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**Chief Executive**

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Our Ref: PGH/Cabinet  
Date: 19 September 2014

## Notice of Meeting

### CABINET

**Date:** Tuesday 30 September 2014

**Time:** 19.00hrs

**Place:** Council Chamber, Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames

<b>Members of the Cabinet</b>	<b>Cabinet member areas of responsibility</b>
R.L. Watts (Chairman)	Leader of the Council, Strategy and Human Resources
P. Forbes-Forsyth (Vice-Chairman)	Deputy Leader, Community Safety, Young People, Leisure and Culture
T.J.M. Evans	Finance
N. St. J. Gething	Economic Development and Fixed Assets
V. J. Leighton	Planning and Corporate Development
A. J. Mitchell	Environment (including Parks and Waste Management)
D. Patel	Parking services and ICT
J. M. Pinkerton OBE	Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Independent Living
J. R. Sexton	Communications and Procurement



## AGENDA

Description	Page Number
<b>1. Apologies for absence</b>	
To receive any apologies for non-attendance.	
<b>2. Minutes</b>	
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2014.	1 - 6
<b>3. Disclosures of Interest</b>	
To receive any disclosures of interest from members in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for members.	
<b>4. Minutes and recommendations of the Local Plan Working Party</b>	
To consider the minutes and recommendations of the Local Plan Working Party held on 3 September 2014.	7 - 8
<b>5. Capital monitoring April - July 2014</b>	
Councillor Evans	9 - 13
<b>6. Revenue monitoring April - July 2014</b>	
Councillor Evans	14 - 26
<b>7. Development of a Housing Strategy for Spelthorne Borough Council</b>	
Councillor Pinkerton OBE	27 - 118
<b>8. Capital funding for housing opportunities</b>	
Councillor Pinkerton OBE	119 - 120
<b>9. Employment monitoring</b>	
Councillor Watts	121 - 131
<b>10. Recovery Policy for Spelthorne Borough Council</b>	
Councillor Evans	132 - 143
<b>11. Request for delegated authority for Environmental Health</b>	
Councillor Watts	144 - 156
<b>12. Leader's Announcements</b>	
Councillor Watts	

**13. Issues for future meetings**

Members are requested to identify issues to be considered at future meetings.

**14. Urgent Items**

To consider any items which the Chairman considers as urgent.

## **Minutes of Cabinet**

**15 July 2014**

### **Present:**

Councillor R.L. Watts, Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Cabinet and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Human Resources  
Councillor P. Forbes-Forsyth, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Young People, Leisure and Culture  
Councillor T.J.M. Evans, Cabinet Member for Finance  
Councillor N. Gething, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Fixed Assets  
Councillor V.J. Leighton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Corporate Development  
Councillor T. Mitchell, Cabinet Member for Environment  
Councillor D. Patel, Cabinet Member for Parking services and ICT  
Councillor J.M. Pinkerton OBE, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Independent Living  
Councillor J. Sexton, Cabinet Member for Communications and Procurement

### **2079. Minutes**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 24 June 2014 were agreed as correct.

### **2080. Disclosures of Interest**

There were none.

### **2081. \*Replacement payment system for Elmsleigh surface and multi-storey car parks – Key Decision**

Cabinet considered a report on a request to recommend that Council agrees to capital funding of an additional £40,000 to allow installation of a replacement payment system for Elmsleigh multi-storey and surface car parks.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** that Council agrees to capital funding of an additional £40,000 to allow installation of a replacement payment system for Elmsleigh multi-storey and surface car parks.

#### **Reason for the decision:**

Cabinet noted that the proposed new payment system will allow improved customer facilities and payment methods, including online payments.

### **2082. Leisure Centre Needs Analysis**

Cabinet considered a report on the future provision of leisure centre facilities in Spelthorne.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet:

- Notes the needs analysis report which indicates a requirement for the provision of a leisure facility.
- Requests a specification for a feasibility study.
- Approves the marketing of the specification.
- Decides on the future direction on the basis of the specification.

**Reason for the decision:**

Cabinet noted that a feasibility study would potentially indicate the future direction to be taken in this project.

**2083. Developing a Housing Strategy for Spelthorne Borough Council**

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed development of a Housing Strategy for the Borough.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet:

- Notes the report and agrees the recommendations set out in Section 9.0 (Appendix 1) and the action plan.
- Agrees a policy and procedure for the discharge of the homelessness duty into the private rented sector as set out in Appendix 3.
- Agrees to consult partners and the public on the draft housing strategy.
- Requests that officers, in consultation with the portfolio holder, prepare a report for October's Council detailing practical and financial solutions to the shortage of temporary, private sector rented properties, as outlined in Appendix 1, para. 6.7 of the report.

**Reason for the decision:**

Cabinet noted the urgent need to increase both the supply of temporary accommodation and the availability of affordable private rented sector accommodation.

**2084. Contract for the monitoring of calls from the Spelthorne Alarm Network (SPAN)**

Cabinet considered a report on the need to renew the current contract which is due to expire in September 2014.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet agrees to delegate the appointment of a suitable contractor to the Head of Housing and Independent Living in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

**Reason for the decision:**

Cabinet noted that, by agreeing on this occasion to an exemption to the requirements of Contract Standing Orders, this would allow a full evaluation of all potential providers in the market and ensure that the best quality solution is provided for the best price.

**2085. Energy Procurement – Laser 2016-2020**

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed continuation of the purchase in advance of Spelthorne's energy needs.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet supports officers' recommendation and continues to purchase in advance with Laser for 2016-2020.

**Reason for the decision:**

Cabinet noted that, as well as saving the Council money through lower energy prices, Laser also saves the Council resources and time spent on monitoring and searching for energy providers.

**2086. Local Government Association (LGA) report on Economic Development**

Cabinet considered an update on the progress of economic development in Spelthorne.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet notes the report and endorses it to the effect that officers will report back to a future Cabinet with specific recommendations and business case for additional resources as required.

**2087. Bailiff Contract Review**

Cabinet considered a report on a proposal to extend the current Bailiff contract.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet agrees to extend the existing Bailiff contract for Chandlers until 30 June 2018.

**Reason for the decision:**

Cabinet noted that Chandlers already provide an effective, efficient service and value for money.

**2088. Review of Discretionary Compensation Policy (redundancy payments)**

Cabinet considered a report on the need to update the Discretionary Compensation Policy to reflect changes in the Local Government Pension Scheme from 1 April 2014.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet notes the current arrangements and agrees any changes required as a result of the new Local Government Pension Scheme.

**Reason for the decision:**

Cabinet noted

**2089. Leader's Announcements**

The following are the latest service updates from various Council departments.

The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester visited Surrey on Tuesday 8 July to hear about the devastating floods which affected the County earlier in the year and to meet the staff, agencies, and volunteers who helped residents. The couple visited the Hythe Centre in Runnymede before visiting some of the worst hit flood areas in Runnymede and Spelthorne and then moving onto Spelthorne's Council Offices. There the couple met local councillors and staff who provided essential support such as taking calls from residents and providing emergency accommodation and sandbags. They also spent time with the volunteers who helped their communities during the critical phase and subsequent clean-up efforts.

The Communications team is increasing the resource dedicated to social media such as Twitter and Facebook for a trial period of six months. It is hoped the trial will improve

awareness of Council news and events and help residents to feel more closely involved with the Council.

Communications is continuing to work with Brooklands Radio to arrange interviews with Cabinet Members. Interviews with Cllrs Watts, Forbes-Forsyth, Evans and Sexton have already been aired and the next interview, with Cllr Nick Gething, can be heard at 1pm on Wednesday 16 July.

Team Spelthorne celebrated a successful weekend at the 18<sup>th</sup> annual P&G Surrey Youth Games. Young people from across the Borough represented Team Spelthorne in 28 teams at the weekend event at Surrey Sports Park in Guildford. The team won the Surrey County Playing Fields Fair Play Award as well as silver medals in girls' tag rugby and under nine girls' football. Bronze medals were won in tennis, Boccia and lacrosse. Nine judo competitors also picked up individual medals.

The Independent Living team recently held a vote to choose a name for the recently formed high needs group at the Greeno Centre in Shepperton. The chosen name, OPAL (older people actively living), was the clear winner. The group now has approximately 50 members attending each week and a number of successful trips and BBQs have already been held. The team is looking at the possibility of introducing a similar group at the Fordbridge Centre in Ashford.

As part of a community safety initiative, the Council has funded a replacement for the radio system which links retailers, pubs and restaurants with Police and the town's CCTV. The new digital radio link will enable shop staff to warn each other about suspicious behaviour and the presence of known shoplifters in the town centre. Around 75 shops pubs and restaurants have already signed up to the scheme.

Two tennis courts at Stanwell Recreation Ground have undergone refurbishment thanks to a grant of £21,000 given to Spelthorne Council by the SITA Trust. The work has included a new tarmac surface being laid, the courts being painted and remarked, new posts, sockets and nets and a new chain-link fence around the perimeter of the courts. By way of celebration, free coaching sessions for adults, juniors and wheelchair users will be provided by Tennis Focus Academy on Saturday 19 July.

Staines Cemetery, Sunbury Cemetery and Sunbury Walled Garden have been entered into South & South East in Bloom for the third year in a row; the judging took place this week and the initial feedback has been very positive. The judge was very pleased with the hard work carried out at all sites and was impressed by the close working relationship between Spelthorne Council, Lotus Landscapes and the Friends of Sunbury Park. Last year Sunbury Cemetery and the Sunbury Walled Garden were awarded first place in their respective categories; we will find out in the autumn how well out entries did this year.

Customer Services is introducing some improvements to the telephony system at the end of July which will provide customers with more functionality including the option to request a call back when phone lines are busy.

The Council is in discussions with the Surrey Social Services team to see if they are interested in renting more space on the ground floor to provide a hub of services for residents.

The Council has secured the conviction of an Ashford woman for fraudulently claiming Housing and Council Tax Benefit and Income Support. Joanne Hodgson of Metcalf Road in Ashford was convicted at Guildford Crown Court on 27 June and given a 26 week prison



sentence which has been suspended for two years. Ms Hodgson had claimed she was a lone parent but in reality was living with her partner. The fraud, committed over a six year period, resulted in an overpayment to her of £48,717.

The Council also secured the conviction of Mrs Aysoo Ruhomaun of Staines-upon-Thames who failed to declare a change in her circumstances (receiving an occupational pension). This affected her Benefit claim and resulted in her being overpaid approximately £5,800 in Housing and Council Tax Benefit over a 33 month period. She was given a conditional discharge for 12 months and has already repaid most of the money.

All of the last 10 appeals against decisions made regarding planning applications have been dismissed - an indication of the quality of the original decision making.

All caravans and vehicles on land adjoining Sheep Walk in Shepperton have now been removed following extensive enforcement action by the Council.

Sir Bob Kerslake, the Permanent Secretary for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) visited Spelthorne Council at the end of June to see the benefits of the Government's Troubled Families Programme in supporting Spelthorne families. During his visit Sir Bob met with the Supporting Families team and heard about their work and success in helping families control their debts and return to work and school.

All office moves at Knowle Green are now completed.

#### **2090. Issues for Future Meetings**

There were none.

#### **2091. Urgent items**

There were none.

#### **NOTES:-**

- (1) *Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are reminded that under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule, the "call-in" procedure shall not apply to recommendations the Cabinet makes to the Council. The matters on which recommendations have been made to the Council, if any, are identified with an asterisk [\*] in the above Minutes.***
- (2) *Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are entitled to call in decisions taken by the Cabinet for scrutiny before they are implemented, other than any recommendations covered under (1) above.***
- (3) *Within three working days of the date on which a decision of the Cabinet or a Cabinet Member is published, not less than three members [one of whom must be the Chairman] of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are able to "call in" a decision;***

- (4) **To avoid delay in considering an item "called in", an extraordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be convened within seven days of a "call in" being received if an ordinary meeting is not scheduled in that period;**
- (5) **When calling in a Cabinet decision for review the members doing so should in their notice of "call in":-**  
**Outline their reasons for requiring a review;**
- **Indicate any further information they consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to have before it in order to conduct a review in addition to the written report made by officers to the Cabinet;**
  - **Indicate whether, where the decision was taken collectively by the Cabinet, they wish the Leader or his nominee (who should normally be the Cabinet Member) or where the decision was taken by a Cabinet Member, the member of the Cabinet making the decision, to attend the committee meeting; and**
  - **Indicate whether the officer making the report to the Cabinet or the Cabinet Member taking the decision or his/her representative should attend the meeting.**
- (6) **The deadline of three working days for "call in" by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the above decisions by the Cabinet is the close of business on 18 July 2014**

## **Local Plan Working Party**

**Wednesday 3 September 2014**

**Present:**

Cllr I.J Beardsmore  
Cllr T.J.M Evans  
Cllr G.E Forsbrey  
Cllr A. Friday  
Cllr V. Leighton  
Cllr R. Smith-Ainsley

**1. Apologies**

Cllr R. Watts

**2. Election of Chairman**

Cllr R. Smith-Ainsley was elected as Chairman

**3. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of 6 January 2014 were agreed.

**4. Report of the Assistant Chief Executive**

A PowerPoint presentation was given by the Head of Planning setting out the need for a review of the Local Plan.

It was explained that a Local Plan is a statutory requirement, is necessary to make planning decisions and central to the Council being an effective Local Planning Authority.

Given the changes to the planning regime through the abolition of regional strategies, the introduction of the Duty to Co-operate and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and emerging evidence on changing housing needs, it was explained why the Local Plan required reviewing now.

Officers set out that any new Local Plan will have to be based on robust evidence, part of which will be required to identify development needs and then meeting them, whilst taking account of sustainability and public consultation.

Officers explained that if agreement was given for a review of a new Local Plan, they would report back to a later LPWP for it to consider a timetable and resource issues.

It was also explained that work is currently underway between Surrey

Districts on strategic planning issues which will form an important part of meeting the Duty to Co-operate.

Councillors were also made aware of the work being undertaken jointly between Spelthorne & Runnymede on defining the extent of a Housing Market Area for the two Boroughs. Agreement was being sought by Officers to continue this work which will assist the Council in understanding its housing needs.

Officers also gave an update on the progress of CIL setting out that the CIL Examiners 'fact check' report was due and that a final report would be issued for publication within the next couple of weeks.

The Planning Monitoring Report 2014 was presented as Appendix F to the main report. An amendment was suggested by Cllr Evans that Table 1 of the Planning Monitoring Report be amended to more clearly set out land designations and their percentages within the Borough.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet be recommended to agree:

- a) To commence the preparation of a new Local Plan for the Borough;
- b) That Officers report back as early as possible on a proposed outline timetable/work programme and resource implications;
- c) To fully co-operate with other Surrey Districts on strategic planning issues and to a Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix E);
- d) As part of the Duty to Co-operate, to progress housing market assessment work with Runnymede and other authorities as required;
- e) To publish the Planning Monitoring Report 2014 subject to amendment to Table 1 and any other minor factual corrections.

**Cabinet****30 September 2014**

<b>Title</b>	Capital Monitoring Report		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To note		
<b>Report Author</b>	Adrian Flynn		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Tim Evans	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Value for money Council		
<b>Cabinet Values</b>	Accountability		
<b>Recommendations</b>	To note the current spend position.		

**1. Key issues**

- 1.1 Attached as Appendix A & B is the actual spend to date on capital covering the period April to July 2014.
- 1.2 For the period ending July 2014, capital expenditure including commitments was £347k (40%) of the original budget and (24%) of the revised budget.
- 1.3 The projected outturn shows that we are anticipating to spend £1.401m which represents (96.7%) of the revised budget.
- 1.4 The difference between the original budget and the revised budget is £585,137. The £585,137 is broken down as £418,551 worth of carry forwards from 2013/14 and £166,586 worth of supplementary estimates.
- 1.5 Transactions involving all projects are reviewed on a regular basis throughout the year to ensure that they meet the definition of capital expenditure as laid down by our external auditors KPMG and accounting standards. Any transaction that fails to meet the capital definition will be transferred to revenue.

**1.6 Significant Developments/variances**

- (a) Housing Locata Project: The budget of £24,000 was carried forward from 2013/14 and the project is scheduled to be completed in Sept 2014.
- (b) Kenyngton Manor Pavilion: (£33k) the funding application has being submitted to the football foundation with an estimated decision date of the 29<sup>th</sup> Sept 2014. Once a decision has being made, the upgrade plans can proceed to tender stage with the works completed by March 2015.

- (c) Parks Properties (£38.5k) Works have being completed on the flats within Long Lane Recreation ground and in Staines Park Pavilion.
- (d) Greeno Centre reroofing: (£160k) The project is at tender stage with an estimated completion date of the end of 2014.
- (e) As per the head of Asset Management, there is the potential for a future supplementary estimate being submitted for the redevelopment of the Knowle Green site project.

**2. Options analysis and proposal**

- 2.1 Cabinet are asked to note the current spend position.

**3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 Any underspend on the approved capital programme enables the authority to invest the monies to gain additional investment income or can be used to fund additional schemes.

**4. Other considerations**

- 4.1 Schemes which are currently incomplete and require a budget carry forward may have contractual obligations which could leave us liable to litigation if they are not allowed the funds to complete the works.

**5. Timetable for implementation**

- 5.1 Bi-monthly monitoring reports are prepared for Management Team and incorporate revised actual figures.

**Background papers:**

**Appendices: A &B**

## Appendix A

## CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT AT 31 JULY 2014

Portfolio Member	ORIGINAL BUDGET	CARRY FORWARDS	SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE	REVISED BUDGET	ACTUALS YTD	COMMITMENTS	MANAGERS PROJECTED OUTTURN	MANAGERS PROJECTION TO REVISED BUDGET
Cllr Pinkerton - Housing, Health, Wellbeing & Ind Living	222,600	41,451	(11,914)	252,137	1,557	37,588	252,137	-
Cllr Mitchell - Environment	50,000	62,100	-	112,100	34,649	20,000	112,100	-
Cllr Gething - Parks and Assets	448,600	23,300	38,500	510,400	4,316	25,072	515,188	4,788
Cllr Patel - ICT & Parking Services	143,800	246,700	40,000	430,500	69,361	100,412	427,228	(3,272)
Cllr Forbes-Forsyth - Comm Safety & Young People	-	45,000	100,000	145,000	53,955	-	95,000	(50,000)
	<b>865,000</b>	<b>418,551</b>	<b>166,586</b>	<b>1,450,137</b>	<b>163,837</b>	<b>183,073</b>	<b>1,401,653</b>	<b>(48,484)</b>

## Appendix B

## CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT AT 31 JULY 2014

Portfolio Member / Service Head	Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget	Carry Forwards	Supplementary Estimate	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD	Commitments	Managers Projected Outturn	Managers Projection to Revised Budget	Comments
<b><u>Housing Investment Programme</u></b>											
<b><u>Cllr Pinkerton - Housing, Health, Wellbeing &amp; Independent Living</u></b>											
Lee O'Neil	40203	Disabled Facilities Mandatory	450,000	-	-	450,000	78,188	-	450,000	-	On target to spend budget. DCLG have awarded SBC an additional grant of £11,914 No spend likely until much later in financial year
Lee O'Neil	40204	Disabled Facilities Discretion	29,600	-	-	29,600	-	-	29,600	-	
Lee O'Neil		Less Specified Capital Grant	(285,000)	-	(11,914)	(296,914)	(78,188)	-	(296,914)	-	
		<b>Net Cost of Disabled Facilities Grants</b>	<b>194,600</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(11,914)</b>	<b>182,686</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>182,686</b>	<b>-</b>	
Lee O'Neil	40209	Home Improvement Agency grant	28,000	-	52,705	80,705	-	80,454	80,705	-	Annual Invoice to be received later in financial year
		HIA Funding	-	-	(52,705)	(52,705)	-	(52,705)	(52,705)	-	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>28,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>28,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,749</b>	<b>28,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Total For HIP</b>			<b>222,600</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(11,914)</b>	<b>210,686</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,749</b>	<b>210,686</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b><u>Other Capital Programme</u></b>											
<b><u>Cllr Pinkerton - Housing, Health, Wellbeing &amp; Independent Living</u></b>											
Deborah Ashman	42271	Fordbridge Day Centre	-	20,600	-	20,600	-	-	20,600	-	Meeting with Runnymede at end of August to commence project. Works to reception area anticipated to be completed by December 2014
Deborah Ashman		External Funding	-	(3,149)	-	(3,149)	-	-	(3,149)	-	
Deborah Ashman	42014	Housing Locata	-	24,000	-	24,000	1,557	9,839	24,000	-	Project anticipated to be completed by the end of September 2014
		<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>41,451</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>41,451</b>	<b>1,557</b>	<b>9,839</b>	<b>41,451</b>	<b>-</b>	
Sandy Muirhead	41623	Insulation (SALIX)	-	-	5,330	5,330	1,908	3,422	5,330	-	SALIX project monies from SALIX fund complete by March 2015
Sandy Muirhead		Salix Funding	-	-	(5,330)	(5,330)	(1,908)	(3,422)	(5,330)	-	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b><u>Cllr Mitchell - Environment</u></b>											
Jackie Taylor	41620	Wheelie Bins	50,000	-	-	50,000	34,649	20,000	50,000	-	Budget for the year will be fully spent
		<b>Total</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>34,649</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
Lee O'Neil	41314	Air Quality	-	25,100	-	25,100	-	-	25,100	-	£25,100 is the outstanding balance on a DEFRA grant to be used for air quality action planning purposes. Project expected to be completed by March 2015
		<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,100</b>	<b>-</b>	
Sandy Muirhead	42047	Bring Site Initiative	-	37,000	-	37,000	-	-	37,000	-	Additional bins to be purchased to improve the 10 most difficult sites
		<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b><u>Cllr Gething - Parks and Assets</u></b>											
Sandy Muirhead	41006	Kenyngton Manor Pavilion	33,000	-	-	33,000	-	-	33,000	-	Funding application has been submitted to the football foundation, with an estimated decision date of 29th September 2014. Runnymede asset team have drawn up plans and provided works estimates. If application is successful further plans will need to be drawn and project will go out to tender
Sandy Muirhead	41026	Laleham Park Upgrade	200,000	-	-	200,000	-	-	200,000	-	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>233,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>233,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>233,000</b>	<b>-</b>	This project is currently being redefined to address changes to the project, and a report is being prepared for the September Cabinet Briefing as to the scope and future of this project



## CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT AT 31 JULY 2014

Portfolio Member / Service Head	Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget	Carry Forwards	Supplementary Estimate	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD	Commitments	Managers Projected Outturn	Managers Projection to Revised Budget	Comments
Dave Phillips	41015	Runnymede Estates	55,600	-	-	55,600	-	9,600	55,600	-	Capitalised Planned Maintenance to be transferred at end of year
Dave Phillips	41028	Fire Alarm Systems	-	-	-	-	(1,345)	1,345	-	-	Special creditor waiting to clear retention payment
Dave Phillips	41031	Fencing	-	-	-	-	(1,623)	1,624	-	-	Special creditor waiting to clear retention payment
Dave Phillips	41618	Esso Site Stanwell	-	20,000	-	20,000	-	-	20,000	-	Purpose of the project is to renovate and clean up Short Lane open space. Confirmation received that no further testing of site is necessary if used for car parking. Soft market testing for car park operators commenced
Dave Phillips	42018	Parks Properties	-	-	38,500	38,500	9,248	-	38,500	-	Works have been completed at Long Lane Recreation flat & is now occupied. Work commencing on Staines Park Pavilion flat, should be completed by end of November 2014
Dave Phillips	42043	Renewal of Toilet Facilities	-	3,300	-	3,300	8,088	0	8,088	4,788	Works to Toilet facilities have been completed
Dave Phillips	42050	KG Reception & Other Moves	-	-	-	-	(1,652)	4,104	-	-	Special creditor waiting to clear retention payment
Dave Phillips	42053	Knowle Green Heating	-	-	-	-	(8,400)	8,400	-	-	Special creditor waiting to clear retention payment
Dave Phillips	42046	Greeno Centre Re-roofing	160,000	-	-	160,000	-	-	160,000	-	Out to tender. Anticipated to be completed by end of the financial year
<b>Total</b>			<b>215,600</b>	<b>23,300</b>	<b>38,500</b>	<b>277,400</b>	<b>4,316</b>	<b>25,072</b>	<b>282,188</b>	<b>4,788</b>	
<b>CLlr Patel - ICT &amp; Parking Services</b>											
Helen Dunn	43003	New Software	20,000	-	-	20,000	1,868	-	20,000	-	Will be spent throughout the year on various software enhancements
Helen Dunn	43311	Voice Over Internet (VOIP)	-	64,500	-	64,500	34,114	11,339	60,000	(4,500)	Video equipment to be purchased in October 2014
Helen Dunn	43314	Integra Upgrade	-	10,000	-	10,000	-	3,920	6,000	(4,000)	Consultancy to take place in October 2014
Helen Dunn	43401	Planning	-	-	-	-	2,375	-	-	-	Not a current project - Invoice to be recoded
Helen Dunn	43606	Misc Software	-	-	-	-	-	2,416	-	-	Not a current project - Commitment to be recoded
Helen Dunn	43608	Other Hardware	50,000	-	-	50,000	-	4,709	50,000	-	Will be spent throughout the year on various hardware requirements
Helen Dunn	43609	ICT Security	-	-	-	-	360	-	360	360	Overspend due to Special creditor. Expenditure could be funded by underspends in other ICT projects
Helen Dunn	43610	Code of Connection Requirement	6,000	-	-	6,000	8,070	-	8,070	2,070	Project complete. Overspend could be funded by underspends in other ICT projects
Helen Dunn	43611	Mobiles and Tablets	28,800	-	-	28,800	-	-	28,800	-	Mobile and tablet replacements to be purchased by the end of the financial year
Helen Dunn	43612	Mobile device management	10,000	-	-	10,000	-	-	10,000	-	Mobile and tablet replacements to be purchased by the end of the financial year
Helen Dunn	43613	Disaster Recovery Requirements	16,000	-	-	16,000	-	-	10,000	(6,000)	Project part paid out of 13/14 budget. Routers & Switches to be purchased by December 2014
Helen Dunn	43614	ESIP	13,000	-	-	13,000	-	-	-	(13,000)	Project completed and paid out of 13/14 budget
<b>Total</b>			<b>143,800</b>	<b>74,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>218,300</b>	<b>46,787</b>	<b>22,383</b>	<b>193,230</b>	<b>(25,070)</b>	
Jan Hunt	41608	HR and Payroll system	-	11,500	-	11,500	1,939	-	11,500	-	Employee self-service module is currently being piloted. Significant system upgrades continuing
<b>Total</b>			<b>-</b>	<b>11,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,500</b>	<b>1,939</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,500</b>	<b>-</b>	
Linda Norman	43505	CRM Solution	-	85,400	-	85,400	3,800	55,600	75,400	(10,000)	Currently in development. Phase 1 to be completed by March 2015 & Phase 2 to be completed by September 2015
Linda Norman	43308	Liquid Voice	-	-	-	-	15,899	15,899	31,798	31,798	Currently testing. Phase 1 to be completed by September 2014 & Phase 2 to be completed by January 2015
<b>Total</b>			<b>-</b>	<b>85,400</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>85,400</b>	<b>19,699</b>	<b>71,499</b>	<b>107,198</b>	<b>21,798</b>	
Rowena Davison	43304	GOSS - Website Upgrade	-	4,700	-	4,700	936	6,530	4,700	-	Continuing development of websites both external and internal to meet the needs of residents and businesses
<b>Total</b>			<b>-</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>6,530</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>-</b>	
Sandy Muirhead	41317	Car Park Improvements	-	70,600	40,000	110,600	-	-	110,600	-	Supplier has been selected. Hoping to complete by November subject to final contract details
<b>Total</b>			<b>-</b>	<b>70,600</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>110,600</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>110,600</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CLlr Forbes-Forsyth - Community Safety &amp; Young People</b>											
Keith McGroary	41605	Staisafe Radio	-	53,300	-	53,300	50,253	-	53,300	-	Additional radios to be purchased. Budget to be fully spent this financial year
Keith McGroary		Funding from Car Parks	-	(8,300)	-	(8,300)	(8,300)	-	(8,300)	-	
Keith McGroary	41611	Law Enforcement	-	-	100,000	100,000	12,002	-	50,000	(50,000)	This is a 12 month project which has not yet started. Expected to commence in October 2014
<b>Total</b>			<b>-</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>145,000</b>	<b>53,955</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>95,000</b>	<b>(50,000)</b>	
<b>Total For Other</b>			<b>642,400</b>	<b>418,551</b>	<b>178,500</b>	<b>1,239,451</b>	<b>163,837</b>	<b>155,324</b>	<b>1,190,967</b>	<b>(48,484)</b>	
Total Expenditure			1,150,000	430,000	236,535	1,816,535	252,233	239,200	1,768,051	(48,484)	
Total Funding			(285,000)	(11,449)	(69,949)	(366,398)	(88,396)	(56,127)	(366,398)	-	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>865,000</b>	<b>418,551</b>	<b>166,586</b>	<b>1,450,137</b>	<b>163,837</b>	<b>183,073</b>	<b>1,401,653</b>	<b>(48,484)</b>	



**Cabinet****30 September 2014**

<b>Title</b>	Revenue monitoring		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To note		
<b>Report Author</b>	Adrian Flynn		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Tim Evans	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Value for money Council		
<b>Cabinet Values</b>	Accountability		
<b>Recommendations</b>	Cabinet are asked to note the report.		

**1. Key issues**

- 1.1 To provide cabinet with the net revenue spend figures to the end of July 2014.
- The forecast outturn at net expenditure level is £13.604m against the revised budget of £13.621m; A projected favourable variance of £17k
  - After taking into account the use of carry forwards, the net position is approx £264k favourable variance.
  - Interest earnings are forecast to exceed the budget by approx £100k as a result of better returns from longer term investments.

**2. Options analysis and proposal**

- 2.1 Cabinet are asked to note the current net revenue spend and forecast position.
- 2.2 The following highlights the more significant or material variances:

**Planning & Corporate Development**

Electoral Registration: £29k favourable variance – Government grant received for individual electoral registration.

Corporate Governance: £35k favourable variance- Income from shared head of legal services arrangement with Reigate and Banstead.

**Environment**

Refuse Collection £126k favourable variance – Increased garden waste & charges for services fee income

### **Community Safety, Young People, Leisure and Culture**

Sports Development: £14k adverse variance – Expenditure on refurbishing Stanwell Tennis courts, offset by reduced expenditure on Bowls clubs maintenance.

Sports Development: £23k favourable variance – External funding received for refurbishing Stanwell Tennis courts and increased fee income from events staged.

### **Parking Service and ICT**

Building Control £42k favourable variance Increased fee income as a result of more activity.

### **3. Financial implications**

3.1 As set out within the report and appendices

### **4. Other considerations**

4.1 There are none

### **5. Timetable for implementation**

5.1 Bi – monthly reports are produced for Management team.

**Background papers: There are none**

**Appendices: A, B, C1 to C9**

## APPENDIX A

**2014/15 Net Revenue Budget Monitoring**  
As at end of July 2014

	14/15	14/15	14/15	14/15
	Budget		Forecast	Variance
	Original	Revised	Outturn	to Revised
	£	£	£	£
Gross Expenditure	54,088,900	54,241,200	55,948,763	1,707,563
Less Benefits (offset by grant)				
Total Gross Expenditure excluding Benefits	54,088,900	54,241,200	55,948,763	1,707,563
Less Specific fees and charges income	(40,390,400)	(40,394,800)	(42,344,172)	(1,949,372)
Net Expenditure - broken down as below	13,698,500	13,846,400	13,604,591	(241,809)
Leader	333,900	333,900	333,900	-
Parking Services and ICT	62,500	62,500	15,998	(46,502)
Planning and Corporate Development	2,206,900	2,135,900	2,059,738	(76,162)
Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Independent Living	2,557,600	2,582,900	2,582,810	(90)
Environment	4,034,000	4,049,000	3,946,248	(102,752)
Community Safety, Young People, Leisure and Culture	283,600	279,200	275,294	(3,906)
Finance	3,118,700	3,189,700	3,173,668	(16,032)
Communications	222,800	222,800	222,800	-
Economic Development and Fixed Assets	878,500	990,500	994,135	3,635
<b>NET EXPENDITURE AT SERVICE LEVEL</b>	<b>13,698,500</b>	<b>13,846,400</b>	<b>13,604,591</b>	<b>(241,809)</b>
Salary expenditure - vacancy monitoring	(300,000)	(300,000)	-	300,000
Pay award	100,000	100,000	-	(100,000)
Efficiencies to offset pay award	(100,000)	(100,000)	-	100,000
Restructuring Savings	-	-	-	-
Partnership Savings	-	-	-	-
Resources to address project management issues	-	-	-	-
Increased Employer contributions due to auto enrollment	75,000	75,000	-	(75,000)
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>13,473,500</b>	<b>13,621,400</b>	<b>13,604,591</b>	<b>(16,809)</b>
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>13,473,500</b>	<b>13,621,400</b>	<b>13,604,591</b>	<b>(16,809)</b>
Interest earnings	(335,300)	(335,300)	(435,300)	(100,000)
<b>Extraordinary Item</b>				-
<b>Appropriation from Reserves:</b>				
Staines Town Development	(450,000)	(450,000)	(450,000)	-
Elmsleigh Car Park	(287,000)	(287,000)	(287,000)	-
Customer Services	(46,700)	(46,700)	(46,700)	-
Spend to Save (Bowls club)	(13,000)	(13,000)	(13,000)	-
Enforcement Project	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	-
<b>BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>12,241,500</b>	<b>12,389,400</b>	<b>12,272,591</b>	<b>(116,809)</b>
Baseline NNDR Funding	(2,361,348)	(2,361,348)	(2,361,348)	-
Revenue Support grant	(1,932,189)	(1,932,189)	(1,932,189)	-
New Homes Bonus	(1,218,600)	(1,218,600)	(1,218,600)	-
DCLG Transitional LCTSS grant	0	0	0	-
<b>NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>6,729,363</b>	<b>6,877,263</b>	<b>6,760,454</b>	<b>(116,809)</b>
Collection Fund Surplus/(deficit)	(187,920)	(187,920)	(187,920)	-
<b>CHARGE TO COLLECTION FUND</b>	<b>6,541,443</b>	<b>6,689,343</b>	<b>6,572,534</b>	<b>(116,809)</b>
2013/14 Revenue carryforward			(147,000)	(147,000)
Net Position				(263,809)

Appendix B			
REVENUE MONITORING 2014/15			
EXPENDITURE AND INCOME SUMMARY 31 JULY 2014			
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Leader</b>			
Employees	339,000	339,000	-
Other Expenditure	37,100	37,100	-
Income	(42,200)	(42,200)	-
	<b>333,900</b>	<b>333,900</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Parking Services and ICT</b>			
Employees	1,132,400	1,122,884	(9,516)
Other Expenditure	1,629,600	1,634,500	4,900
Income	(2,699,500)	(2,741,386)	(41,886)
	<b>62,500</b>	<b>15,998</b>	<b>(46,502)</b>
<b>Planning and Corporate Development</b>			
Employees	1,612,400	1,622,100	9,700
Other Expenditure	1,237,300	1,287,700	50,400
Income	(713,800)	(850,062)	(136,262)
	<b>2,135,900</b>	<b>2,059,738</b>	<b>(76,162)</b>
<b>Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Independent Living</b>			
Employees	2,919,900	2,919,900	-
Other Expenditure	33,024,800	34,567,300	1,542,500
Income	(33,361,800)	(34,904,390)	(1,542,590)
	<b>2,582,900</b>	<b>2,582,810</b>	<b>(90)</b>
<b>Environment</b>			
Employees	2,573,000	2,573,085	85
Other Expenditure	3,485,800	3,569,800	84,000
Income	(2,009,800)	(2,196,637)	(186,837)
	<b>4,049,000</b>	<b>3,946,248</b>	<b>(102,752)</b>
<b>Community Safety, Young People, Leisure and Culture</b>			
Employees	394,100	399,194	5,094
Other Expenditure	482,000	502,900	20,900
Income	(596,900)	(626,800)	(29,900)
	<b>279,200</b>	<b>275,294</b>	<b>(3,906)</b>
<b>Finance</b>			
Employees	2,885,500	2,867,600	(17,900)
Other Expenditure	658,700	658,700	0
Income	(354,500)	(352,632)	1,868
	<b>3,189,700</b>	<b>3,173,668</b>	<b>(16,032)</b>
<b>Communications</b>			
Employees	130,200	130,200	-
Other Expenditure	92,600	92,600	-
Income	0	0	-
	<b>222,800</b>	<b>222,800</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Economic Development and Fixed Assets</b>			
Employees	223,800	229,800	6,000
Other Expenditure	1,383,000	1,394,400	11,400
Income	(616,300)	(630,065)	(13,765)
	<b>990,500</b>	<b>994,135</b>	<b>3,635</b>
<b>NET EXPENDITURE AT SERVICE LEVEL</b>	<b>13,846,400</b>	<b>13,604,591</b>	<b>(241,809)</b>
Total Employees	12,210,300	12,203,763	(6,537)
Total Other Expenditure	42,030,900	43,745,000	1,714,100
Total Income	(40,394,800)	(42,344,172)	(1,949,372)
	<b>13,846,400</b>	<b>13,604,591</b>	<b>(241,809)</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>54,241,200</b>	<b>55,948,763</b>	<b>1,707,563</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(40,394,800)</b>	<b>(42,344,172)</b>	<b>(1,949,372)</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>13,846,400</b>	<b>13,604,591</b>	<b>(241,809)</b>

Appendix C1				
<b>Leader</b>				
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Employees	43,000	43,000	0	
Other Expenditure	27,500	27,500	0	
Income	0		0	
<b>People &amp; Partnerships</b>	<b>70,500</b>	<b>70,500</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	245,600	245,600	0	
Other Expenditure	9,200	9,200	0	
Income	(42,200)	(42,200)	0	
<b>HR</b>	<b>212,600</b>	<b>212,600</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	50,400	50,400	0	
Other Expenditure	400	400	0	
Income	0		0	
<b>Payroll</b>	<b>50,800</b>	<b>50,800</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Employees	<b>339,000</b>	<b>339,000</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Other Expenditure	<b>37,100</b>	<b>37,100</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Income	<b>(42,200)</b>	<b>(42,200)</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>333,900</b>	<b>333,900</b>	<b>0</b>	

Appendix C2				
<b>Parking Services and ICT</b>				
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Employees	470,000	470,000	0	
Other Expenditure	601,800	601,800	0	
Income	(48,400)	(48,400)	0	
<b>Information &amp; Comms Technology</b>	<b>1,023,400</b>	<b>1,023,400</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	379,200	379,200	0	
Other Expenditure	894,100	894,100	0	
Income	(2,020,000)	(2,020,000)	0	
<b>Car Parks</b>	<b>(746,700)</b>	<b>(746,700)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	13,684	13,684	Overtime payments relating to flooding and flooding meeting
Other Expenditure	8,000	13,000	5,000	
Income	0	14	14	
<b>Emergency Planning</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>26,698</b>	<b>18,698</b>	
Employees	283,200	260,000	(23,200)	
Other Expenditure	16,100	16,000	(100)	
Income	(316,100)	(358,000)	(41,900)	Increased Activity is generating increased income for the service
<b>Building Control</b>	<b>(16,800)</b>	<b>(82,000)</b>	<b>(65,200)</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	109,600	109,600	0	
Income	(315,000)	(315,000)	0	
<b>Staines Market</b>	<b>(205,400)</b>	<b>(205,400)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Employees	<b>1,132,400</b>	<b>1,122,884</b>	<b>(9,516)</b>	
Total Other Expenditure	<b>1,629,600</b>	<b>1,634,500</b>	<b>4,900</b>	
Total Income	<b>(2,699,500)</b>	<b>(2,741,386)</b>	<b>(41,886)</b>	
	<b>62,500</b>	<b>15,998</b>	<b>(46,502)</b>	



Appendix C3				
<b>Planning and Corporate Development</b>				
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Employees	277,400	277,400	0	
Other Expenditure	22,800	57,000	34,200	
Income	(1,200)	(53,500)	(52,300)	
<b>Legal</b>	<b>299,000</b>	<b>280,900</b>	<b>(18,100)</b>	
Employees	90,300	90,300	0	
Other Expenditure	100	100	0	
Income	0	(35,000)	(35,000)	Income from Head of Legal arrangement with Reigate
<b>Corporate Governance</b>	<b>90,400</b>	<b>55,400</b>	<b>(35,000)</b>	
Employees	117,500	117,500	0	
Other Expenditure	2,100	2,100	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Committee Services</b>	<b>119,600</b>	<b>119,600</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	57,600	57,600	0	
Other Expenditure	900	13,000	12,100	
Income	(190,000)	(210,000)	(20,000)	Additional income recovery due to upturn in housing market. Still an ongoing risk to future years income streams in this area due to the proposed changes by Land Registry.
<b>Land Charges</b>	<b>(131,500)</b>	<b>(139,400)</b>	<b>(7,900)</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	82,900	82,900	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Print Unit</b>	<b>82,900</b>	<b>82,900</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	180,500	190,200	9,700	Anticipating overspend on Overtime due to weekend opening
Other Expenditure	444,900	449,000	4,100	
Income	(142,800)	(142,800)	0	
<b>Knowle Green</b>	<b>482,600</b>	<b>496,400</b>	<b>13,800</b>	
Employees	191,100	191,100	0	
Other Expenditure	98,200	98,200	0	
Income	(1,000)	(1,000)	0	
<b>Planning Policy</b>	<b>288,300</b>	<b>288,300</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	577,300	577,300	0	
Other Expenditure	53,800	53,800	0	
Income	(377,800)	(377,800)	0	
<b>Planning Development Control</b>	<b>253,300</b>	<b>253,300</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	450,000	450,000	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Staines Upon Thames Programme</b>	<b>450,000</b>	<b>450,000</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	2,300	2,300	0	
Other Expenditure	7,900	7,900	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Elections</b>	<b>10,200</b>	<b>10,200</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	118,400	118,400	0	
Other Expenditure	73,700	73,700	0	
Income	(1,000)	(29,962)	(28,962)	Government grant received for Individual electoral registration
<b>Electoral Registration</b>	<b>191,100</b>	<b>162,138</b>	<b>(28,962)</b>	
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>1,612,400</b>	<b>1,622,100</b>	<b>9,700</b>	
<b>Total Other Expenditure</b>	<b>1,237,300</b>	<b>1,287,700</b>	<b>50,400</b>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(713,800)</b>	<b>(850,062)</b>	<b>(136,262)</b>	
	<b>2,135,900</b>	<b>2,059,738</b>	<b>(76,162)</b>	

Appendix C4				
<b>Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Independent Living</b>				
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	315,000	315,000	-	
Income	0	0	-	
<b>General Grants</b>	<b>315,000</b>	<b>315,000</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	111,500	111,500	0	
Other Expenditure	13,900	13,900	0	
Income	0	(90)	(90)	
<b>Com Care Administration</b>	<b>125,400</b>	<b>125,310</b>	<b>(90)</b>	
Employees	352,300	352,300	0	
Other Expenditure	222,700	222,700	0	
Income	(223,000)	(223,000)	0	
<b>Day Centres</b>	<b>352,000</b>	<b>352,000</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	57,500	57,500	0	
Other Expenditure	85,900	85,900	0	
Income	(192,300)	(192,300)	0	
<b>Meals On Wheels</b>	<b>(48,900)</b>	<b>(48,900)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	92,900	92,900	0	
Other Expenditure	54,600	54,600	0	
Income	(283,300)	(283,300)	0	
<b>Span</b>	<b>(135,800)</b>	<b>(135,800)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	19,700	19,700	0	
Income	(5,000)	(5,000)	0	
<b>Rodent &amp; Pest Control</b>	<b>14,700</b>	<b>14,700</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	143,900	143,900	0	
Other Expenditure	51,400	51,400	0	
Income	(113,800)	(113,800)	0	
<b>SAT</b>	<b>81,500</b>	<b>81,500</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	723,100	723,100	0	
Other Expenditure	38,000	38,000	0	
Income	(10,500)	(10,500)	0	
<b>Environmental Health Admin</b>	<b>750,600</b>	<b>750,600</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	12,500	12,500	0	
Income	(16,600)	(16,600)	0	
<b>Environmental Protection Act</b>	<b>(4,100)</b>	<b>(4,100)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	1,300	1,300	0	
Income	(3,000)	(3,000)	0	
<b>Food Safety</b>	<b>(1,700)</b>	<b>(1,700)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	7,900	7,900	0	
Income	(12,900)	(12,900)	0	
<b>Public Health</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	18,400	18,400	0	
Other Expenditure	250,800	250,800	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Democratic Rep &amp; Management</b>	<b>269,200</b>	<b>269,200</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	560,700	560,700	0	
Other Expenditure	73,600	73,600	0	
Income	(1,100)	(1,100)	0	
<b>Housing Needs</b>	<b>633,200</b>	<b>633,200</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	734,300	734,300	0	
Income	(506,400)	(506,400)	0	
<b>Homelessness</b>	<b>227,900</b>	<b>227,900</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	514,100	514,100	0	
Other Expenditure	53,900	53,900	0	
Income	(454,100)	(454,100)	0	
<b>Housing Benefits Admin</b>	<b>113,900</b>	<b>113,900</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	345,500	345,500	0	
Other Expenditure	6,100	6,100	0	
Income	(351,600)	(351,600)	0	
<b>Spelthorne Troubled Families</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	31,083,200	32,625,700	1,542,500	
Income	(31,188,200)	(32,730,700)	(1,542,500)	
<b>Housing Benefits Payments</b>	<b>(105,000)</b>	<b>(105,000)</b>	<b>0</b>	Subsidies as a whole are higher than budgeted but expenditure will compensate this
Total Employees	<b>2,919,900</b>	<b>2,919,900</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Other Expenditure	<b>33,024,800</b>	<b>34,567,300</b>	<b>1,542,500</b>	
Total Income	<b>(33,361,800)</b>	<b>(34,904,390)</b>	<b>(1,542,590)</b>	
	<b>2,582,900</b>	<b>2,582,810</b>	<b>(90)</b>	

