taking into account the use of carry forwards, the net position resulted in a £214k underspend.
- 1.4 The Committee noted the impact of the flooding on the revenue budget and the types of expenditure which the Council could claim back from central Government.
- 1.5 It also noted the measures the Council was taking to assist residents and businesses affected by the recent flooding, but was concerned that it wasn't clear whether there was any support forthcoming to assist residents and businesses after the Council's 3 month relief/ discount period ended, as it was aware that many would not be able to reoccupy their property within that timescale.

2. Leader's Task Groups

- 2.1 The Committee noted the progress that had been made with work on two of the three Leader's Task Groups looking at Economic Development and Fixed Assets.
- 2.2 The Committee was pleased to hear directly from three members of the business community who were very positive about their experience of working with the Council; its willingness to involve the business community, the rapport built with staff and the support it had given to their activities. They also gave encouraging feedback about how the Economic Strategy had assisted with their forward planning.

3. Planning Enforcement – update

- 3.1 The Committee noted an update on the revision to the planning enforcement list.
- 3.2 The Committee agreed that the confidential version of the list, which would be sent to all councillors monthly, should be circulated on gold paper to make clear to members the confidential nature of its contents.

4. Housing Issues – update

- 4.1 The Committee noted an update on the housing and welfare reform issues affecting Spelthorne and thanked the housing team for their creative approach to solving problems.
- 4.2 The Committee asked the officers to highlight to Kwasi Kwarteng, MP in a briefing note, the dilemma they faced between encouraging those affected by benefit cap/under occupation to seek solutions such as return to employment or downsizing

versus managing the discretionary housing payment budget and safeguarding it for future years.

- 4.3 Members expressed concern about the alleged approach of A2Dominion in relation to service charges which was putting people in arrears and at risk of homelessness. I agreed to include this as an item on the Committee's future work programme.

5. Localism Act

- 5.1 The Committee noted the work of the sub-group on the progress of the working party looking at what the Council was doing to address Localism.

- 5.2 The Committee discussed how it might engage local community groups in Localism and agreed it would be useful to raise the opportunities available to communities with representatives of Residents' Associations at the next meeting. In the meantime the working party was asked to produce an 'easy guide' to Community Rights for residents in advance of the next meeting.

Councillor Philippa Broom

Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24 April 2014

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN ON THE WORK OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Planning Committee has met twice since the previous report was prepared for the Council meeting. This report therefore gives an overview of the key items considered by the Committee at the meetings on 12 March and 9 April 2014.

The meeting on **12 March** dealt with 9 items. Public speaking took place on 6 of the items with 6 people taking the opportunity to address the Committee. The key items considered by the Committee were:

- The granting of permission for a Costco warehouse club building at Units A1 and A2, Hanworth Road, Sunbury.
- The refusal of planning permission and listed building consent for the conversion of the Old Fire Station building, and erection of a block of 13 flats on land to the rear, and alongside, the Old Town Hall Staines.
- The granting of planning permission for the erection of 14 houses and flats at The Three Crowns PH site in Long Lane, Stanwell.

The meeting on **9 April** dealt with 3 items. There was no public speaking on any them. The key items considered by the Committee related to:

- The granting of planning permission for the redevelopment of the contractors yard at 46-48 Littleton Road Ashford to provide 11 dwellings.
- The Committee also granted permission for the installation of a concrete BMX /Skate park in the Long Lane Recreation Ground Stanwell.

Councillor Richard Smith – Ainsley
Chairman of the Planning Committee

24 April 2014

