



## CANDIDATE BRIEFING DOCUMENT

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**POSITION:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**CLIENT NAME:** SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

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***“ ‘Spelthorne Means Business’ is not just a slogan but an attitude which underpins everything SBC does”***

Cllr Ian Harvey  
Leader, Spelthorne Borough Council

**8<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

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**“This is an exciting career opportunity for an ambitious, dynamic and entrepreneurial leader to advance their career as the Chief Executive of one of the UK’s most dynamic and forward-thinking boroughs”**

### Executive Summary

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Spelthorne Borough Council (SBC) serves a population of 98,000 residents on the Surrey/London border. SBC is responsible for open spaces, environmental services, cleansing, planning, licensing, leisure, housing and, fundamentally, economic development to promote Spelthorne as a centre for business. Our Community Leadership role is at the heart of everything we do.

SBC has a growing reputation for being commercially aware and as a result, increasingly financially sustainable. The Council recently concluded the largest local authority property deal in the UK with the purchase and leaseback of the £385m BP Campus in Sunbury. The focus is now on building and maximising the Council’s asset base and investment income with a view to further improving the Council’s financial self-sufficiency in light of reducing central government funding. This is crucial in protecting the services residents need and deserve.

SBC is one of the most dynamic, entrepreneurial, and forward-thinking local authorities in the UK. With the current Chief Executive (CX) retiring shortly, SBC are seeking a commercially aware and charismatic individual with natural leadership and people skills.

### The Opportunity

Having made significant progress with its investment strategy, SBC is in an enviable position. However there is much more work to do to become independent of government grant and financially sustainable for the long term. Spelthorne’s economic area is prosperous and attractive. It is served by key transport links (M3/M25) and with close proximity to Central London and Heathrow, Spelthorne has a strong pro-business reputation. With a solid, proactive and decisive political leadership which combines an entrepreneurial ‘can-do’ approach with a clear vision for the future, the new CX will be an important part of the leadership team, helping shape and deliver SBC’s strategic goals.

### SBC’s Strategic Priorities

- Financial stability
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Clean and safe environment

### The successful candidate will have:

- A clear understanding of the pressures on, and expectations of, a modern ‘go ahead’ local authority
- A **strong and proven** local government leadership track record blended with private sector experience and business acumen
- An understanding of long-term property investment

- The ability to work closely with a highly entrepreneurial and creative senior political leadership team on complex asset related and financial matters
- An ability to build, manage and maximise relationships across both public and private sectors as well as amongst staff, Members and external partners

SBC is rapidly gaining a reputation for being entrepreneurial and creative as it seeks to build a sustainable financial future. The role of CX is pivotal in ensuring SBC achieves its corporate priorities. For an ambitious, dynamic and charismatic CX, this is an outstanding opportunity to advance his/her career and gain significant leadership experience at the helm of this well-regarded local authority.

## **Detailed Role and Person Specification: Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive is Head of SBC'S Paid Service. He/she is the main link between Council Members and Officers, promoting positive and open communication and ensuring strategic priorities are implemented in an appropriate and accountable manner. The CX will also act as the principal advisor on matters of general policy, giving advice at Council and Committee meetings.

### **Key purpose of the role**

The CX will be both outward looking and organisation focussed. He/she will represent the Council's priorities and interests. The role demands a natural leader with resilience, commitment, a commercial mind, the ability to influence others and easily command respect.

In conjunction with the political leadership the CX represents, and negotiates on behalf of, the Council with external bodies and leads the development of effective and productive partnerships — setting the right balance between the Council's own objectives and shared goals with other organisations.

As Head of Paid Service, the CX is responsible for the performance management of senior staff, ensuring that the corporate priorities are successfully delivered.

### **Key corporate accountabilities include:**

- Leading SBC's Management Team; working closely with Members; leading an exciting corporate plan for the future success of the Council
- Trusted advisor to the Councillors, providing impartial advice in support of the Council's decision making process
- Promoting SBC and its reputation nationally, regionally and locally, as a leader in local government. As the context of the Council changes with a more commercial approach, this will mean building networks with a wider diverse range of stakeholders
- Developing and maintaining effective partnerships with other public and private sector bodies in Surrey and beyond
- Being accountable for delivery of excellent services to the Borough's residents, businesses, strategic partners and visitors

### **Specific responsibilities include:**

- **Working with Elected Members:** To develop and sustain close positive working relationships with elected Members to ensure political leadership priorities are effectively implemented
- **Policy Advisor:** To be SBC's principal advisor on matters of general policy and to ensure that the correct advice is available at Council and Committee meetings
- **Proactive Planning:** To think and plan ahead so that SBC policy is fully informed and that policies are clear and reflect SBC's corporate objectives, and supported by achievable and well managed work programmes

- **Leadership:** To provide professional leadership for SBC ensuring that sufficient financial, human and other resources are available to discharge the authority's statutory functions. To provide clear leadership direction with partners to deliver improved outcomes for SBC and its residents
- **Resource Management:** To be ultimately accountable for SBC's budget and to ensure that all services delivered or procured represent effective value for money whilst maintaining high standards
- **Performance and Quality:** To ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, appropriateness, availability and customer focus of services, including putting in place arrangements to effectively monitor Council and contract services
- **Creating Links and Partnerships:** To initiate and develop links and partnerships with other local authorities, Central Government, local businesses, public and voluntary sector organisations in order to achieve the Council's objectives
- **Electoral Matters:** To act as SBC's Returning Officer

**Key knowledge and skill requirements:**

- An in-depth understanding of local authority procedures and functions
- An outstanding and innovative manager able to demonstrate the ability to lead and enthuse a complex public sector service organisation at all levels, whilst being prepared to take tough decisions when necessary
- Appreciate, and be excited by, the opportunities in Spelthorne, supported by geographic location, communications, business opportunities, further regeneration opportunities, sound and expanding financial base, and political support to grow the Council
- An ability to build effective teams and relationships which are not dependent on structure and able to lead by example
- Significant business acumen, and an ability to think strategically whilst also getting involved in detail where necessary
- Ability to evaluate competing budgetary and service priorities and ensure that services are co-ordinated to achieve maximum effectiveness and value for money
- Be able to work closely with Elected Members of all parties, in particular providing sound, impartial and proactive advice on a wide range of issues
- Being able to demonstrate a customer focused approach to management of the Council and to ensure this is achieved across all service areas
- An exceptional all round communicator who is able to engage proactively with the Spelthorne community and external organisations
- A charismatic and inspirational leader and public speaker who is able to act as the "front end" of Spelthorne. Comfortable presenting and interacting at all levels, from residents' associations to Government Ministers or Managing Directors of multinationals

- Be fully informed on the current and future issues to be faced which affect local government and the financial, legal and political context of public sector management.

### In Conclusion

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This is an exciting opportunity for a dynamic, entrepreneurial leader to advance his/her career by leading one of the most dynamic and forward-thinking boroughs in the UK. On a journey of change and having made significant progress on its way towards a financially sustainable future, Spelthorne is in an enviably strong position. The new CX will therefore have the opportunity to lead the Council towards its strategic goals and influence outcomes.

*“Spelthorne Means Business”* is not just a slogan. It is an attitude which underpins everything SBC does. With a strong focus on creating a sustainable future, the new CX will have a unique opportunity to work with SBC’s political leadership to bring many of the benefits of the private sector into local government.

For an initial confidential discussion about this exciting and unique opportunity, please contact **Sebastian Lowe** of Norman Broadbent Group on 020 7484 0049 / 07748 931911 or via [sebastian.lowe@normanbroadbent.com](mailto:sebastian.lowe@normanbroadbent.com)