Appendix C5				
				<b>Environment</b>
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	500	0	(500)	DVLA pick up the majority of abandoned Vehicles in the borough
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Abandoned Vehicles</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(500)</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	68,400	77,000	8,600	Insurance excess, vending machine charges, installation of CCTV camera
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Depot</b>	<b>68,400</b>	<b>77,000</b>	<b>8,600</b>	
Employees	559,900	559,900	0	
Other Expenditure	64,900	64,900	0	
Income	(21,200)	(21,200)	0	
<b>DS Management &amp; Support</b>	<b>603,600</b>	<b>603,600</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	1,031,900	1,031,900	0	
Other Expenditure	830,400	830,400	0	
Income	(573,600)	(700,000)	(126,400)	Increased garden waste scheme income
<b>Refuse Collection</b>	<b>1,288,700</b>	<b>1,162,300</b>	<b>(126,400)</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	9,500	9,500	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Energy Initiatives</b>	<b>9,500</b>	<b>9,500</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	40,300	40,300	0	
Income	(25,000)	(25,000)	0	
<b>Environmental Enhancements</b>	<b>15,300</b>	<b>15,300</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	309,500	309,500	0	
Other Expenditure	15,100	15,100	0	
Income	(34,100)	(34,100)	0	
<b>Enviro Services Administration</b>	<b>290,500</b>	<b>290,500</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	541,500	541,500	0	
Other Expenditure	306,300	306,300	0	
Income	(47,700)	(48,737)	(1,037)	
<b>Street Cleaning</b>	<b>800,100</b>	<b>799,063</b>	<b>(1,037)</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	190,800	205,000	14,200	Increased Cost of Green waste disposal
Income	(651,000)	(651,000)	0	Present delay in claiming recycling credits due to problems with new SCC software
<b>Waste Recycling</b>	<b>(460,200)</b>	<b>(446,000)</b>	<b>14,200</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	500	500	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Technical Projects</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	47,600	47,600	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Public Conveniences</b>	<b>47,600</b>	<b>47,600</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	6,200	6,200	0	
Income	(43,200)	(43,200)	0	
<b>Allotments</b>	<b>(37,000)</b>	<b>(37,000)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	118,200	118,200	0	
Income	(96,000)	(96,000)	0	
<b>Parks Strategy</b>	<b>22,200</b>	<b>22,200</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	23,700	26,000	2,300	
Income	(327,400)	(327,400)	0	
<b>Cemeteries</b>	<b>(303,700)</b>	<b>(301,400)</b>	<b>2,300</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	17,000	17,000	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Staines Metro Commons</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	130,200	130,200	0	
Other Expenditure	1,740,900	1,800,300	59,400	Playground maintenance
Income	(190,600)	(250,000)	(59,400)	Section 106 monies received for playground maintenance
<b>Grounds Maintenance</b>	<b>1,680,500</b>	<b>1,680,500</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	85	85	Overtime payment made
Other Expenditure	5,500	5,500	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Water Courses &amp; Land Drainage</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>5,585</b>	<b>85</b>	
Total Employees	<b>2,573,000</b>	<b>2,573,085</b>	<b>85</b>	
Total Other Expenditure	<b>3,485,800</b>	<b>3,569,800</b>	<b>84,000</b>	
Total Income	<b>(2,009,800)</b>	<b>(2,196,637)</b>	<b>(186,837)</b>	
	<b>4,049,000</b>	<b>3,946,248</b>	<b>(102,752)</b>	

Appendix C6				
<b>Community Safety, Young People, Leisure and Culture</b>				
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Employees	0	94	94	
Other Expenditure	25,500	25,500	-	
Income	(1,000)	(1,000)	-	
<b>Youth</b>	<b>24,500</b>	<b>24,594</b>	<b>94</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	0	0	-	
Income	(44,000)	(44,000)	-	
<b>Riverside Arts Centre</b>	<b>(44,000)</b>	<b>(44,000)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	0	7,000	7,000	Consultants invoice for work completed
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Laleham Park Project</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>7,000</b>	
Employees	3,000	0	(3,000)	Expenditure will be required if any new volunteers or casual staff need training
Other Expenditure	1,000	1,000	-	
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Safeguarding</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>(3,000)</b>	
Employees	12,500	12,500	-	
Other Expenditure	3,400	3,400	-	
Income	(6,300)	(3,200)	3,100	Reduced sales of materials and reduced fee income
<b>Resource Centre</b>	<b>9,600</b>	<b>12,700</b>	<b>3,100</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	4,000	4,000	-	
Income	(500)	(500)	-	
<b>Active Lifestyle</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	5,100	5,100	-	
Other Expenditure	36,100	50,000	13,900	Expenditure on refurbishing Stanwell tennis courts offset by reduced spend on bowls club maintenance.
Income	(6,000)	(29,000)	(23,000)	External funding received relating to Stanwell tennis courts + increased income from events.
<b>Sports Development</b>	<b>35,200</b>	<b>26,100</b>	<b>(9,100)</b>	
Employees	2,600	2,600	-	
Other Expenditure	29,500	29,500	-	
Income	(3,000)	(5,000)	(2,000)	
<b>Arts Development</b>	<b>29,100</b>	<b>27,100</b>	<b>(2,000)</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	2,000	2,000	-	
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Events</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	196,900	196,900	-	
Other Expenditure	12,900	12,900	-	
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Leisure Administration</b>	<b>209,800</b>	<b>209,800</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	4,500	4,500	-	
Income	(8,000)	(8,000)	-	
<b>Museum</b>	<b>(3,500)</b>	<b>(3,500)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	8,000	8,000	Costs of out of hours opening and closing of the Shepperton village hall
Other Expenditure	7,400	7,400	-	
Income	(54,700)	(62,700)	(8,000)	Extra income generated at Shepperton village hall
<b>Public Halls</b>	<b>(47,300)</b>	<b>(47,300)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	55,300	55,300	-	
Income	(237,600)	(237,600)	-	
<b>Spelthorne Leisure Centre</b>	<b>(182,300)</b>	<b>(182,300)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	0	0	0	
Income	(42,200)	(42,200)	0	
<b>Sunbury Golf Club</b>	<b>(42,200)</b>	<b>(42,200)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	104,800	104,800	0	
Other Expenditure	3,900	3,900	0	
Income	(102,600)	(102,600)	0	
<b>Licensing</b>	<b>6,100</b>	<b>6,100</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	2,700	2,700	0	
Income	(76,000)	(76,000)	0	
<b>Taxi Licensing</b>	<b>(73,300)</b>	<b>(73,300)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	69,200	69,200	0	
Other Expenditure	293,800	293,800	0	
Income	(15,000)	(15,000)	0	
<b>Community Safety</b>	<b>348,000</b>	<b>348,000</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Employees	<b>394,100</b>	<b>399,194</b>	<b>5,094</b>	
Total Other Expenditure	<b>482,000</b>	<b>502,900</b>	<b>20,900</b>	
Total Income	<b>(596,900)</b>	<b>(626,800)</b>	<b>(29,900)</b>	
	<b>279,200</b>	<b>275,294</b>	<b>(3,906)</b>	

Appendix C7				
<b>Finance</b>				
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	222,700	222,700	-	
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Insurance</b>	<b>222,700</b>	<b>222,700</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	168,700	168,700	-	
Other Expenditure	17,800	17,800	-	
Income	(46,900)	(41,900)	5,000	Reduced levels of income expected due to change in arrangements at Woking.
<b>Audit</b>	<b>139,600</b>	<b>144,600</b>	<b>5,000</b>	
Employees	364,100	327,000	(37,100)	Salary saving as a result of early retirement and Maternity leave
Other Expenditure	15,400	15,400	-	
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Accountancy</b>	<b>379,500</b>	<b>342,400</b>	<b>(37,100)</b>	
Employees	117,000	117,000	-	
Other Expenditure	4,700	4,700	-	
Income	0	0	-	
<b>MaT Secretariat &amp; Support</b>	<b>121,700</b>	<b>121,700</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	306,700	306,700	-	
Other Expenditure	8,000	8,000	-	
Income	0	(132)	(132)	
<b>Assistant Chief Executives</b>	<b>314,700</b>	<b>314,568</b>	<b>(132)</b>	
Employees	359,500	359,500	-	
Other Expenditure	8,400	8,400	-	
Income	0	(11,500)	(11,500)	Contribution from the partners in the partnership towards the cost of the project manager of the Locata project
<b>Chief Executive</b>	<b>367,900</b>	<b>356,400</b>	<b>(11,500)</b>	
Employees	6,000	6,200	200	
Other Expenditure	181,800	181,800	-	There is a joint bank contract procurement exercise that is ongoing.
Income	(9,100)	(9,100)	-	
<b>Corporate Management</b>	<b>178,700</b>	<b>178,900</b>	<b>200</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	0	0	-	
Income	(139,700)	(139,700)	-	
<b>Business Rates</b>	<b>(139,700)</b>	<b>(139,700)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	703,300	722,300	19,000	Redundancy costs of £19k have been incurred due to a restructuring exercise. These will be funded from the Business Improvement Reserve at year end.
Other Expenditure	147,200	147,200	0	
Income	(150,300)	(150,300)	0	
<b>CServ Management &amp; Support</b>	<b>700,200</b>	<b>719,200</b>	<b>19,000</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	10,000	10,000	0	
Income	(8,500)	0	8,500	Funding has been credited to Legal Services for utilisation instead.
<b>Misc Expenses</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>8,500</b>	
Employees	860,200	860,200	0	
Other Expenditure	42,700	42,700	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Unapportionable CentralIO/Heads</b>	<b>902,900</b>	<b>902,900</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Employees	<b>2,885,500</b>	<b>2,867,600</b>	<b>(17,900)</b>	
Total Other Expenditure	<b>658,700</b>	<b>658,700</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Income	<b>(354,500)</b>	<b>(352,632)</b>	<b>1,868</b>	
	<b>3,189,700</b>	<b>3,173,668</b>	<b>(16,032)</b>	

Appendix C8				
<b>Communications and Procurement</b>				
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Employees	130,200	130,200	-	
Other Expenditure	79,600	79,600	-	
Income	0		-	
<b>Corporate Publicity</b>	<b>209,800</b>	<b>209,800</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0		-	
Other Expenditure	13,000	13,000	-	
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Research &amp; Consultation</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Employees	<b>130,200</b>	<b>130,200</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Other Expenditure	<b>92,600</b>	<b>92,600</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Income	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>222,800</b>	<b>222,800</b>	<b>0</b>	

Appendix C9				
<b>Economic Development and Fixed Assets</b>				
<b>Results to</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>31-Jul-14</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>to Revised</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Employees	166,200	166,200	-	
Other Expenditure	379,900	379,900	-	
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Asset Mgn Administration</b>	<b>546,100</b>	<b>546,100</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	2,400	5,700	3,300	Business rates & storage costs
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Sea Cadets</b>	<b>2,400</b>	<b>5,700</b>	<b>3,300</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	81,500	81,500	-	
Income	(35,800)	(35,800)	-	
<b>General Property Expenses</b>	<b>45,700</b>	<b>45,700</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	38,200	44,200	6,000	
Other Expenditure	28,100	36,200	8,100	Costs of running Staines upon Thames day, offset by income as reflected below in income line.
Income	0	(13,765)	(13,765)	Sponsorship Income for Staines upon Thames day
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>66,300</b>	<b>66,635</b>	<b>335</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	546,800	546,800	-	Planned Maintenance budget to be used fully by year end in partnership with Runnymede BC
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Planned Maintenance Programm</b>	<b>546,800</b>	<b>546,800</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	-	
Other Expenditure	155,500	155,500	-	Responsive Maintenance budget to be used fully by year end in partnership with Runnymede BC
Income	0	0	-	
<b>Responsive Maintenance Progra</b>	<b>155,500</b>	<b>155,500</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	0	0	0	
Other Expenditure	28,500	28,500	0	
Income	0	0	0	
<b>Bus Station</b>	<b>28,500</b>	<b>28,500</b>	<b>0</b>	
Employees	19,400	19,400	0	
Other Expenditure	160,300	160,300	0	
Income	(580,500)	(580,500)	0	
<b>Staines Town Centre Managemen</b>	<b>(400,800)</b>	<b>(400,800)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Total Employees	<b>223,800</b>	<b>229,800</b>	<b>6,000</b>	
Total Other Expenditure	<b>1,383,000</b>	<b>1,394,400</b>	<b>11,400</b>	
Total Income	<b>(616,300)</b>	<b>(630,065)</b>	<b>(13,765)</b>	
	<b>990,500</b>	<b>994,135</b>	<b>3,635</b>	





**Cabinet****30 September 2014**

<b>Title</b>	Housing Strategies for Spelthorne		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a recommendation to Council		
<b>Report Author</b>	Liz Borthwick		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Mrs Jean Pinkerton OBE	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Delivering quality of life services		
<b>Cabinet Values</b>	Self-Reliance		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>To agree the draft</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Housing Strategy 2014-2015</b></li> <li>- <b>Private Sector Strategy 2014-2015</b></li> <li>- <b>Homelessness Strategy 2014-2015</b></li> </ul> <p><b>for further consultation with the community for adoption of the final strategies at full Council on 23 October 2014.</b></p>		

**1. Key issues**

- 1.1 Cabinet at its meeting on 15 July 2014 agreed a Housing Action Plan. Included within the action plan was the requirement to develop the following strategies
  - Housing Strategy
  - Homelessness Strategy
  - Private Sector Housing Strategy
- 1.2 Councillors are fully aware that the Council has legal requirements relating to homelessness strategies and development of planning guidance.
- 1.3 Councillors are also aware of the demand for affordable housing and temporary housing for homeless households significantly outstrips supply.
- 1.4 There is also a medium term financial strategy requirement to explore income generation.
- 1.5 The Council, working in partnership with Bernadette O'Shea have developed the draft strategies for consultation.

## 2. Options analysis and proposal

- 2.1 The option is to adopt the following strategies which will provide a plan for
- Increasing housing options for the residents of Spelthorne
  - Reducing the Council's cost on bed and breakfast
  - Provide Spelthorne Council with an income stream

### Housing Strategy

- 2.2 The proposed vision for the Housing Strategy is "Ensuring best quality homes in a thriving and sustainable community".
- 2.3 The key objectives for the Housing Strategy are as follows.
- Increase the supply of new homes and improve the tenure mix especially the provision of more private rented accommodation.
  - Improve the quality of existing homes.
  - Prevent homelessness
  - Support residents to access affordable, well managed market rent and social rented properties.
  - Prioritise social housing allocations to those who contribute.

### Private Sector Housing Strategy

- 2.4 The proposed vision for the Private Sector Housing Strategy is
- To ensure that Spelthorne Borough Council has good quality private sector housing to meet the needs of residents and to ensure that Spelthorne is a thriving place to live and work.

The key Private Sector objectives are as follows

- Improve the condition of private housing throughout support and regulations.
- Ensure that private housing (owner occupation and rented) is suitable to meet the needs of older disabled residents.
- Ensure there are sufficient good quality private rented homes available to enable the Council to discharge the homelessness duty into the private rented sector.
- Maximise the use of existing accommodation through conversion and bringing empty homes back into use.
- Improve energy efficiency of dwellings and ensure affordable worth is available to residents.

## **Homelessness Strategy**

- 2.5 The proposed vision for the Homelessness Strategy is to 'Prevent homelessness, increasing the supply of suitable accommodation and enabling wherever possible the discharge of duty into the private rented sector.

The strategic objectives of the Homelessness Strategy are as follows.

- Adopt a corporate and partnership commitment to prevent homelessness.
- Develop and provide a comprehensive housing options preventative service including the single homeless
- End the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families.
- Facilitate the discharge of homelessness duty to the private rented sector.
- Develop pathways for specific vulnerable client groups.
- Develop a private rented sector offer through a Spelthorne Borough Council letting service and by working effectively with local lettings agent.
- Adapt a 'no second night out' model for emergency accommodation.
- In partnership with the CAB prevent mortgage repossessions.
- Achieve the gold standard

- 2.5 There are a number of key projects emerging from the three strategies and they are as follows.

- 1) Establish a local lettings agency
- 2) Discharge duty onto the private rented sector
- 3) Continue with the councils acquisitions and conversions project
- 4) Redevelopment proposals including the establishment of a Spelthorne Borough Council housing company
- 5) Promotion of Private Rented Sector through the planning process
- 6) Review of the allocation policy to reflect new discharge policy.

## **3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 Cabinet are aware that at present the Council are spending in the region of £140k per annum on funding temporary accommodation and this could increase. Each element of the action plan will require a business plan to be prepared and presented to MAT.

## **4. Other considerations**

- 4.1 A housing workshop was held on 10 September 2014 with relevant partners. A number of constructive issues were discussed and will be integrated within the final draft. Key additions to the strategy as discussed included the urgent need to do a housing needs assessment and stock condition survey. Valuable

points were made about cross borough work, partnership to deliver some of the project e.g. local lettings agency.

- 4.2 A housing workshop took place on 10 September 2014 with our housing partnership including our select list of RSL's, Surrey County Council, Health and Rentstart to consult on the draft strategies.
- 4.3 Following adoption of the draft strategies further consultation will be required with the community. A communications plan will be developed.

## **5. Timetable for implementation**

- 5.1 Each strategy has an action plan with a timetable.

### **Background papers:**

#### **Appendices:**

Housing Strategy 2014-2015

Housing Strategy Action Plan

Private Sector Strategy 2014-2015

Private Sector Strategy Action Plan

Homelessness Strategy 2014-2015

Homelessness Strategy Action Plan

# Draft Housing Strategy 2014 - 2017



## **Housing Strategy.**

### **1.0 Introduction from Cllr Pinkerton**

Spelthorne Council recognises that a person's home is a main need. Housing can have a significant impact on the quality of a person's life, it is crucial to social mobility and health and wellbeing. We also recognise that different types of housing are required for our community.

In developing the housing strategy the Council acknowledge the need to have a strategic approach to ensuring that there is a choice of housing options available to people living in Spelthorne. The strategy also identifies the need to work in partnership with developers, registered local landlords and other agencies to ensure that the Council can support the housing needs of our local residents.

### **2.0 Overview of the borough and corporate vision.**

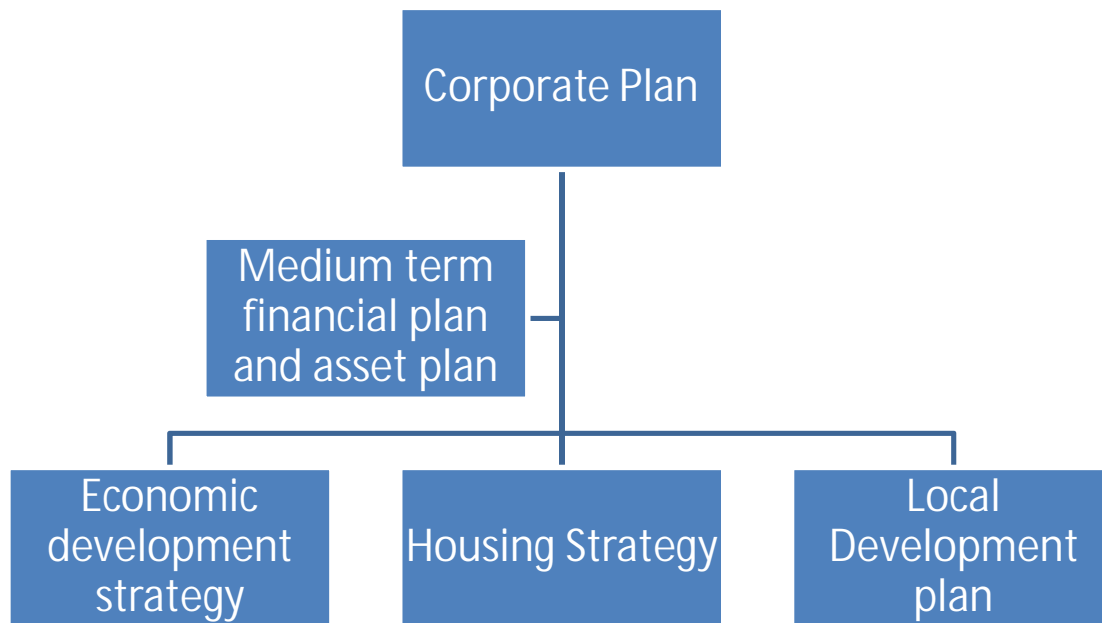
2.1 Spelthorne Council is located in North West Surrey and borders the London boroughs of Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond and the Berkshire boroughs of Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead, and the Surrey boroughs of Runnymede and Elmbridge.

2.2 It is relatively small (approximately 20 square miles) and densely populated with Heathrow to the immediate north and the River Thames forming the southern boundary. The borough is within the curtilage of the M25, and the M3 runs through Sunbury upon Thames. 42% of the borough is either water or green belt. There is very little land available for new build developments.

Further data relating to population is included in Appendix A.

2.4 The Housing Strategy has been prepared against a backdrop of low interest rates and growing recognition of the negative impact of housing demand significantly outstripping supply.

2.5 The Housing Strategy can be viewed as a 'foundation strategy' for the Council; it impacts on all residents in the borough and provides the starting point for the building of communities. So much of what succeeds and what fails in an area is dependent on the type and mix of housing. The corporate housing strategy is where the Council sets out its collective vision for housing in the area.



### **Corporate Plan Vision statement:**

**‘Delivering quality, best value for money services that matter to our residents’**

### **Medium Term Financial plan:**

1. Budget reductions and service delivery efficiency
2. Focus on maximising income streams by
  - -Protecting Council tax base
  - -Maximising existing fees and charges
  - -Generating income from the Council’s asset base
  - -Maintaining and increasing investment returns from treasury management activity.

### **Spelthorne Economic strategy.**

**‘To secure sustained growth of the local economy for the benefit of businesses and residents whilst protecting the Borough’s environment and character’.**

The vision is delivered through four themes:

- Implementing and maintaining a capacity for growth
- Supporting business
- Improving infrastructure.
- Developing skills and employability

### **3.0 Delivery of the previous Housing Strategy (2010-14).**

3.1 The previous Spelthorne Housing Strategy (2010-14 updated in 2013) identified four priorities and delivered the following outcomes:

- 1. To ensure the provision of affordable housing throughout the Borough in order to meet a range of local needs and through a mix of property types, sizes and tenures.**

Number of new build properties between 2008 and 2013.

Year	Private	Housing Association	Total
2008/9	130	57	187
2009/10	168	43	211
2010/11	87	52	136
2011/12	75	84	159
2012/13	127	43	170

- 2. To improve the housing options of clients through the introduction of a choice-based lettings scheme**

SBC in partnership with Elmbridge Council have agreed revised allocation policies and procedures and developed and launched a choiced based lettings system.

- 3. To improve the housing options services to clients through the prevention of homelessness.**

The Council introduced a range of measures in response to Welfare reforms, the reduction in Local Housing Allowances and incidences of repossessions for mortgage arrears. The partnership with Rentstart and the CAB was strengthened.

- 4. To address the issues of 'decent' homes, independent living for vulnerable people, and the availability of suitable properties in the private rented sector.**

The partnership with A2D continued to focus on decent homes standards in the 4.500 homes they manage in the borough. SBC has continued to take action on empty homes and homes in multiple occupation and to take action against owners (including landlords) for serious disrepair and poor house conditions.

#### **4.0 Developing a new Housing Strategy**



4.1 The corporate Housing strategy is supported by a body of evidence relating to housing needs in the community and housing conditions:

- Housing conditions and needs survey ( last commissioned in 2006, there is a plan to update this in the near future)
- Strategic Housing market assessment
- Census 2011

and a set of sector specific strategies

- **Homelessness strategy**, this is a requirement of the Housing Act: it sets out how the Council intends to prevent homelessness and discharge its duty for accepted households.
- **Private Sector strategy**, sets out the approach the council will take to providing grants to homeowners, the regulation of the private rented sector and its use for discharging homeless families under PRS orders; it also provides a vehicle for considering how the Local Authority will help promote the development of more private rented accommodation.
- **Tenancy strategy**; this deals with what types of tenancies the authority want to social housing providers in the area including probation and fixed term tenancies. Strategy agreed in 2012.
- **Allocation Policy**; under the provisions of the Localism Act, but mindful of the legal requirements relating to homeless households and people in extreme housing need, SBC has now establish local criteria for allocations, and a choice-based lettings scheme. Policy agreed by SBC in 2011.
- **Enabling policies** relating to the planning process; these are part of the Local development plan and the suite of planning guidance documents that support that document. It provides evidence of demand and establishes targets for cross tenure developments. Policy agreed by SBC in 2012
- **Special needs/vulnerable residents and supporting people**; these strategic priorities are the responsibility of the County and are summarised in the Joint strategic needs assessments for each client group.

## 5.0 The policy context for the new Housing strategy

**5.1 National Housing Strategy (2011)** 'Laying the Foundations, a housing strategy for England'. This provided the framework for the current Government policy on housing. The focus was on tackling housing shortage, boosting the economy, creating jobs and giving people the opportunity to get onto the housing ladder. The strategy lead to the introduction of the Homebuy programme aimed at first time buyers; the Build to rent programme that provides loans to developers wanting to build private rented sector homes; reforms to Council Housing revenue accounts and facilitation of real estate investment funds.

5.2 **Localism Act (2011)** introduced new freedoms and flexibilities for local government. It included a number of measures relating to housing:

- General power of competence to local government to enable innovation and the development of new ventures.
- Reforms to the planning system including neighbourhood planning; end of sub regional plans and introduction of a 'duty to cooperate'.
- Reforms to ensure decisions about housing are taken locally including enabling Councils to establish their own allocation policies for social housing; fixed term tenancies for social housing allocation; discharging the homelessness duty into the private sector; national homeswap scheme; new regulatory and complaints framework for social housing tenants.

5.3 **Welfare reform Act (2012)** introduced a wide range of reforms designed to make the benefits and tax credits system fairer and simpler, improving financial incentives to encourage work. The main challenges for landlords, tenants and the Council include:

- The introduction of capped universal credit, which will include a housing element and is paid monthly directly to the tenant not the landlord.
- Housing benefit property size criteria that means the reduction of benefit to working age households who are under occupying
- Changes to the Local Housing Allowance so that housing costs are set at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile cost (as opposed to the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile) and includes an increased age threshold from 25yr to 35yr so that single claimants are only entitled to the shared room rate.

5.4 **Right to Buy and Help to Buy schemes.** In 2012 the Government increased cash incentives for right to buy applicants from £16,000 to £75,000 thereby enabling many more social housing tenants to be able to buy their own homes. They also introduced a new equity loan scheme aimed at first time buyers called 'Help to Buy'. This scheme enabled buyers with a 5% deposit and the capacity to raise a 75% (loan to value) mortgage to access the remaining 20% as an interest free loan for five years; the ceiling on the value of the property was set at £600,000.

5.5 **Public subsidy for new housing.** As part of the Governments package of public sector cuts, in 2011 the DCLG through the Homes and Communities agency changed its approach to grants for social housing developments this required developers and housing associations to build units at lower levels of subsidy and let at a new 'affordable rent level' of 80% of market rent levels in the area. The model was based on the view that developers and housing associations could raise capital from investors and, on the basis of sharing benefits and risks, guarantee a return on investment and generate surplus for the development of further stock. The HCA also introduced new funding support for the development of private rented homes through the Build to Rent programme, the most recent round had a budget of £1billion and a target to build 10,000 new homes by 2015.

**5.6 Making every contact count (2012).** In 2010 the Minister for Housing set up an interdepartmental Ministerial Group on homelessness, the focus of their work was on developing a cross sector response to homelessness with an emphasis on prevention. The final report identified ten local challenges, these are now known as the 'homelessness gold standard' and provide a benchmark for local authority homelessness services.

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services.
2. To actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address, support, education, employment and training needs
3. To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients including written advice.
4. To adopt a No Second Night out model or an effective local alternative.
5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support.
6. To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord.
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness, reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
10. To not place any families in Bed and breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than six weeks.

**5.7 Review of the barriers to institutional investment in private rented homes (Montague report 2012).** Sir Adrian Montague was asked to look into how the Government might facilitate rapid development of the PRS through capital investment vehicles. The report agreed that there was real potential for investment in large scale developments of purpose built rented housing and made three key recommendations:

- Ensure that Local Authorities use the planning system to encourage and facilitate PRS developments
- Ensure that Central Government releases land holdings for PRS, with a particular focus on London.
- Government to provide carefully targeted incentives to stimulate rapid development of new business models from a range of promoters- public sector landowners, registered providers, or private sector house-builders.

The report was followed by a HCA funded 'Build to rent' programme in 2012 worth £200m and in 2013 worth £1b, these are fully recoverable commercial investment pots available to fund up to 50% of eligible development costs with returns to Government being realised upon refinancing or sale of a developers interest to an institutional investor. A2D in association with Crest Nicholson

were successful in the first round and are building a PRS development of 46 apartments in Bristol, this is part of A2Ds strategy to develop/acquire 1,000 private rented homes over the next five years.

5.8 The **Care Act 2014** will come into force over the next two years. It pulls together the raft of legislation relating to meeting the needs of adults requiring support and their carer's. The main provisions of the Act relate to:

- Prevention or the delaying of care and support to adults and carers.
- Integration of work between local government and the NHS
- An enhanced duty to provide information about care and support services
- The promotion of high quality care providers
- An obligation on public bodies to co-operate
- Requirement that Social Services notify housing and health bodies if a need is identified in a community care assessment.
- The provision of care and support services (this includes goods and services, information and advice)
- Duty to assess the needs of adults and their carers.

5.9 The impact of all of these policy initiatives has been substantial.

## 6.0 Housing Strategy vision and priorities for the next five years.

### Vision statement

**'Ensuring best quality homes in a thriving and sustainable community'**

### Strategic priorities 2014-2019

1. **Increase the supply of new homes and improve the tenure mix especially the provision of more private rented accommodation.**
2. **Improve the quality of existing homes.**
3. **Prevent homelessness**
4. **Support residents to access affordable, well-managed market rent and social rented properties.**
5. **Prioritise social housing allocations to those who contribute.**

## **7.0 Strategic Priority One. Increase the supply of new homes and improve the tenure mix especially the provision of more private accommodation.**

### **Why this is a priority.**

8.1 Housing demand at both the local and sub-regional level remains high. The Government have set a national target of building 240,000 units per year and are currently only delivering 110,000. The shortfall is having an impact on the economy and on community cohesion. Within Spelthorne the situation is made more acute by the lack of available land and the ongoing migration from London to the green belt suburbs. There are currently over two thousand households on the SBC housing register.

8.2 Most commentators agree that the UK population continues to aspire to homeownership as the tenure of choice but there is now a growing affordability gap; the Office for National Statistics reported in May this year that nationally housing inflation for the year to March was running at 8% and in London at 17% with the average home nationally worth £252k and within the M25 £459k.

8.3 The recent Enterprise M3 Partnership report on Housing needs (2014) noted that although the DCLG recommend a loan to salary ratio for mortgages of 3.5x earnings, the reality is that in the Southeast on average the requirement is 8.3 times and in the M3 partnership region 9.7 times. This takes homeownership out of the range of the vast majority of first time buyers and those hoping to step-up to larger family homes.

8.4 The situation is made even more complicated by the affordability gap not being limited to aspiring owner occupier. The Enterprise M3 Partnership reported that the average two bed property across nearly all tenure offers was in excess of the average earnings in the area.

Tenure type (all average two bed)	Household income requirement
Buy outright	£50,623
Low cost home ownership	£39,550
Private rented home	£50,734
Affordable rented home (80% of market rent)	£40,587
Social rent (based on £120/wk and income at Universal Credit level)	£26,000

8.5 Housebuilding is a major contributor to economic growth, the Montague report (2012) estimated that £1m spent on house building supports 12 additional jobs per year (7 directly and 5 indirectly) and for every £1 invested in construction £2.60 is generated elsewhere in the supply chain.

The Enterprise M3 partnership report identified constraints to the delivery of new homes:

- Market conditions have to be favourable, especially for mixed tenure developments that can struggle with viability.
- Schemes where land needs to be assembled and negotiations are with multiple owners.
- Sites where tenants need to be relocated (or leaseholders bought out)
- Infrastructure requirements, including flood plain management and remediation.
- Adverse community sentiment relating to the proposal.

But it also set out the strategic benefits of delivering additional homes:

1. Maintains diverse population base and supports labour mobility and recruitment and helps economic growth
2. Ensures the availability of sufficient public and private services to expand the local income base.
3. Supports Local Authorities through new homes bonus (and ongoing Council tax income)
4. Ensures social cohesion by enabling affordable units.

8.6 General power of competence and the development of Local Housing Companies and joint venture companies (limited liability partnerships) with Housing Associations, private developers and institutional investors.

The general power of competence is a power available to local authorities in England to do “anything that individuals generally may do”. It was provided for in the Localism Act 2011 and replaces the well-being powers in the Local Government Act 2000. It has enabled Councils across the country to innovate in order to better meet the needs of their local communities, this includes a number of Council’s establishing their own ‘Local Housing Companies’ or ‘Joint venture partnerships’ dedicated to the development or acquisition of homes including for rent. SBC Medium term financial strategy paved the way for the development of business cases that could generate income for the Council, this strategic priority focuses on the opportunity now available for the Council to develop a local housing company or Joint Venture enterprise that increases units, potentially helps support the homelessness strategy and generates income whilst retaining the equity value.

There is a huge variety of approaches adopted by Councils and the ‘golden rule’ is that ‘objectives (desired outcomes) should come first, vehicle comes later’:

- Joint ventures
- Local Housing companies
- Private Finance initiative
- Local asset backed ventures
- Community Land trusts
- RSL/developer partnerships

The typical scenario for a Local Housing Company is where a Council establishes a separately constituted company with the Council as the single shareholder. There is a transfer of assets or finance to the company, this provides the basis for the purchase of properties. Once established the asset and income stream provide security for raising loans that can be used to deliver further development/acquisition. The properties are let as private rented homes on an assured shorthold tenancy basis, the term being determined by the landlord; there is no right to buy/acquire. The day to day management of the properties is usually delivered through a contract with an external partner. All of the risks are held by the single shareholder.

Joint venture enterprises are typically characterised by equal shares and equal representation on a management board between the public sector and private sector partners with a shared vision enshrined in an agreed business plan. Again the Local Authority transfers an asset into the partnership and the private sector partners bring in finance, technical expertise and capability to deliver and manage the homes developed. The terms normally last at least 20 years.

#### **Key objectives within this priority.**

1. In line with the Local development plan, work to support the delivery of new housing of all tenures in the borough.
2. Work with partners to overcome obstacles to developments.
3. Work with partners to maximise the delivery of affordable homes providing a range of homes to meet all needs including for those households with specific requirements; mobility related disabilities; supported housing; extra-care housing and larger family homes.
4. Enable further development of sites for private rented housing.
5. Develop options for the development of a SBC Local Housing Company or a special purpose 'Local Backed Asset Vehicle' as a provider and developer of private rented accommodation.

#### **Expected outcomes.**

1. Increased number and range of homes in the borough.
2. Improved range of housing to meet the needs of specific groups of residents.

3. A sustainable quantity and mix of dwellings to encourage economic growth within the borough and within the M3P sub-region.
4. Income stream generated to support the Council.

## **9.0 Strategic Priority Two. Improve the quality of existing homes.**

### **Why this is a priority.**

9.1 In 2000 the Government launched a 'decent homes standard' with the requirement that all Local Authority homes would be expected to attain this by 2010. A2D have confirmed that 99.29% of the stock they manage in the borough has attained the decent homes standard.

9.2 National reports show that 40% of all homes in the private rented sector do not meet decent homes standards and the SBC Private Sector Housing Condition survey in 2006 found that 8.7% of housing stock (across all private tenures) was classified as 'poor housing' with the highest presentation in the private rented sector and in older houses.

9.3 Empty homes present a further challenge; they are a waste of a resource and blight the neighbourhood. It is estimated that there are 50 empty homes in the borough.

9.4 The provision of a high quality private rented sector is a requirement for the Borough if we want to pursue the policy of discharging our duty towards homeless people into the PRS. Under the requirements of the Homelessness (Suitability of accommodation) (England) Order November 2012, the Council must be assured that it can source appropriate high quality private rented accommodation that is in 'reasonable physical condition' and complies with the requirements for

- Specified electrical regulations
- Fire Safety
- Fitted Carbon monoxide alarms
- Homes in Multiple Occupation licensed
- Valid Energy performance certification.
- Gas safety record
- Guarantee that a written tenancy agreement will be provided for at least twelve months (and ideally longer)
- And that the land lord is a fit and proper person to act in the capacity of a landlord.

9.5 Energy efficiency and fuel poverty remain significant challenges. SBC is committed to supporting a Surrey wide initiative to ensure consistent information, advice and practical support are available for households most at risk. The priority remains older residents and residents living in park homes.

### **Key objectives within this priority.**



1. Ensure that all social housing landlords operating in the borough comply with the decent homes standard.
2. Develop a comprehensive Private Housing Strategy and an implementation plan that targets resources on the Private rented sector and on vulnerable owner occupiers.
3. Through the SBC Lettings Agency build a relationship with private landlords that ensures the availability of good quality rented homes for those vulnerable to becoming homeless and that enables the discharge of the homelessness duty.
4. Maintain the commitment to bringing empty homes back into use.
5. In collaboration with Surrey County partners, develop and deliver an energy efficiency and fuel poverty plan for SBC.

#### **Expected outcomes.**

1. All social rented housing meets the decent homes standard.
2. Regulatory activity is focused on poor quality private rented homes.
3. The SBC Lettings agency secures private rented accommodation at a good standard (compliant with the requirements of the order) and enables the discharge of the homelessness duty
4. SBC continues to register all homes in multiple occupation.
5. Empty homes are identified and measures taken to bring them back into use.
6. Advice and practical support is given to vulnerable owner occupiers so that they can maintain their homes and their independence.
7. The energy efficiency plan is developed and delivered.

### **10.0 Strategic Priority Three. Prevent Homelessness.**

#### **Why this is a priority.**

10.1 As the economy and population grows in London and the Southeast so the pressure for housing increases. There is a significant mismatch between the number of newly emerging households and the availability of homes across all tenures. As a consequence prices continue to rise for all types of housing and those at the lower end of the market are struggling to find and keep accommodation.

10.2 SBC has statutory duties relating to homeless households and individuals who meet the criteria of connection to the Borough and housing needs arising from vulnerability and household configuration. Homelessness is a growing problem in Spelthorne Borough and is having a big impact on the budget of the Council.

10.3 Government policy over the last ten years has increased the focus on the prevention of homelessness. Measures have included help to homeowners facing mortgage repossessions; early advice and help to avoid loss of home; support in Courts to stop evictions; provision of advice on housing options; development of low cost homeownership models; initiatives aimed at ending the use of bed and breakfast and programmes to eliminate rough sleeping in cities.

10.4 As previously noted (Section 5.6) in 2012 the Ministerial Working Group on homelessness published the 'gold standard' for homelessness prevention with ten local challenges for Councils to consider as a benchmark for excellence in homelessness prevention.

10.5 SBC has adopted many of these measures but in the last three years there has been a steady increase in homeless presentations. The vast majority of these are either loss of rented accommodation as Landlords sell their properties, or evictions from family homes. The situation is made more acute as fewer landlords are now willing to accept tenants in receipt of housing benefit as the facility for 'direct payment' to the landlord has disappeared; and the Local Housing Allowance has also set a ceiling at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile level for rented properties relating to size and location, resulting in extreme pressure to find affordable rented accommodation.

10.6 The Housing Act 1996 placed a duty on Local Authorities to provide accommodation to people who are judged to be homeless and to have a priority need for accommodation, since then Councils have developed a range of mechanisms for securing temporary accommodation. This has included contractual arrangements with landlords directly by way of 'private sector leases' or through Housing associations taking on leases and then letting to Local Authority nominees.

A large number of Councils have developed incentive packages to attract landlords and there is also a network of 'Private Sector rental access schemes' delivered by Councils and the third sector. SBC will develop a business case for the development of a local lettings agency operated by the Council to enable the discharge of the homelessness duty and to support the work of the housing options team in preventing homelessness.

### **Key objectives within this priority.**

1. SBC to develop and adopt a comprehensive homelessness strategy that fully complies with the gold standard and that has a focus on prevention and the discharge of the statutory duty into the Private rented sector.

2. Develop a local lettings agency to enable the discharge of the duty into the PRS but also to access affordable temporary accommodation for exceptional circumstances.
3. Greater emphasis on partnership working and public education to prevent homelessness and to enable residents to consider alternative strategies to meet their long term housing needs.
4. Utilising the Housing Forum partnership devise 'housing pathways' to support specific vulnerable households and individuals.

### **Expected outcomes.**

1. Homelessness strategy and action plan agreed adhering to the gold standard.
2. Local Lettings agency operational and securing good standard private rented accommodation that provides for the discharge of the statutory duty into the PRS and for temporary accommodation in exceptional circumstances.
3. Increased awareness by residents of the SBC policy on homelessness and the services of the 'housing options' team.
4. End to the use of bed and breakfast type accommodation.
5. Develop a three borough (SBC, Runnymede and Elmbridge) initiative to deliver a winter shelter so as to ensure we comply with the gold standard relating to 'no second night out' for rough sleepers.

## **11.0 Strategic priority four. Support residents to access affordable, well-managed market rent and social rented properties.**

### **Why this is a priority.**

11.1 SBC has responsibilities relating to the prevention of homelessness through the provision of advice on housing options and the adoption of the policy and procedure for the allocation of social housing property in the borough. The tenure mix in the borough is now increasingly diverse with options relating to shared ownership and low cost homeownership models operating alongside the traditional tenures of ownership and renting (private and social). The Housing Options team needs to be able to advise on all these options so that residents are empowered to make realistic decisions.

11.2 The Private rented sector continues to grow and flourish and there are well established systems operating in the private sector through estate agents, lettings agents and Associations of Private Landlords. SBC already contracts directly with private landlords for temporary accommodation and we

intend to develop a local authority lettings agency so that we can secure PRS accommodation for households approaching the Council through the 'prevention route' and the 'homelessness route'

11.3 In July 2014, the Cabinet agreed to adopt a new policy on the discharge of the homelessness duty into the private sector. The policy requires that the Council fully assesses the needs of each household and where they are suitable for an allocation to the PRS, that SBC then sources suitable good standard private rented homes for them to live in. This will be a key responsibility for the SBC lettings agency.

11.6 The medium term financial strategy included support for income generation projects. There is the opportunity within this priority to consider the development of a business case for SBC establishing a separate Housing Company that could purchase street properties; similar projects have been established by a number of other Councils.

#### **Key objectives within this priority.**

1. Ensure that the Housing options team provides detailed information to residents about their housing options including information about housing options and costs outside the borough.
2. Ensure full implementation of the Council's policies on 'discharge of duty into the PRS'; the tenancy strategy; and the allocation policy. In light of the decision to discharge the homelessness duty into the private rented sector we will consider further amendments to the allocation policy to ensure that applicants are encouraged to go down the needs route to allocation rather than the homelessness route.
3. All social housing tenancies let through the Choice based lettings service and let on the basis of fixed term tenancies.
4. Develop a SBC Local lettings agency so that the Council can source good quality property to enable homelessness prevention, the discharge of the homelessness duty into the PRS, and the provision of emergency and temporary accommodation when the need arises.
5. Develop a business case for a Local Authority Housing Company that could borrow from the Council or the Public Works loan board.

#### **Expected outcomes.**

1. Reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation and reduction in the cost to the general fund.
2. Established SBC local letting agency with sufficient units of accommodation to support the homelessness prevention and discharge programme.

3. Fixed term tenancies the norm and more effective use of social housing stock.
4. Business case for Local Housing Company prepared and actioned.

## 12.0 Strategic priority five. Prioritise social housing allocations to those who contribute.

### Why this is a priority.

12.1 Social housing remains the most affordable housing offer and demand continues to increase as the cost of home ownership and private renting is out of the reach of households living on or near the average household income in the borough

LA Name - Export	Bedroom	No of Units	Avg Rent	Avg Service Charge	Rent + Service Charge
Spelthorne	Bedsit	183	81.89	4.12	86.01
	One Bedroom	1391	95.99	5.20	101.19
	Two Bedroom	1196	112.91	4.39	117.30
	Three Bedroom	1532	127.10	2.61	129.72
	Four Bedroom	120	138.67	2.43	141.10
	Five Bedrooms	2	151.14	0.31	151.45
	Six or More Bedrooms	1	187.85		187.85
Grand Total/Weighted average		4425	111.96	4.08	116.04

12.2 Numbers of households on SBC housing register against number of allocations per year

	2011	2012	2013	2014*
Number of households on register	1,546	1,933	2,184	tba
Number of homes allocated	265	241	207	tba

\*\*\*Following the introduction of the Choice based lettings approach there has been a review of all applicants, this accounts for the significant drop in numbers in 2014.

12.3 Such a limited resource needs to be let and managed carefully, the Localism Act enabled Councils to establish local allocation policies that promote the aspirations of the Council and SBC made changes to the allocation policy in line with the new powers. There are significant safeguards required as set out in Government guidance relating to 'preferential treatment' for designated cases including those for whom you have accepted a duty. The policy will now need to be revisited as part of the change of approach to discharge of duty as the Council will need to agree how it intends to deal with households who have voluntarily taken a private rented home as part of a prevention activity, and those who have been discharged into private rented sector following acceptance of the duty.

12.4 Further there are some authorities that have gone considerably further than Spelthorne when framing their policies. In the main this is in response to extreme pressure on the housing register and the desire of Local Authorities to shape communities.

Some of the features included in other Councils' policies

- Increases in length of time of qualification for 'local connection' up to five years.
- Requirements relating to work (including voluntary work or caring responsibility).
- Limitation on time available for certain types of applicants (including households in temporary/emergency accommodation) to bid prior to getting a direct offer.

12.5 The Localism Act also gave Council's further discretionary powers relating to the terms of the tenancy agreements in social housing and SBC adopted a 'Tenancy Strategy' in December 2012. This strategy introduced fixed term tenancies of five years as the norm. It included criteria to be applied at the point of review and systems for advice and appeals. All social housing tenancy rents are required to be within the financial limits set by the Local Housing Allowance.

12.6 This priority is also linked to the policy aspirations of welfare reform. Government policy is focused on incentivising behaviours that support adults into work and financial independence. State benefits are now capped, limited and all applicants are expected to be actively seeking work.

**Key objectives within this priority.**

1. Ensure that all housing applicants understand the extreme pressures on the housing register and that the focus is on encouraging people into work and independence.
2. Ensure that the majority of all social housing lets are occupied by households that are working.

3. Ensure that there is a link to the 'pathways' of support and enablement for the most vulnerable housing applicants and that good support arrangements are in place to enable tenants to maintain their homes.
4. Ensure that the fixed term tenancy policy is implemented so that best use can be made of the limited social housing resource available in the borough.

**Expected outcomes.**

1. A significant proportion of social housing allocations go to working households.
2. That the fixed term tenancy reviews are carried out fully and where necessary, and appropriate, tenants move on to alternative tenures or move into more suitable accommodation.

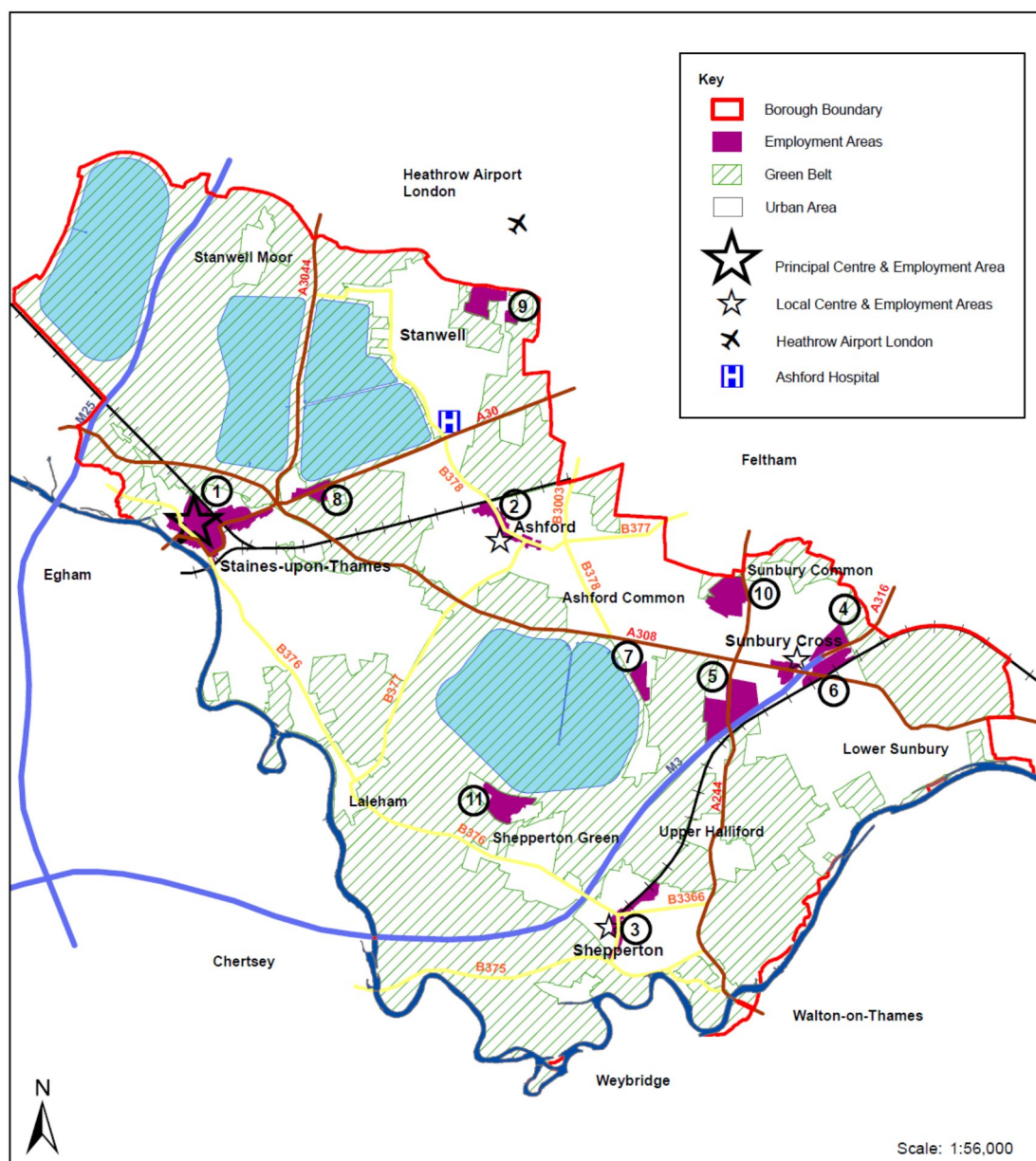
**13.0 Consultation on the draft strategy and feedback.**

13.1 A consultation event was held in the Council in September 2014 to consult on the draft Housing Strategy. Invitations were extended to SBC partners including Registered Housing providers, private developers, Surrey County Council, Police and voluntary sector organisations, resident groups and health partners. The draft strategy was also posted on the SBC website for two weeks to invite comments from members of the public.

## Appendix One Housing in Spelthorne some facts and figures.

Many of the features of housing in Spelthorne relate to location and geography. The map below highlights the significant physical features of the borough:

- The boundaries are dominated by the River Thames, the M25 motorway and the proximity of London.
- There are significant areas of water and in the greenbelt.
- The proximity of Heathrow Airport.
- Good transport and rail links into London and towards the South and South west.

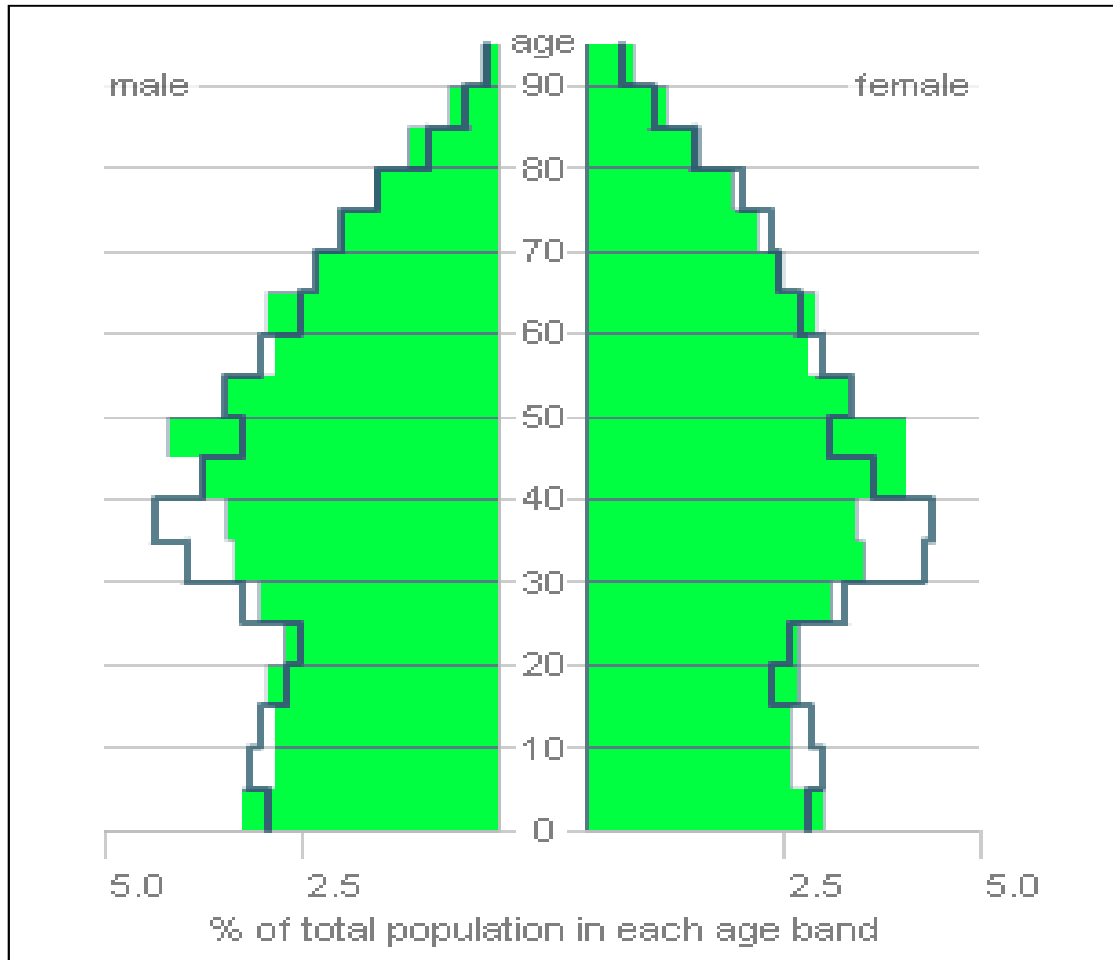




## Population

Spelthorne has a population of 95,000 (Census 2011) and there are 41,200 dwellings. Average income levels are at £29,000 this is low compared to the rest of Surrey.

Overall population distribution 2011 Census (.)

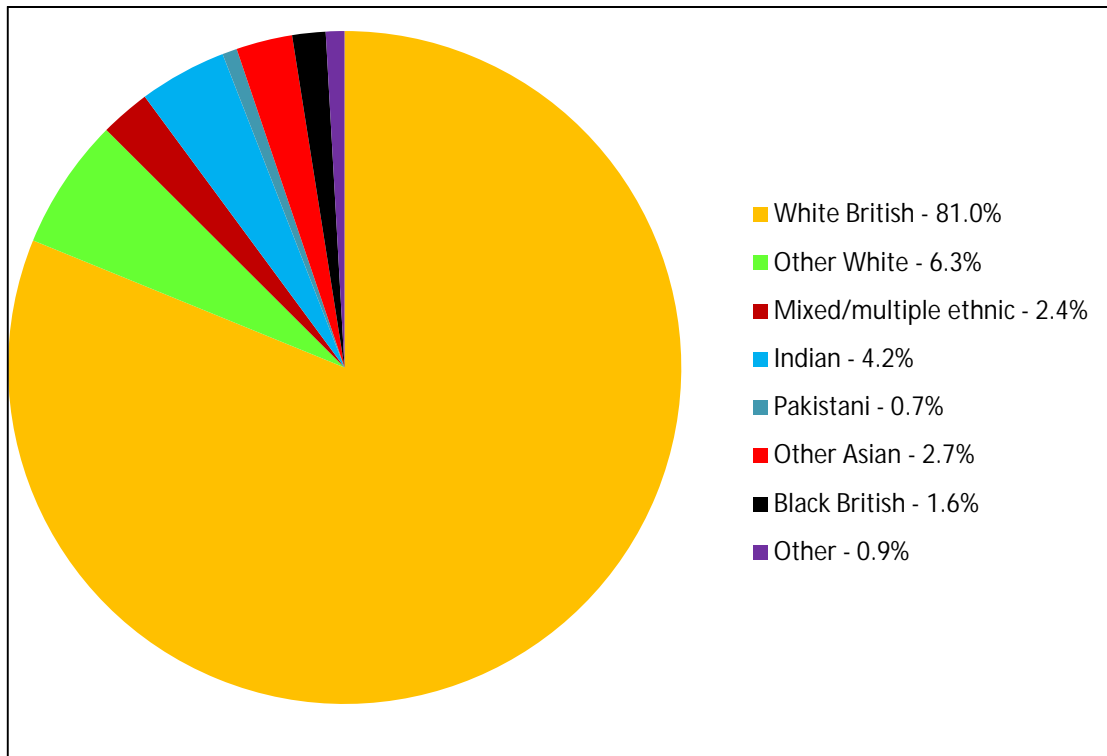


This shows that the borough continues to have a sizable middle-aged to older population.

## Ethnicity.

The ethnic mix in the borough is constantly changing and this has an impact on the types of housing required by the community.

**Key equalities groups (ethnic minorities) 2011 Census.**



**Tenure mix (Census 2011)**

Tenure Type	2001	2011
Owned outright	32.78%	33.9%
Mortgaged	45.10%	38.6%
Private rented	9.07%	12.6%
Social housing	11.82%	12.4%
Shared ownership	1.23%	1.4%

**Housing costs**

Average house purchase costs in SBC (data from Home.co.uk)

	2007	2014	
			Income required to access (assume 20% deposit and rest as mortgage as

			3.5 x household income)
Detached	£265,964	£389,742	Deposit £78k Income £89k
Semi	£225,000	£321,669	Deposit £64.5k Income £73.5k
Terraced	£185,000	£258,825	Deposit £52k Income £59k
Flat	£176,564	£195,095	Deposit £39k Income £56k
All	£220,142	£289,186	Deposit £58k Income £66k

### Cost of Renting

Size of home	Average cost of renting	Local Housing Allowance (ceiling for benefit claimants)
One bed	£808	£722.54
Two bed	£1,113	£923.82
Three bed	£1,335	£1,187.03
Four bed	£2,450	£1,594.32

### Households in housing need (households on the register for affordable housing)

	2011	2012	2013
Number of households on register	1,546	1,933	2,184
Number of homes allocated	265	241	207

**1.0 Strategic priority one. Increase the supply of new homes and improve the tenure mix especially the provision of private rented accommodation.**

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1.1 Increase the supply of new homes.	Encourage registered provider partners and private developers to develop and manage new homes in the borough.	Head of Planning Housing Strategy Officer	Ongoing
	Develop and maintain a pipeline supply of development sites in the Local development plan.	Head of Planning	Ongoing
	Work with partners to identify requirements for specialist housing and ensure requirements are included in Local development plans.	Head of Planning	Ongoing

1.2 Develop a SBC housing company or Special Purpose vehicle for the purpose of developing new affordable homes for rent.	Identify SBC landholdings that could be used for the development of new homes	Head of Asset Management	Ongoing
	Commission a study on the options for developing a SBC housing company.	Assistant Chief Executive – Liz Borthwick	October 2014
	On the basis of the options, move to develop a starter scheme.	Assistant Chief Executive – Liz Borthwick	January 2015

**2.0 Strategic priority two. Improve the quality of existing homes.**

<b>What we will do.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
2.1 Ensure that all social housing landlords comply with the decent homes standard.	Seek confirmation from all operating registered providers on their compliance with the Decent homes standard and their timetable for achieving the standard.	Housing Strategy Officer	March 2015
2.2 Develop a comprehensive Private Sector Housing strategy and implementation plan.	Private sector strategy and action plan agreed by Cabinet.	Environmental Health Manager	October 2014
2.3 Improve access to the private rented homes in order to prevent homelessness, and to	Develop a local lettings agency to offer management services to the private rented sector.	Assistant Chief Executive – Liz Borthwick	March 2015

<p>discharge the housing duty into the private rented sector.</p>			
<p>2.4 Maintain commitment to bringing empty homes back into use.</p>	<p>Bring 15 homes back into use through interventions.</p>	<p>Environmental Health Manager</p>	<p>March 2017</p>
	<p>Increase the levels of enforcement action and ensure that potential CPOs are pursued.</p>	<p>Environmental Health Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

**Strategic priority three. Prevent homelessness.**

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale.</b>
3.1 Develop and adopt a comprehensive homelessness strategy that is compliant with the 'Gold standard'.	Homelessness strategy and action plan agreed by Cabinet.	Head of Housing and Independent Living	October 2014
3.2 Develop a local lettings agency	See action point 2.3 above	See 2.3	See 2.3
3.3 Agree a policy that enables the discharge of the homelessness duty into the private rented sector	Policy agreed in July 2014	Head of Housing and Independent Living	March 2015



	Communication strategy in place to enable the rollout of the strategy and to increase public awareness of the role of the housing options team.	Assistant Chief Executive – Liz Borthwick Plus Communications	November 2014
3.4 Devise housing pathways for vulnerable households and individuals.	Through the SBC Housing Forum, work with partners to identify vulnerable groups and to devise ‘care pathways’ to support their housing needs.	Head of Housing and Independent Living	March 2016
3.5 Seek to end the use of bed and breakfast accommodation.	Through the work of the Housing Options team and the local lettings agency ensure that all homeless applicants, or those vulnerable to becoming homeless are directed to PRS accommodation.	Head of Housing and Independent Living	Ongoing

3.6 Develop a three borough response to providing winter shelters.	Develop a project, including external funding to provide a winter shelter	Head of Housing and Independent Living / Lead is Elmbridge Borough Council	Bid submitted
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**Strategic priority four. Support residents to access affordable, well-managed market rent and social rented properties. (only includes elements not covered in action plan above)**

<b>What we will do.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead</b>
4.1 Ensure that all residents approaching the Council for housing advice receive comprehensive advice on options including moving outside the borough.	Continue to provide specialist training and approach for SBC staff.	Ongoing	Housing Manager
4.2 Ensure full implementation of the Council's policy on discharge of	Consult with partners and appropriate agencies to the changes with the policy and implement.	March 2015	Head of Housing and Independent Living and Housing Manager

homelessness duty into the PRS.			
4.3 Ensure all social housing tenancies in the borough are let through choice based lettings and let on fixed term tenancies.	Implement of new scheme via Locata	October 2014	Housing Manager

## DRAFT – Housing Options data

## Appendix two

Advice Reason Description	Number of Cases 2011/12	Number of Cases 2012/13	Number of Cases 2013/14
16-17S AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS	19	17	13
AFFORDABILITY IN PRS (WELFARE REFORM)			82
ARMY/ NAVY/ RAF DISCHARGE	4	4	3
ASKED TO LEAVE BY FRIENDS/ FAMILY	219	254	282
CARE LEAVERS	5	7	4
COMPLEX SUPPORT NEEDS	7	4	4
DISREPAIR	7	9	12
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	150	100	80
EX-OFFENDERS	29	28	28
HOSPITAL DISCHARGE (GENERAL NEEDS)	12	14	4
HOSPITAL DISCHARGE (MENTAL HEALTH)	4	4	4
MORTGAGE ARREARS	111	74	56
OTHER (YOU MUST SPECIFY IN CASE QUESTIONS)	198	158	155
PRIVATE RENTED: RISK OF HOMELESSNESS	211	196	237
RELATIONSHIP BREAKDOWN	72	67	72
RSL: RISK OF HOMELESSNESS	46	41	39
SHR CASEWORK (MEDICAL/ SOCIAL ISSUES)	24	38	12
TENANCY QUERY	83	65	62
TRAVELLERS/ ROMANY ETC	2		1
TOTAL	1203	1080	1150
excluding Domestic Abuse	1053	980	1070

# Draft Private Sector Housing Strategy 2014 - 2017



## **Private sector housing strategy.**

### **1.0 Introduction from Cllr Pinkerton**

Spelthorne Council recognises that a person's home can have a significant impact on their quality of life; that it is crucial to their social mobility, health and wellbeing. We also recognise that decent affordable housing is connected to the broader health of Spelthorne's economy.

With over 87% of Spelthorne's residents living in private sector housing, of which 12.6% are privately rented and 12.4% are social rented. The 2011 census has highlighted that the proportion of households living in private sector rented accommodation is increasing, and that private sector rented accommodation is becoming the main source of affordable housing for many households.

In developing this strategy we also acknowledge that the private rented sector is changing. With the recent legislative changes and Welfare Reforms, along with the reality that the numbers of people on social housing waiting lists outweigh the supply of social housing, it is essential that our approach supports the increasing emphasis on the private rented sector to ensure it meets the standards and quality required.

### **2.0 Overview.**

2.1 This strategy forms a key part of the SBC Housing Strategy and has taken account of the Corporate Plan and the Medium Term Financial Plan. It is compatible with the SBC Homelessness Strategy. The strategy addresses the statutory regulatory responsibilities of the Council and sets out how the Council will use its enabling powers to promote, support and develop best quality private housing in the borough for those who rent and those who own their homes.

2.2 This strategy explains the way the Council will offer general advice, assistance and support with unsatisfactory housing, and in some cases financial assistance to provide disabled facility adaptations, and to signpost residents to grants they may be able to access to help with works to repair and improve their homes. It also sets out how the Council will use legal powers where necessary to enforce statutory standards.

2.3 The strategy is based on evidence about local housing conditions and the priorities identified in national and local policy. The last private sector house condition and energy efficiency survey was conducted in 2006.

2.4 Local authorities have significant range of responsibilities relating to the private housing sector including:

- Responsibility as the 'strategic authority' for housing and requirement to conduct regular reviews relating to assessing housing needs and housing conditions.
- The statutory role of developing and implementing the Local development plan; local planning guidance and the determination of planning and Building/ development applications.
- To maximise the opportunities for the development of affordable housing in the Borough through the use of its planning policies.
- Regulation of housing relating to health and safety and housing conditions
- Registration of Homes in Multiple occupation.
- Requirements to ensure empty homes are brought back into use.
- Provision of grants including Disability facility grants; home improvement grants and energy efficiency grants (subject to government funding).
- Duties relating to homelessness including prevention; assessment of those in housing need and provision of emergency and temporary accommodation. This includes the inspection of all Bed and Breakfast type accommodation used as emergency accommodation by the Council. There are also specific duties that relate to securing appropriate private rented accommodation so that the homelessness duty can be discharged.

2.5 Resources available to support this range of activities are small (approximately 2 FTE) so this strategy is focused on areas of priority based on an assessment of risk. The work of the team falls into four main categories:

- Providing advice, information and specialist support to members of the public, other staff in SBC and professional staff in partner organisations;
- Enforcement activity;
- The provision of disabled facility grants and working with partners to prevent vulnerable people dying of excess cold in their homes.
- Special focus projects, for example, to provide advice to households living in mobile homes about how they can improve the thermal and fuel efficiency of their homes, and signpost them to grants that are available to assist them carry out improvements.

2.6 Disabled facilities grants for major adaptations

The Council has a duty to provide disabled facility adaptation grants (DFGs), subject to a means test, for essential adaptations to give disabled people better freedom of movement into and around their homes and to give access to essential facilities within the home and garden. The annual DFG budget is £507,000.

The Council routinely identifies grants that are available to the public to improve the condition of their homes, particularly to improve energy and fuel efficiency. Where grant funding streams are identified, the Council bids to obtain grant funding to help vulnerable people to improve the safe condition of their home.

### 3.0 Spelthorne Borough housing stock.

3.1 Spelthorne has a population of 95,000 (Census 2011) and there are 41,200 dwellings.

3.2 Tenure mix across the borough (Census data)

Tenure Type	2001	2011
Owned outright	32.78%	33.9%
Mortgaged	45.10%	38.7%
Private rented	9.07%	12.6%
Social housing	11.82%	12.4%
Shared ownership	1.23%	1.4%
Living rent free		1.0%

Although not as pronounced as in London, over the last few years there has been a shift in tenure from owner occupation into private rented accommodation and it is reasonable to expect that the figure will have grown in the last three years as more small investors move into the buy to let market.

The Housing Act 2004 places a duty on Local authorities to keep the condition of the Housing stock under review so that they can make proper decisions about the actions they need to take to deal with unsatisfactory housing.

Some of the information used to develop this strategy has been obtained through the day to day work of SBC officers. A major source of information has also been the borough-wide private sector house condition and energy efficiency survey from 2006, we continue to rely on that data but one of the recommendations arising from this strategy will be the need to commission a new survey in the near future.

The main headlines from the 2006 survey:

#### Property profile

- 8.7% of the stock was constructed before 1919
- 68.3% of the stock was built after the second world war
- 20.95% of stock is flats; the predominant building type is terraced and semi-detached.

#### Poor Housing

- 1% of the stock is classified as unfit compared to 4.2% national rate
- 8.7% of Spelthorne's housing stock is classified as 'poor housing'
- Poor housing in the PRS is higher than for the owner-occupied sector



- Majority of poor housing is in older property.
- Condensation problems are prevalent in the oldest stock and at a significant proportion in the private rented sector.

#### Decent homes

- Overall 25.5% of occupied homes fail to meet the Decent Home (DH) standard
- 26.1% of occupied owner occupied homes fail to meet the DH standard
- 36.1% of occupied PRS fail to meet the DH standard

#### Vulnerable households

- 21.4% of households in the borough are vulnerable.
- In the private sector (owner occupation and PRS) 39.5% of vulnerable households are living in non-decent homes.

#### Energy efficiency

- The overall energy efficiency of the housing stock is better than the average for England with an average National Home Energy Rating (NHER) of 6.4 and an average SAP of 55
- The total number of homes estimated to be at risk of fuel poverty is about 17% of all households
- There are over 3,000 elderly households in the Borough living in dwellings where the SAP (calculation of energy efficiency of building,) rating is less than 40 (the national average is 51.8) of these, 1000 have a SAP rating of less than 30.

### 3.3 Housing costs in the private sector.

#### Average cost of renting in Spelthorne.

Size of property	Average rent levels 2014
Studio flats	£630 pcm
One bed	£808 pcm
Two bed	£1,113 pcm
Three bed	£1,335 pcm
Four bed	£1,450 pcm

Rent increases are likely to be over 18% by 2017 and in London 24%. Rental yields average 4.7% per year. The average London rent rose at 2.8 times the rate of the average salary; this will put pressure on outer London areas.

### 3.4 Average house purchase costs in Spelthorne (data from Home.co.uk)

	2007	2014	Income required to access (assume 20% deposit and rest as mortgage as 3.5 x household income)
Detached	£265,964	£389,742	Deposit £78k Income £89k

Semi	£225,000	£321,669	Deposit £64.5k Income £73.5k
Terraced	£185,000	£258,825	Deposit £52k Income £59k
Flat	£176,564	£195,095	Deposit £39k Income £56k
All	£220,142	£289,186	Deposit £58k Income £66k

Ownership is now out of the reach of most working household. The average deposit by first time buyers in London is now £64,000 (Council of Mortgage lenders August 2013)

3.5 Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels for Housing Benefit payments in Spelthorne.

As part of the reforms to the welfare benefits system, the Department for Work and Pensions introduced maximum sums to be paid for housing costs through 'Local Housing Allowance levels' these were initially set at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile and have since been reduced to the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile. The LHA determines the benchmark for the fixing of Housing benefit payments to all claimants. This means that residents in receipt of housing benefit can now only afford one in three properties of the type available in the area. It also means that landlords have become increasingly reluctant to accept benefit claimants as tenants. It is becoming almost impossible to source private sector accommodation in Spelthorne at these prices

Current LHA levels monthly (April 2014-March 2015):

Shared accommodation (single people under 35)	£364
One bedroom	£722.54
Two Bedroom	£923.82
Three Bedroom	£1187.03
Four Bedroom	£1594.32

#### 4.0 National, regional and local policy context.

4.1 This strategy needs to reflect and contribute to local, regional and national policy objectives. The Government set out its overall ambitions for housing in 2011 document '**Laying the foundations- a housing strategy for England**'. Its policies in relation to the private sector focused on:

- Supporting older and vulnerable people to live independently at home
- Improving energy efficiency particularly through the Green Deal
- Supporting the growth of the private rented sector (with no proposals to increase regulation of the private rented sector)

- Returning empty homes back into use.

4.2 **Welfare reform Act (2012)** introduced a wide range of reforms designed to make the benefits and tax credits system fairer and simpler, improving financial incentives to encourage work. The main challenges for landlords, tenants and the Council include:

- The introduction of capped Universal Credit, which will include a housing element and is paid monthly directly to the tenant not the landlord.
- Housing benefit property size criteria that means the reduction of benefit to working age households who are under occupying rented accommodation.
- Changes to the Local Housing Allowance so that housing costs are set at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile cost (as opposed to the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile) and includes an increased age threshold from 25yr to 35yr so that single claimants are only entitled to the shared room rate.

These reforms are having a significant impact on the private rented sector in the borough evidenced by the increased number of evictions and end of tenancies by landlords reluctant to take benefit claimants; the challenge the Council faces in securing affordable private rented accommodation at the Local housing allowance level and the increase call on discretionary housing payments to 'top-up' rents in the PRS.

4.3 Review of the barriers to institutional investment in private rented homes (**Montague report 2012**). In this report Sir Adrian Montague was asked to look into how the Government might facilitate rapid development of the Private Rented Sector (PRS) through capital investment vehicles. The report agreed that there was real potential for investment in large scale developments of purpose built rented housing and made three key recommendations:

- Ensure that Local Authorities use the planning system to encourage and facilitate PRS developments
- Ensure that Central Government releases land holdings for PRS, with a particular focus on London.
- Government to provide carefully targeted incentives to stimulate rapid development of new business models from a range of promoters- public sector landowners, registered providers, or private sector house builders.

The report was followed by a HCA funded 'Build to rent' programme in 2012 worth £200m and in 2013 worth £1b; these are fully recoverable commercial investment pots available to fund up to 50% of eligible development costs with returns to Government being realised upon refinancing or sale of a developers interest to an institutional investor. For example A2D in association with Crest Nicholson were successful in the first round and are building a PRS development of 46 apartments in Bristol, this is part of A2D's strategy to develop/acquire 1,000 private rented homes over the next five years.

4.4 The Government also championed 'localism' as part of the 'Big Society' agenda and the **Localism Act 2011** included a general power of competency

and provision for key decisions relating to housing (discharging the homelessness duty into the private rented sector; establishing local tenancy strategies relating to fix term tenancies in the social housing sector and local allocation policies) to be determined at the local level

The Localism Act allows local authorities to fully discharge the main housing duty by a 'private rented sector offer' (s193 (7AA)-(7AC) Housing Act 1996 as amended by 2.148(5)-(7) Localism Act 2011). This must be an offer of assured shorthold tenancy with a minimum fixed term of 12 months. The legislation was followed by supplementary guidance in November 2012 in the form of the **Homelessness (Suitability of accommodation) Order** which set out the minimum requirements for the quality of private rented homes offered to applicants.

- The Council adopted the following policy in July 2014:-

*Spelthorne Borough Council will consider a 'private sector offer' (PSO) to end the homelessness duty in all cases. If an options officer considers that a PSO is appropriate to the needs of the applicant, and if suitable accommodation can be secured, then such an offer will routinely be made.*

*This will be considered the household's one offer of suitable accommodation and whether the household accepts or refuse this offer, it will discharge the Council's statutory homelessness duty.*

Under this policy the Council will make 'suitable' offers of private rented accommodation in order to discharge the homelessness duty. In assessing the suitability of the accommodation the Council will comply with the relevant legislation, associated case law and the Code of Guidance as it relates to location, conditions and affordability. (Appendix one sets out the detail of the SBC policy)

4.5 In practice the **Housing Act 2004** and the **Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002** still remain the main influences on the way local councils deal with private sector housing.

The Housing Act 2004 introduced major changes to statutory housing standards including a new minimum legal standard for housing. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) requires properties to be free of serious hazards that could affect the health of residents, visitors and passers-by. Along with other legal provisions, the Act also requires the owners of higher risk 'Houses in multiple occupation' (HMOs), typically three story bedsit type housing, to apply for a licence and also gives local authorities strong powers to deal with long term empty homes.

4.6 The **Regulatory Reform Order (2002)** led to major changes in the way local authorities can give financial help to people to repair or improve private sector homes. It gave local authorities greater freedom to set their own framework to provide financial assistance rather than simply apply national rules. However to do so they have to show that their frameworks sit

comfortably with national and local policies and with local priorities identified from evidence of housing conditions and housing demand.

4.7 However policies need to be tied to resources and there has been significant limitations on Spelthorne Borough Council budgets that will continue into the future, this means that investment is limited and the prime responsibility for the repair and improvement of a property does rest with the owner.

4.8 **Right to Buy and Help to buy schemes.** In 2012 the Government increased cash incentives for right to buy applicants from £16,000 to £75,000 thereby 'enabling' many more social housing tenants to be able to buy their own homes. They also introduced a new equity loan scheme aimed at first time buyers called 'Help to Buy'. This scheme enabled buyers with a 5% deposit and the capacity to raise a 75% (loan to value) mortgage to access the remaining 20% as an interest free loan for five years; the ceiling on the value of the property was set at £600,000.

4.9 The **Energy Act 2011** contained a range of measures aimed at reducing carbon emissions. The Act introduced the Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation (ECO). The Green Deal is a scheme to allow homeowners to install energy efficiency measures without any upfront costs for example new boilers, window replacement, cavity wall insulation. These improvements are paid for over a period of years with instalments being met from savings in fuel bills. Eligibility for the scheme depends upon a 'golden rule' this states that the energy savings a property makes in a 25 year period must be equal to or more than the cost of the implementing the changes in the first place. The cost is then a charge on the energy bill for that property and passes to any future owners.

For properties where the 'golden rule' cannot be met (the Government indicates this will include most solid wall properties) and/or the household is vulnerable, additional support may be available through the ECO.

The Government sees local authorities as having a significant role in the Green Deal as promoters of the programme and as, either direct providers co-ordinating finance and the delivery of works, or by working in partnership with commercial Green Deal providers and community partners.

4.10 The **Care Act 2014** will come into force over the next two years. It pulls together the raft of legislation relating to meeting the needs of adults requiring support and their carers. The main provisions of the Act relate to:

- Prevention or the delaying of care and support to adults and carers.
- Integration of work between local government and the NHS
- An enhanced duty to provide information about care and support services
- The promotion of high quality care providers
- An obligation on public bodies to co-operate
- Requirement that Social Services notify housing and health bodies if a need is identified in a community care assessment.

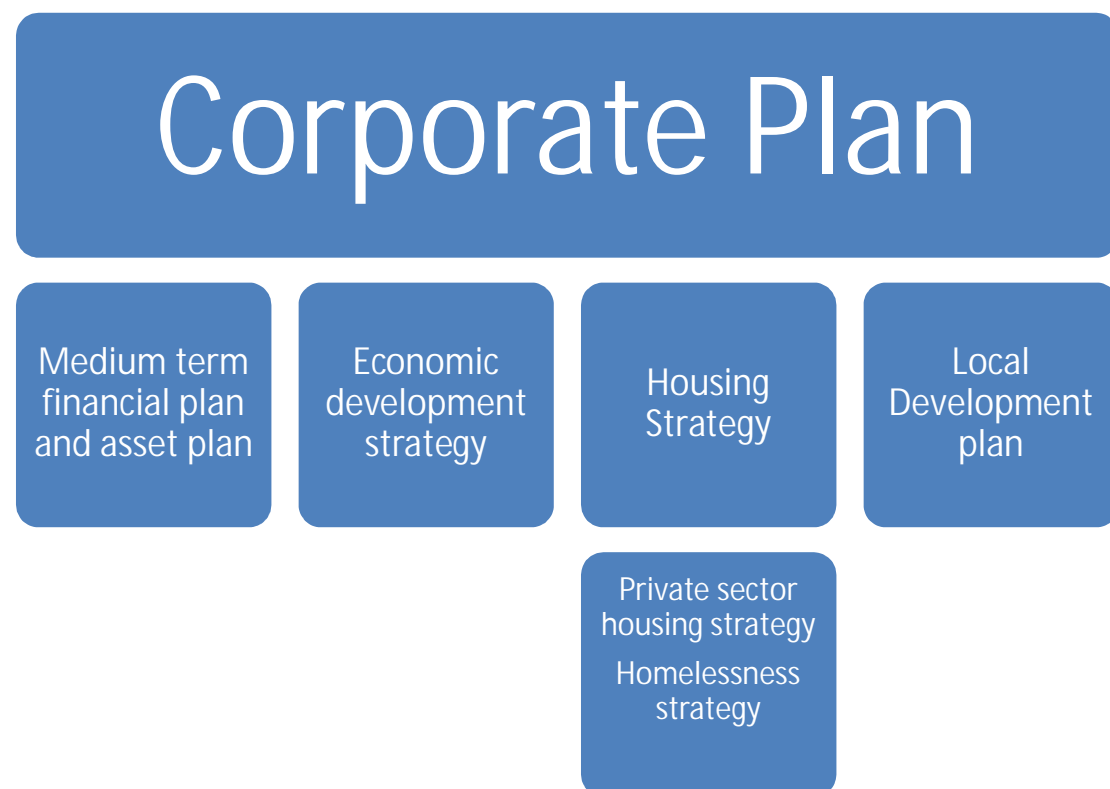
- The provision of care and support services (this includes goods and services, information and advice)
- Duty to assess the needs of adults and their carers

## 5.0 Corporate plan priorities for 2013-15

5.1 At the local level this Private Sector Housing Strategy fits within the family of the Council's wider Housing Strategy and the allied strategies relating to Finance (Medium Term strategy), the economy (Economic Development strategy) and the Local Development Plan.

**Mission: Delivering quality, best value for money services that matter most to our residents.**

**Vision: Creating opportunities and prosperity for our borough  
Delivering quality of life services.  
Value for money Council.**



### Vision for Private sector housing

**To ensure that Spelthorne Borough has good quality private sector housing to meet the housing needs of residents and to ensure that Spelthorne is a thriving place to live and work.**

### Strategic objectives

1. Improve the condition of private housing through support and regulation.
2. Ensure that private housing (owner occupation and rented) is suitable to meet the needs of disabled and older residents.
3. Ensure there are sufficient good quality private rented homes available to enable the Council to discharge the homelessness duty into the private rented sector.
4. Maximise the use of existing accommodation through conversions and bringing empty homes back into use.
5. Improve energy efficiency of dwellings and ensure affordable warmth is available to residents.

### 6.0 Strategic Priority One. Improve the condition of private housing through support and regulation.

#### Why this is a priority

6.1 The last housing condition survey (2006) found that 1% of stock was classified as unfit, with a further 8.7% of housing stock assessed as 'poor'. Over the last seven years work has continued to identify homes in poor condition and to ensure that the Council uses available powers and resources to bring homes up to standard and to deal effectively with home owners (landlords or owner occupiers) who neglect their responsibilities.

#### Housing Condition and Grant Provision Services Provided

Grants	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Number of DFG enquiries	95	98	103	138
Number of DFG approved	88	55	48	45
Total DFG completed	57	55	79	74
Total DFG spend	£469,779	£562,134	£362,306	£426,261
No. of warm home grants given (boiler repairs, boiler servicing, heater loan)	-	2	23	27
No. of warm home grants given through our partners Age UK (CO alarms, heater loans, draught proofing, hot water jacket, window insulation film)	-	-	87	NA
<b>Housing</b>				
Housing complaints from RSL tenants	74	51	52	68
Housing complaints from other social landlords	8	3	4	8
Housing complaints from private tenants	104	105	102	91
General housing enquiries	41	24	21	29
Immigration visits	5	6	1	4
Housing overcrowding complaints	11	8	16	14
Housing notices served	29	21	36	36

<b>Grants</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Homes made safe through the service of housing enforcement notices	9	10	5	5
Housing inspections made including out of borough inspections of HMO temporary accommodation	126	244	214	214
Formal cautions given	0	1	0	0

6.2 Vulnerable and elderly home owners remain a priority for action. The private sector regulation team works closely with other agencies (health, social care organisations, and community organisations) to ensure vulnerable homeowners are identified. Where ever possible the focus remains on preventative work this includes advice, practical support and access to grants.

6.3 For most people the majority of their time is spent at home. Research shows that there are clear links between sub-standard houses and poor health- for example damp homes can lead to respiratory illnesses including asthma; cold homes place an additional load on the circulatory system and the Marmot review (2010) highlighted the links between heart attacks, strokes and respiratory disease in the winter months for people living in poorly heated homes.

6.4 The Housing Act 2004 requires all local authorities to have a licensing scheme for homes in multiple occupation (HMO) that have three or more storeys and are occupied by five or more people who form more than one household.

6.5 There are relatively few licensable HMOs in Spelthorne due to the low number of three storey residential properties in the Borough, however it is estimated that there are 250 to 300 HMOs in SBC. A significant proportion of these homes do not meet the decent homes standard.

6.6 The Housing Condition survey is a key tool in the development of the SBC approach as it helps determine the extent of the need, the basis for the allocation of SBC resources and deployment of staff, and finally the benchmark against which the activity can be judged. There is an obligation under the Housing Act 2004 that Councils will conduct regular condition surveys, and SBC now needs to do that.

6.7 Working with Action Surrey, a county-wide impartial energy advice centre, have recently started to log enquires since 2013 on a database management system ZOHO. Basic information is gathered about the customer and their property that is to be passed to a contractor for a product or service. To date 578 queries have been logged with over 100 installs



including boiler repair/replacements and loft and cavity wall insulation and solar photovoltaic panels.

### **Key objectives within this priority**

1. Commission a new Housing Conditions survey.
2. Continue to work with partners to identify vulnerable and elderly homeowners in need of advice on how best to manage their homes.
3. Where necessary ensure that legal powers are used to deal with statutory failures and that SBC maximises the opportunity to publicise action taken.
4. Maintain the approach to the effective regulation of HMOs.
5. Where grants are available that these be targeted on households in most need.

### **Expected outcomes**

1. New housing condition survey available and used as benchmark.
2. SBC private sector team activity continues to focus on preventative advice followed, and where necessary enforced by legal action.
3. All licensable HMOs are licensed.

## **7.0 Strategic priority two. Ensure that private housing (owner occupied and rented) is suitable to meet the needs of disabled and older residents.**

### **Why this is a priority**

7.1 With a growing population of older people, especially residents living into their 80's and 90's, there are increasing challenges relating to the maintenance and suitability of their homes. The stock condition survey confirmed that older residents are disproportionately more likely to occupy non-decent housing.

7.2 Demand for adaptations has also increased as changes in social policy and medical advances have allowed people of all ages with varying levels of disabilities and complex needs to lead more independent lives in the community. Many children with significant disabilities are living into adulthood which can mean that families need to adapt their homes more than once as the child becomes an adult and their needs change.

7.3 Research has shown that people are 2.8 times more likely to fall if they live in unsuitable housing which needs adaptation, for example where ramps, a stair lift or level access bathing facilities are needed. The provision of small

improvements and adaptations can reduce the risk of accidents and long term illness and prevent the risk of hospital admission or need for long-term care.

7.4 The Care Act 2014 also places additional duties on local authorities to assess and allocated resources to support elderly, sick and disabled people living in the community. The duty requires Councils to take preventative steps to ensure that people do not come into care. This includes requirements relating to the suitability of housing.

### **Key objectives within this priority**

1. Work with partner organisations to ensure that advice, grants (where available) and floating support services are targeted at vulnerable and older residents.
2. Design and deliver a high quality disabled facilities grants service to enable more residents to live independently and to maintain their independence.
3. Work with partners to keep vulnerable residents safe in their homes.
4. Seek to enable older residents to maintain independence in their own homes.
5. Ensure that the Council meets the obligations in the Care Act 2014.

### **Expected outcomes**

1. Reduction in accidents at home and admissions to hospital as a result of accidents.
2. Increased number of older and vulnerable people able to maintain independent living arrangements.
3. Continue to work with partner organisations such as the Fire Service, the Police, and Social Services to target high risk properties and provide access to advice, aids and equipment.
4. Improved liaison arrangements with Occupational therapy services to enable early discharge from hospital.
5. Continue to identify and promote grants available to vulnerable and older residents to enable them to remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible.

**8.0 Strategic Priority three. Ensure there are sufficient good quality private rented homes available to enable the Council to discharge the homelessness duty into the private rented sector.**

### Why this is a priority

8.1 As previously noted the Localism Act included provisions to enable Councils to make local decisions relating to dealing with homeless households and in determining local allocation policies.

On the matter of discharge of duty, the Act allows local authorities to decide that when a duty is accepted under the homelessness criteria you can agree a policy that allows the Council to discharge that duty into the private sector **without** requiring the agreement of the applicant. The Spelthorne Borough Council policy was agreed in July 2014 (see Appendix one).

The Government issued guidance and regulations relating to how discharge should be managed; this included requirements relating to physical condition of the property; Landlord behaviour as a 'fit and proper person'; health and safety requirements; licencing of Homes in Multiple occupation and a written tenancy agreement of at least 12 months. The expectation is that accommodation will be secured in the borough but that may not be possible, the regulations require that councils consider the distance from the borough, the significance of the disruption to employment, caring responsibilities or education, the proximity of medical facilities and support and the proximity and accessibility of local services, amenities and transport. When all of this is taken into account, out of borough placements are permissible. Boroughs are required to inform other councils when they make a placement in their borough. This is necessary for 'safeguarding' reasons; the Council will need to develop protocols to ensure that this matter is addressed as a key risk issue (this matter is addressed in the Homelessness Strategy).

#### Number of homelessness applications and acceptances in SBC

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14*
Homelessness applications made to SBC	7	9	28	101	137
Homelessness acceptances	1	2	7	39	89
Percentage of applications accepted as duty	14%	22%	25%	38.6%	65%
*These figures include 15 households who were placed in temporary accommodation in 2010 and 2011 but for whom we only accepted the duty in 2013/14.					

This table shows the steady increase in the number of homeless households approaching the Council over the past few years. With the adoption of the new discharge policy the hope is that the number of applications will decrease but there will remain a need for the Council to identify landlords willing to house local households through either the preventative route (via the work of the Housing Options team) or through the homelessness route (where we are now discharging that duty into the PSL). Further the Housing Options team will be facilitating the development of a SBC 'Local Lettings Agency' so the private sector housing policy and the staff working to this policy will have a

key role in promoting the standards required to meet the demand and support the work of the lettings agency.

### **Key objectives within this priority**

1. Increase the availability of good standard and affordable private rented homes (at the Local Housing Allowance level) through working with the Local lettings Agency and directly with landlords.
2. Support the work of the Housing Options team and the Local Lettings Agency by inspecting private rented homes to check that the properties meet the 'suitability criteria'
3. Encourage the development and acquisition of properties for private lets through all the available vehicles:
  - Local Housing Company
  - Individual investors in the buy to let market
  - Property investment companies and banks.
4. Work with A2 Dominion and other local registered providers to identify leaseholder properties that are being sub-let with a view to extending the opportunity for these landlords to let their properties through the local lettings agency.

### **Expected outcomes**

1. Sufficient units of private rented accommodation secured to meet the demand from the Housing Options and homelessness team.
2. Growth in the private rented sector.
3. Development of protocol for out of borough discharge of duty to private rented sector.

## **9.0 Strategic Priority four. Maximise the use of existing accommodation through conversions and bringing empty homes back into use.**

### **Why this is a priority**

9.1 Given the extent of housing need in the borough, empty homes and unused buildings, are often unsightly and a waste of a precious resource. In 'Laying the Foundations; A Housing Strategy for England' the Government made it clear that bringing empty homes back into use was a priority. £100m was made available for housing providers, community and voluntary groups to tackle problematic empty homes and for local authorities, the Government also offered significant financial incentives by ensuring that empty homes brought back into use qualified for 'New Homes Bonus'.

In SBC we have had an empty homes project running over the last few years. This has used data from the Council tax system to identify properties and a

part-time officer then follows up with letters, contact and advice. We estimate that there are 50 empty homes in the borough.

The Council has also been looking at its own property portfolio and agreeing to conversions into rented homes so that they can be made available to homeless families.

There are also opportunities for larger scale conversion, A2 Dominion converted their own headquarters on the river into a mixed residential and office unit, thereby creating more units of accommodation and an income stream.

### **Key objectives within this priority**

1. Maintain the work of the empty homes service.
2. Maintain a log of local authority owned empty buildings and consider further opportunities for conversion or sale.
3. Maintain a log of other empty buildings in the borough and investigate approaches it can use to negotiating with the owners about future use.

### **Expected outcomes**

1. 15 empty homes brought back into use through empty homes projects over the next three years
2. SBC continues to convert its own buildings.

## **10.0 Strategic Priority five. Improve energy efficiency of dwellings and ensure affordable warmth is available to residents.**

### **Why this is a priority**

10.1 One of the most common issues in private sector housing is a lack of thermal efficiency and excess cold which can lead to risk of death and ill health associated with living in a cold home. It is vital when improving energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty we concentrate on improving health and wellbeing among vulnerable groups.

10.2 Following the Hill report the Government revised the definition of fuel poverty so that it links those living on the lowest incomes with those paying the highest costs (LIHC measure). Average incomes in SBC are the lowest in Surrey County. SBC is committed to raising the profile of this issue and encouraging homeowners to adopt measures that reduce costs to households and cut carbon omissions. A particular focus is on the 340 households living in park homes many of these are elderly and vulnerable residents.

10.3 Spelthorne is working with Surrey boroughs through the Surrey Energy and Sustainability Partnership along with the delivery partner Action Surrey to deliver energy efficiency projects to vulnerable residents.

#### **Key objectives within this priority**

1. We will be focusing on making further improvements to our services for residents who are in fuel poverty
2. Closer partnership working with the community, public health and voluntary sector to help reduce cold winter deaths.
3. Development of a referral system with the Clinical Commissioning Group with a focus on the needs of groups who are vulnerable to the cold.

#### **Expected outcomes**

1. 300 houses to have energy efficiency improvements over the next three years
2. 200 park homes provided with solid wall insulation through the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund over the next two years

### **11.0 Developing an action plan, the annual review and engagement with partners.**

11.1 An implementation plan is attached to this report as Appendix 1; it includes the commitment to an annual review of this strategy.

11.2 The SBC overarching Housing Strategy includes a commitment to a partnership group that draws together all of the key housing stakeholders. It is intended that the promotion of this strategy will be through that forum. The Housing Strategy Partnership Forum will represent stakeholders from the private sector including landlords, investors, estate agents, resident associations and private and social housing sector tenants.

As our resources become smaller over the next few years we will need to share resources and expertise and rely increasingly on the promotion of best practice with legal action as a final resort.

**Strategic priority one Improve the condition of private homes through support and regulation.**

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1.1 Ensure we have up to date information and data to support the Private Sector strategy	Commission a new housing conditions survey	April 2015	Housing Development Officer
	Once the survey is complete, review the action plan to ensure it is in line with the findings.	October 2015	Housing Development Office, (with input from Senior Environmental Health Manager, Head of Housing and Independent Living, Sustainability manager)
	Establish targets for action in light of the findings.	October 2015	
1.2 Improve the standard of private sector homes	Encourage landlords to join a professional body	August 2015	Senior Environmental Health Manager
	Take enforcement action against landlords who fail to take action to remedy Category 1 or 2 hazards.	On-going	Senior Environmental Health Manager
	Take action when instances of ASB and noise nuisance are established.	On-going	Senior Environmental Health Manager
1.3 Support the work of the Housing options team in	Carry out inspections to ensure that private rented homes	On-going	Head of Housing and Independent Living

What we will do	Action	Timescale	Lead
securing suitable accommodation to meet the requirements of the 'discharge of duty' orders.	secured through the Local Lettings Agency or the Options Team comply with the discharge of duty order.		
1.4 Provide effective regulation of houses in multiple occupation.	Continue to license HMOs and identify unlicensed HMOs and take action where appropriate.	On-going	Senior Environmental Health Manager
	Take action to bring licensed HMOs up to standard.	On-going	Senior Environmental Health Manager
1.5 Improve the professionalism of landlords within Spelthorne	Investigate the feasibility of introducing a voluntary registration scheme for private landlords	August 2015	Senior Environmental Health Manager
	Introduce the scheme if found to be feasible	October 2015	Senior Environmental Health Manager

**Strategic priority two Ensure that private housing (owners occupiers and rented) is suitable to meet the needs of disabled and older residents.**



<b>What we will do.</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Lead</b>
2.1 Ensure that advice and grants are targeted at vulnerable and elderly residents.	Work through the housing partnership forum to ensure referrals for advice and assessment for grants.	On-going	Senior Environmental Health Manager
2.2 Improve the DFG provision service	Reduce the amount of time it takes to complete DFG (from receipt of the Occupations Therapists report to completion of the adaptation works)	June 2015	Senior Environmental Health Manager
2.2 Help to maintain the safety and security of private sector homes.	Work with the Fire Service and the Police to target high risk properties and provide access to advice, aids and equipment.	On-going	Senior Environmental Health Manager
2.3 Hospital discharge....any work with occupational therapy services at Ashford Hospital?	Explore how the Council can work with the Hospital services to ready homes for the discharge of patients. Also to identify any funding that would enable the Council to do this work	October 2015	Independent Living Manager
2.4 Floating support services....	Support to vulnerable households in liaison with supporting people provision and agencies	On-going	Head of Housing and Independent Living

What we will do.	Actions	Timescales	Lead
2.5 Ensure that the Council meets its obligations under the Care Act 2014	Review the provisions of the Care Act and put in place any actions required to meet any deficit within the Council's duties	March 2015	Head of Housing and Independent Living

**Strategic priority three Ensure that there are sufficient good quality private rented homes available to enable the Council to discharge the homelessness duty into the private rented sector.**

What we will do.	Actions	Timescales.	Lead
3.1 Improve the supply of good quality private rented accommodation.	Encourage registered providers and private institutions to develop and manage a portfolio of private rented accommodation.	April 2015	Local Letting Agency - TBC
	Develop and maintain a pipeline of development sites in the local development plan *	Ongoing	Housing Development Officer
	Provide an advice and inspection service to the Local Lettings Agency.	April 2015	Head of Housing and Independent Living

What we will do.	Actions	Timescales.	Lead
3.2 Target sub-letting A2 Dominion leaseholders to procure accommodation to let to homeless households	Establish partnership with A2D to facilitate project on flatted estates.	April 2016	Local Letting Agency - TBC
3.3 Encourage the development and acquisition of properties for private lets.	Contribute expertise to the options review for the development of a local housing company or Special purpose vehicle.	January 2015	Head of Asset Management

**Strategic priority four Maximise the use of existing accommodation through conversion and bringing empty homes back into use.**

What we will do.	Action.	Timescales	Lead
4.1 Maintain the work of the Empty homes project.	Continue to work with the Council Tax service to identify empty homes and use the powers available to the Council to bring them back into use.	Liberata project finished, this needs to be refined and taken forward in-house if possible	Empty Homes Officer*
	Bring 15 long-term empty homes back into use through	31 March 2017	Empty Homes Officer*

What we will do.	Action.	Timescales	Lead
	empty homes projects.		
4.2 Identify funding sources to bring empty properties back into use	Promote and process empty home grants where they have been identified.	Ongoing	Empty Homes Officer*
4.3 Where necessary take enforcement action and pursue Compulsory Purchase Orders.	Review the approach to CPOs and ensure staff are trained and facilitated to take action.	Ongoing	Empty Homes Officer*
4.4 Identify vacant SBC buildings and where ever possible convert them into use as temporary accommodation.	Register of buildings established and resources identified to enable conversion.	Ongoing	Empty Homes Officer*
<p>*The Empty Homes Officer is currently resource is 1 day per week. This is funded by the Council to support an externally grant funded project until March 2015. The work currently being done by the Empty Homes Officer goes beyond the grant funded project and takes more than the 0.2 FTE allocated. Additional funding post March 2015 will need to be identified and sought to support the continuation of this work and similar projects. (These projects also represent a saving in real terms through a reduced need to provide B&amp;B / emergency accommodation)</p>			

**Strategic priority five Improve energy efficiency of dwellings and ensure affordable warmth is available to residents.**

<b>What we will do.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead</b>
5.1 Access funding to provide measures for low income households	Working with Action Surrey to aid resident to obtain ECO or GD funding	Ongoing	Energy Reduction Officer
5.2 Housing stock appraisal analysis to identify vulnerable residents	Breakdown of BRE survey and investigate findings rolling out necessary projects	2016	Energy Reduction Officer
5.3 Promote uptake of energy efficiency measures	Ensure Council communication channels provide appropriate advice and information to householder	Ongoing	Energy Reduction Officer
5.4 Develop and promote energy efficiency measures for mobile/park homes.	Working with Action Surrey and Partners to access funding	2016	Energy Reduction Officer

\*These items also feature in either the Housing Strategy Action Plan or the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.

# Draft Homelessness Strategy 2014 - 2017



## **Draft Homelessness strategy 2014-2019**

### **1.0 Introduction from Cllr Pinkerton**

The Council has a statutory duty to prevent homelessness and accommodate homeless households.

This strategy aims to focus our collective efforts to support those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

The actions described are aimed at refocussing the effort to prevent homelessness and also help access into the private rented sector.

This strategy cannot be delivered just by the Council, we will need to work in partnership with a range of organisations which will include registered providers, private sector landlord, voluntary sector and health.

### **2.0 Background to the strategy.**

2.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 placed a statutory duty on all Councils to undertake regular reviews of homelessness in their area and, based on the findings, to develop and publish a strategy to tackle and prevent homelessness.

2.2 The legal definition of homelessness is a person who does not have accommodation elsewhere which is available for his or her occupation and which that person has a legal right to occupy. A person is homeless if they cannot secure entry to such accommodation or if it is unreasonable or unsafe for them to do so. A person is also homeless if their accommodation is a moveable structure such as a caravan or boat and there is nowhere for it to be placed. A person is threatened with homelessness if they are likely to become homeless in 28 days.

2.3 The legislation requires Councils to provide proactive, planned and preventative homelessness services. Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) guidance on prevention recommends a focus on providing advice and guidance at three levels:

- Early intervention for those at risk of becoming homeless.
- Prevention when homelessness is imminent.
- Preventing reoccurring homelessness.

2.4 Vulnerable and disadvantaged households are at particular risk of becoming homeless. This includes older people; people with disabilities; people with mental health issues and substance misuse; and families suffering domestic violence or subject to hate crime.

2.5 Spelthorne Borough Housing Options team is responsible for front line housing services including managing the housing register; administrating the allocation system (through the new Choice based lettings system); offering housing advice and assisting homeless households. An out of hours emergency service is provided through a contract with Runnymede Council with the support of the Surrey County Council emergency duty team, this service is currently under review.

There are 12.8 FTE officers running the service. The 2013/14 costs for running the service were

- Homelessness Initiatives - £66,792
- Bed and Breakfast / Temporary accommodation –  
B&B Expense – £543,180  
Rental Income - £403,662  
**Total Net Cost - £139,518**
- DCLG Homelessness Initiatives grant - £50,000

### 3.0 National policy context for this strategy.

3.1 Over the past three years there have been a number of policy developments that have had a significant impact on homelessness services.

3.2 **Localism Act (2011)** introduced new freedoms and flexibilities for local government. It included a number of measures relating to housing:

- General power of competence to local government to enable innovation and the development of new ventures.
- Reforms to the planning system including neighbourhood planning; end of sub regional plans and introduction of a 'duty to cooperate'.
- Reforms to ensure decisions about housing are taken locally including enabling Councils to establish their own allocation policies for social housing; fixed term tenancies for social housing allocation; discharging the homelessness duty into the private sector; national home swap scheme; new regulatory and complaints framework for social housing tenants.

Using the powers in the Localism Act, in July 2014 the Council agreed a policy to discharge the homelessness duty into the private sector. This is a key feature of this strategy. The detail of the policy is set out in Appendix One.

This is a significant change in approach for SBC and signals to residents that housing allocation will be primarily through the 'housing needs route' rather than the 'homelessness route'. The Act allows local authorities to decide that when a duty is accepted under the homelessness criteria it can agree a policy that allows the Council to discharge that duty into the private sector **without** requiring the agreement of the applicant.



The Government has issued guidance and regulations relating to how discharge should be managed; this includes requirements relating to physical condition of the property; Landlord behaviour as a 'fit and proper person'; health and safety requirements; licencing of Homes in Multiple occupation and a written tenancy agreement of at least 12 months.

The expectation is that accommodation will be secured in the borough but that may not be possible. The regulations require that where the Council decides to make an offer outside the borough it must consider the distance from the borough, the significance of the disruption to employment, caring responsibilities or education, the proximity of medical facilities and support and the proximity and accessibility of local services, amenities and transport. When all of this is taken into account, out of borough placements are permissible. Boroughs are required to inform other Councils when they make a placement in their locality.

**3.3 Welfare reform Act (2012)** introduced a wide range of reforms designed to make the benefits and tax credits system fairer and simpler, improving financial incentives to encourage work. The main challenges for landlords, tenants and the Council include:

- The introduction of capped universal credit, which includes a housing element and is paid monthly directly to the tenant not the landlord.
- A housing benefit property size criterion that has reduced the level of benefit to working age households who are under occupying their homes and have spare bedrooms.
- Changes to the Local Housing Allowance (this is the price ceiling paid to landlords) so that housing costs are set at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile cost (as opposed to the previous 50<sup>th</sup> percentile) and includes an increased age threshold from 25yr to 35yr so that single claimants are only entitled to the shared room rate.

These changes are affecting all those of working age receiving benefits, including many working households living on low wages and dependent on housing benefit to meet their housing costs. The early indications are that landlords are increasingly reluctant to house benefit claimants and that those that do are more likely to not renew tenancies at the end of initial tenancy term.

**3.4 Right to Buy and Help to Buy schemes.** In 2012 the Government increased cash incentives for right to buy applicants for social housing from £16,000 to £75,000 enabling many more social housing tenants to be able to buy their own homes. They also introduced a new equity loan scheme aimed at first time buyers called 'Help to Buy'. This scheme enabled buyers with a 5% deposit and the capacity to raise a 75% (loan to value) mortgage to access the remaining 20% as an interest free loan for five years; the ceiling on the value of the property was set at £600,000.

**3.5 Making every contact count (2012).** In 2010 the Minister for Housing set up an interdepartmental Ministerial Group on homelessness. The focus of their work was on developing a cross sector response to homelessness with an emphasis on prevention. The final report identified ten local challenges; these are now known as the 'homelessness gold standard' and provide a benchmark for local authority homelessness services.

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness that has buy in across all local authority services.
2. To actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address, support, education, employment and training needs
3. To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients including written advice.
4. To adopt a No Second Night out model or an effective local alternative.
5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support.
6. To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord.
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness, reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
10. To not place any families in Bed and breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than six weeks.

It is the intention of this strategy is that Spelthorne Borough Council will work to this standard.

#### **4.0 The Local context.**

4.1 Over the past two years there has been a significant increase in the number of homelessness applications and as a consequence a sharp increase in the numbers of households accepted under the duty and placed in temporary accommodation including bed and breakfast.

#### **Number of homelessness applications and acceptances in SBC**

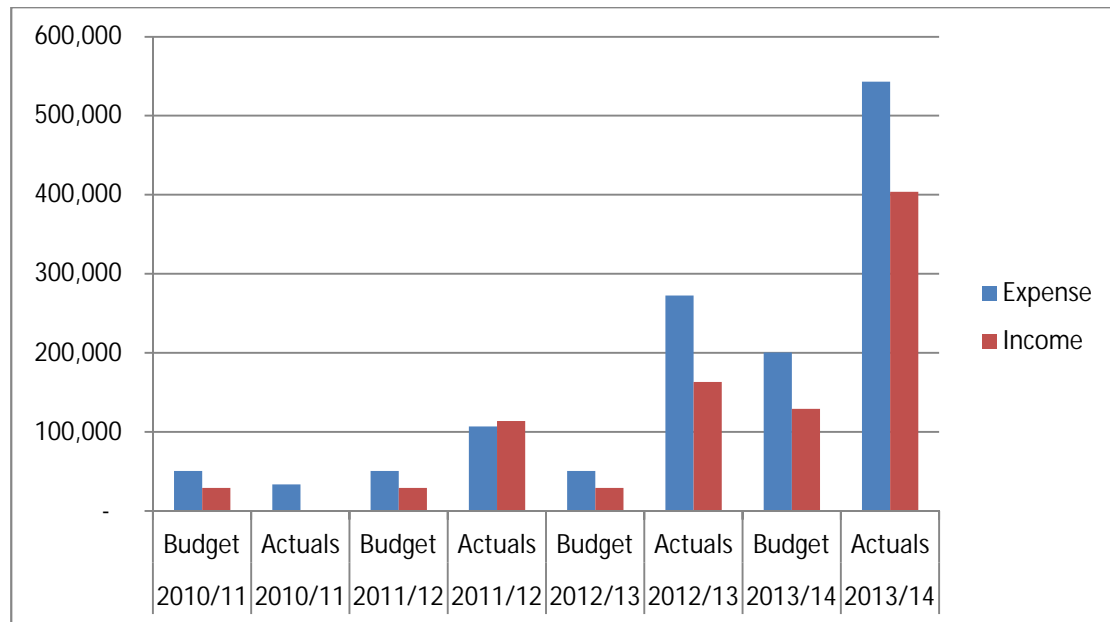
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 *
Homelessness applications made to SBC	7	9	28	101	137
Homelessness	1	2	7	39	89

acceptances					
Percentage of applications accepted as duty	14%	22%	25%	38.6%	65%

\*These figures include 15 households who were placed in temporary accommodation in 2010 and 2011 but for whom we only accepted the duty in 2013/14.

The cost of temporary accommodation is rising and the SBC Housing Options team has struggled to secure tenancies within the ceiling of the 'Local Housing Allowance' cap. Consequently the Council has had to subsidise the housing costs.

	2010/11	2010/11	2011/12	2011/12	2012/13	2012/13	2013/14	2013/14	
	Budget	Actuals	Budget	Actuals	Budget	Actuals	Budget	Actuals	
Expense	50,600	33,706	50,600	106,955	50,600	272,700	200,600	543,180	
Income	29,400	902	29,400	113,873	29,400	163,094	129,400	403,662	
Net Variance	21,200	32,804	21,200	- 6,918	21,200	109,606	71,200	139,519	



4.2 This review has identified the following contributing factors that help explain the increase in presentations:

- Impact of the reduction in the local housing allowance to the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile point, leading to overall reduction in the number of private rented homes available to low income households reliant on housing benefit (working and non-working).

Size of home	Average cost of renting	Local Housing Allowance
One bed	£808	£722.54
Two bed	£1,113	£923.82
Three bed	£1,335	£1,187.03
Four bed	£2,450	£1,594.32

- Lack of availability of social housing lets and increased length of time for all applicants on the housing register

	2011	2012	2013
Number of households on register	1,546	1,933	2,184

Number of homes allocated	265	241	207
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- Lack of confidence of private sector landlords in the housing benefit service to provide regular and accurate payments.
- Impact of Welfare reforms that has ended direct payment of housing benefit to the landlord to a monthly payment of universal credits to residents and has led to concerns about arrears.
- The disparity between number of available private rented homes in the borough and the volume of households seeking accommodation. This has been exacerbated by the development of Heathrow Airport and the in-flux of people who work in London but have moved out to find more affordable private rented accommodation.
- Ongoing competition for accommodation between low waged and high waged households.
- The acute shortage of affordable private rented property is mirrored throughout other Surrey authorities

Tenure type (all average two bed)	Household income requirement
Buy outright	£50,623
Low cost home ownership	£39,550
Private rented home	£50,734
Affordable rented home (80% of market rent)	£40,587
Social rent (based on £120/week and income at Universal Credit level) <i>Added by consultant for completeness</i>	£26,000

## 5.0 Profile of homeless residents.

5.1 Since the beginning of the economic downturn the housing options team have been dealing with increasing numbers of enquires and requests for assistance. The first level of intervention is to provide advice and assistance to prevent homelessness. In 2012/13 the service prevented or relieved

homelessness for 1,080 cases and received 101 applications and accepted 39 households under the homelessness duty; in 2013/14 these numbers rose to 1,150 enquiries for preventative work with 137 homelessness applications and 89 households accepted under the duty. (full figures for preventative work and reason for presentation is attached as appendix two)

### 5.2 Age of homeless applicants

Age of applicant	2012/13	2013/14
16-24 years	40	43
25-44 years	49	74
45-59 years	13	19
60-64 years	4	3
65-74 years	4	1
75 years and over	0	0
Total	110	140

### 5.3 Ethnicity of homeless applicants

Ethnicity	2012/13	2013/14
White	72	120
Black	3	8
Asian	10	6
Mixed	2	2
Other	1	0
Refused	4	2
Not stated	18	2
Total	110	140

#### 5.4 Reasons for homelessness

Reason	2011/12	2012/13
Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	1	11
Other relative or friend no longer willing or able to accommodate	1	8
Non-violent breakdown of relationship	0	1
Violent breakdown of relationship	0	4
Harassment (non-racial)	1	0
Loss of rented accommodation due to termination of the assured short holds tenancy.	3	12
Loss of rented accommodation due to reason other than termination of AST.	1	2
Other reasons	0	1
Total	7	39

It should be noted that these figures are taken from the number of cases formally accepted as homeless. In many instances the Council's Housing Options team assist in preventing homelessness; the numbers in each category requesting assistance are considerably higher. (see Appendix one for numbers and full details of the reasons for presentation),

#### 6.0 Homeless Services for vulnerable people.

6.1 Vulnerable people are over represented in the homeless population. Meeting the housing and support needs of vulnerable people is a key part of the homelessness strategy. The approach is always in collaboration with partners. This section identifies significant groups and sets out our current approach.

#### 6.2 Gypsies and Travellers.

Where relevant the Housing Options officers can seek advice and guidance from the Surrey County Council traveller liaison officer. Staff have received equality and diversity training with particular emphasis on the needs of gypsies and travellers.

Where individuals approach the service but require assistance due to eg lower literacy levels the officers are trained to assist and explain any of the Council processes. A small number of households were affected by the recent benefit cap issues. A specialist officer visited them to discuss the implications and assist with possible solutions. There is a Surrey Travellers Community Relations forum and the Council will actively participate in and learn from the forum in future as to how to further improve relationships with the community.

### **6.3 Ex-offenders.**

There is a multi agency Persistent and Prolific Offenders Management Panel which Housing officers attend as required. In addition there is a joint protocol between agencies relating to a small number of housing nominations for this group. The Multi Agency Public protection arrangement (MAPPA) is a forum which assesses the risk posed to the community from prisoners after release and jointly agrees appropriate measures including relating to housing provision. There are differing levels of MAPPA depending on the severity of the potential risk to the public. Where the greatest risk applies very senior housing and Council officers attend.

Where ex offenders are deemed non priority, our policy, if they apply as homeless, is to work with their Probation Officer and Rentstart to secure suitable accommodation.

### **6.4 People with mental health issues.**

Joint training has occurred with the Community Mental Health Team and Housing staff and there is regular contact relating to individual cases. Officers attend information sharing events. Further detailed training on the needs of those with mental health issues is planned for the Housing staff with annual refresher training. An excellent operational working relationship exists between housing and the CMHT consultant psychiatrist. Some of our partners operate specialist housing for those with severe mental health difficulties and will accept referrals from housing.

### **6.5 People with learning disabilities.**

There is a Surrey Wide learning disability partnership board. There is a good working relationship between the team and the local voluntary sector in particular carer organisations for those with learning disabilities. The housing team often work closely with the parents of those with learning difficulties and try to jointly agree longer term housing solutions where parents are concerned about their own health or ability to look after their adult children. There are a small number of specialist housing units available locally

### **6.6 People with drug and alcohol dependency.**

People with these issues are often difficult to assist as there is no local hostel provision and hostels in other boroughs often operate a no alcohol/drug policy. The housing team work with the Community Drug and Alcohol team to



aid in the assessment of applicants for the housing register and ensure input to guide in decision making.

### **6.7 Young people and care leavers**

In the last year or two local provision for young people has improved dramatically through the Surrey County Council Youth Support services, who have actively formed a more effective support package than previously existed. Young people are no longer sent to bed and breakfast accommodation unless in exceptional emergency situations. There are regular meetings with the Care Leaver's service to discuss the housing options available and how to facilitate them. Housing staff have all received safeguarding training and make referrals as appropriate which are always followed up for all young people that approach the service. Where accommodation is provided for care leavers, officers work in partnership to ensure successful transition to permanent accommodation.

### **6.8 Domestic violence and hate crime.**

There are currently five properties which Spelthorne purchased to house victims of domestic abuse, these are managed by A2D with support from an organisation called Lookahead. However the Lookahead funding ends in 2015 so alternatives will be required. Referrals are made as appropriate to 'Your Sanctuary' to locate accommodation suitable for the interim whilst the Council maintains a duty and seeks long term solutions. There are inter borough mobility scheme initiatives whereby households can be placed in a safer area away from where the perpetrator lives. The Sanctuary scheme is a scheme where the Housing Associations, Police, and Council work together to make a safe room and other provisions in the home if the applicant chooses to remain. There are new Domestic Violence Protection Orders and Notices operated by the Police. The Housing team are notified of these and always act on any relevant matters.

### **6.9 Single homeless and rough sleepers**

Single homeless(non priority) are referred to our partner Rentsart to assist with securing accommodation. They also assist with rough sleepers and facilitate locating accommodation for them. They offer practical assistance through rent bonds and rent in advance. There is no hostel accommodation in the borough although referrals can be made to hostels in other boroughs. Runnymede, Elmbridge and Spelthorne Councils are working with Transform Housing on a project which aims to open a winter night shelter serving all three boroughs. This will also be in partnership with the voluntary sector. A bid for funding will be submitted to the DCLG in the near future. There are statutory requirements (Severe Weather Emergency provision) relating to when the temperature drops to a certain level for three consecutive nights. It is hoped that the night shelter will assist with this as presently the Housing Options team are reliant on referrals to bed and breakfast accommodation

### **6.10 Older people.**

Spelthorne has developed three extra care housing scheme in partnership with A2D and Notting Hill Housing. These have greatly assisted with meeting local demand. Sheltered accommodation also available.

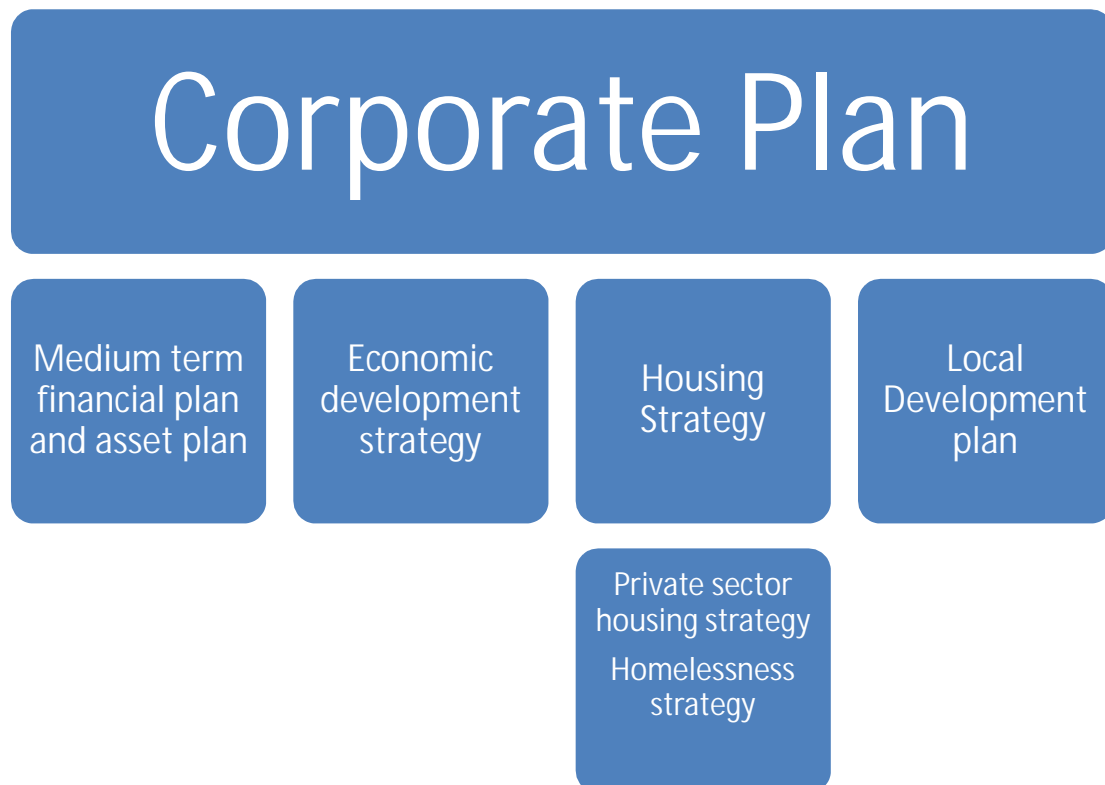
As the population grows older there is a tendency for people to wish to remain in their own homes for as long as possible, perhaps longer than in previous generations therefore some of the sheltered accommodation units remain hard to let. The Council's Independent living team offer services such as meals on wheels, community alarms and telecare which help facilitate people staying in their homes for longer. In addition the Council facilitates Disabled Facility grants which help meet the same aim. The Independent Living Team also manage a 'well Being' centre which amongst other roles provides advice and information relating to those with memory loss and dementia and again can help enable people to live at home for longer. The Housing and Independent Living team have an excellent working relationship with the County Council's Adult Social Care team who are co-located in the same building in Staines and liaise in relation to specific clients. Housing staff have attended adult safeguarding training.

### **6.11 Armed forces personnel.**

SBC adopted the Armed Forces Covenant in April 2014 and an action plan is being developed to ensure compliance with the requirements, this will include housing services. The SBC Allocation Policy already gives priority to ex-service personnel.

## **6.0 The Spelthorne Borough Council Homelessness Strategy.**

7.1 The homelessness strategy fits within a family of SBC strategies all of which link together.



The SBC Corporate Plan Mission is **‘Delivering quality, best value for money services that matter most to our residents.’**

#### **Vision**

- Creating opportunities and prosperity for our borough
- Delivering quality of life services
- Value for money Council.

The SBC Housing Strategy overall mission is **‘Ensuring best quality homes in a thriving and sustainable community.’**

#### **Strategic priorities**

- Increase the supply of new homes and improve the tenure mix especially the provision of more private rented accommodation.
- Improve the quality of existing homes.
- Prevent homelessness
- Support residents to access affordable, well-managed market rent and social rented properties.
- Prioritise the majority of social housing allocations to those who are working.

### **7.2 Homelessness Strategy 2014-2019.**

This strategy adheres to the requirements of the DCLG ‘Gold Standard’. It has taken account of the Council’s Corporate Plan and Medium Term financial

plan and it is compatible with the Housing Strategy, the Allocation Policy and the Tenancy strategy.

### **7.3 Vision for Homelessness services.**

**The overall purpose of this strategy is to set out how the Council and its partners intend to tackle homelessness in the borough over the next five years by:**

- **Preventing homelessness**
- **Increasing the supply of suitable accommodation and enabling wherever possible the discharge of duty into the Private rented sector.**
- **Ensuring that support is available to people whilst they are homeless.**

### **7.4 Strategic objectives:**

1. Adopt a corporate and partnership commitment to preventing homelessness.
2. Develop and provide a comprehensive housing options preventative service including the single homeless.
3. End the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families.
4. Facilitate the discharge of homelessness duty to the private rented sector.
5. Through the Housing Forum develop 'housing pathways' for specific vulnerable client groups.
6. Develop a private sector offer through working with local landlords and through a SBC lettings agency that will acquire properties for the discharge of the duty and where necessary as temporary lets.
7. Adopt a 'no second night out' model for emergency accommodation.
8. In partnership with the CAB prevent mortgage repossession.

### **8.0 Strategic priority one. Adopt a corporate and partnership commitment to preventing homelessness.**

#### **Why this is a priority.**

- 8.1 Tackling homelessness is a significant challenge and evidence shows that the triggers for becoming homeless are numerous and can relate to personal, family, social and economic circumstances. These individual aspects also need to be combined with the more general issues relating to the in-balance between supply and demand especially in the

affordable housing markets. No one agency can deal with this problem alone and so a collaborative approach is recommended.

### **Key objectives within this priority.**

1. Establish and facilitate a Spelthorne Borough Council Housing Forum. The terms of reference of the Forum will be to support the implementation of the Housing Strategy, the Private Sector Strategy and the Homelessness Strategy. It will also provide a focus for supporting the development of new homes in the borough in line with the Local Development Plan. The membership of the Forum will include Council departments, Surrey County Council services, the voluntary sector, resident organisations, private landlord organisations, lettings agents, health and police.
- 2 The Forum will be a focus for ongoing consultation and engagement on the Housing action plans (Housing Strategy/ Private sector housing strategy/Homelessness strategy.)
3. The Forum will monitor the implementation of the plan.
4. The Forum will enable data to be gathered relating to the needs of vulnerable groups and for the development of joint approaches to prevention and support for specific groups and individuals who have complex needs.

### **Expected outcomes.**

1. Improved communications and joint working.
2. Provide a vehicle for regular monitoring of the action plan.
3. Ensure that pathways are developed to provide early intervention and support to vulnerable individuals.

## **9.0 Strategic priority two. Develop and provide a comprehensive preventative housing options service including the single homeless.**

### **Why this is a priority.**

9.1 The emphasis of government policy is now firmly on preventing homelessness. That approach is echoed in this strategy, it builds on the work already undertaken by the housing options team. The focus needs to remain on ensuring best possible advice to enquirers on their available options

coupled with work with landlords (including parents of adult children) to ensure that tenancies can be sustained.

9.2 The most significant challenge remains the lack of housing supply; prices continue to increase, making it ever more difficult to secure private housing at the lower end of the market. There is also the impact of welfare reforms and changes to the housing benefit payment arrangements so that landlords no longer get direct payments but are reliant on their tenants to make regular rent payments and to manage their resource on a monthly rather than a bi-weekly basis.

### **Key objectives within this priority.**

1. Develop a triage service for dealing with housing option enquiries so that the emphasis is on dealing with threats of homelessness as a priority.
2. Identify the reasons for 'no fault' evictions and continue with an approach that negotiates directly with landlords to prevent homelessness.
3. With partners develop educational and pre-tenancy training courses aimed at young people, care-leavers, and vulnerable people entering the private rented sector through Council schemes so that they are able to manage the responsibilities of being a tenant.
4. Work with partners to improve the life chances of households vulnerable to becoming homeless by offering money advice, access to employment and training and support to vulnerable individuals through social care and support services.
5. Complete a review of the out-of-hours emergency service.

### **Expected outcomes.**

1. Reduction in the number of households seeking assessment under the homelessness duty.

### **10.0 Strategic priority three. End the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families.**

#### **Why this is a priority.**

10.1 The use of bed and breakfast for a homeless household is always a last resort for the Council. Over the last three years there has been a significant increase in the number of families accommodated in Bed and Breakfast hotels. Shelter, the National Federation of Housing and the Local Ombudsman have all reported on the poor quality of accommodation offered in many Bed and Breakfast establishments and the negative impact on families, especially children, of living in cramped, shared accommodation for extended periods of time.

**Key objectives within this priority.**

1. Through the work of the SBC Lettings Agency (see below) ensure that there are sufficient private sector lets available to ensure that the majority of homeless households are offered suitable PRS accommodation.
2. End the use of bed and breakfast and, where it is used, ensure that the stay does not last more than six weeks.

**Expected outcomes.**

1. Families no-longer accommodated in Bed and Breakfast hotels.

**11.0 Strategic priority four. Facilitate the discharge of the homelessness duty into the private rented sector.**

**Why this is a priority.**

11.1 Provisions in the Localism Act 2011 give Local Authorities more scope to place homeless households in private rented homes. These powers also provide an opportunity to build stronger links with local landlords and raise the general standards of rented homes in the borough.

11.2 The DCLG issued supplementary guidance relating to this power in November 2012 (1) and the Homelessness (Suitability of accommodation) (England) Order relating to the quality of accommodation to be provided. Officers are required to have regard to these requirements when seeking to discharge the full homelessness duty into the private rented sector. The powers came into effect from 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012. Spelthorne Borough Council adopted a policy on this in July 2014 (attached as Appendix One).

11.3 In the previous arrangements, households presenting as homeless to the Council were entitled to seek to be assessed as in 'housing need' and if they met the criteria the 'duty' was accepted by the Council. Steps would be taken to accommodate them initially in emergency or temporary accommodation (all in the private rented sector) and later in a social

housing/affordable rented unit through the SBC allocation system. On average households spend 3 years waiting for general needs accommodation and 15 months for sheltered accommodation.

11.4 The SBC policy would mean that all applicants would be encouraged down the housing options/prevention route but where a homelessness assessment were required and a 'duty' accepted the offer of accommodation would usually be into a private rented home where the 'duty would then be discharged'. The applicant has no right to refuse an offer that meets the suitability criteria and, if necessary, this can be out of the borough.

**Key objectives within this priority.**

1. Reinforces the emphasis on preventing homelessness through the housing options route.
2. Breaks the link between homelessness and allocations and encourages housing applications down the housing need route.

**Expected outcomes.**

1. Reduces the numbers of households presenting as homeless and seeking temporary accommodation.
2. Improves the quality of private rented stock.

**12.0 Strategic priority five. Through the Housing Forum develop housing pathways for vulnerable groups.**

**Why this is a priority.**

12.1 Vulnerable people are significantly over-represented in the population of people who are homeless or in housing need. The definitions of vulnerable are set out in Section 6 of this report; it includes features that impact on significant sections of our community.

12.2 Homeless vulnerable people have more than housing needs. They often struggle to find and maintain their homes as one aspect of managing daily life. Supported housing services and voluntary sector services have a critical role to play alongside the statutory agencies in helping vulnerable people to manage the responsibility of being a tenant.

**Key objectives within this priority.**



1. Ensure that the Housing Forum raises awareness and addresses the need for preventative work to ensure that vulnerable people have access to good quality homes.
2. Ensure that the Housing Forum addresses the specific support needs of each of the identified vulnerable groups.
3. Continue to develop specialist housing offers for significant groups

#### **Expected outcomes.**

1. The Housing Forum will have developed a 'housing pathway' for key vulnerable groups that includes housing options, appropriate advice and on-going support.
2. Overall reduction in homeless applications for vulnerable individuals.

#### **13.0 Strategic priority six. Develop a private sector offer through working with local landlords and through a SBC lettings agency that will acquire properties for the discharge of the duty and where necessary as temporary lets.**

##### **Why this is a priority.**

13.1 The Housing Act 1996 placed a duty on Local Authorities to provide accommodation to people who are judged to be homeless and to have a priority need for accommodation. Since then local authorities have developed a range of mechanisms for securing temporary accommodation. This has included contractual arrangements with landlords directly by way of 'private sector leases' or through Housing associations taking on leases and then letting to Local Authority nominees. Spelthorne Council currently uses a mixed approach; with some secured leases through A2D and facilitated support to single homeless people through the 'Rentstart' project and the in-house rent support project.

13.2 Over the last few years it has become increasingly difficult to secure affordable (at the reduced Local Housing Allowance levels), good quality private lets for use as temporary accommodation. This strategic objective focuses on building a better relationship with private landlords that encourages them to work with the Council.

13.2 A large number of Councils have established their own lettings agencies and have offered incentive packages to attract landlords, these include:

- Free advertising of their properties

- Minimisation of void costs (with aim to guarantee 52 week per year income)
- Rent level at LHA level and hotline to Housing Benefit service.
- Model AST (with regular updates as required by statute)
- Bond/Guarantees for all agreed ASTs
- Inventory service and management of 'transfer of utilities'
- Support with certifications (Gas and Energy assessment)
- Reference checks for tenants
- Fast track welfare advice and debt management advice service to tenants.
- Ongoing support to tenants with regular checks (dependent on level of need) and access to supported housing services.
- Free membership of Landlord Association and regular updates on good practice and legal matters.
- Mediation service.
- Support and advice to landlords with ending tenancies where there has been a breach of the AST.

13.3 SBC has already started the task of converting local authority properties for use as temporary accommodation. It is intended to take this model further and use capital reserves, or prudential borrowing, to purchase property and let these at LHA levels. Using powers from the Localism Act 2011, the merits of establishing a local housing company to manage these properties on behalf of the Council will be considered.

**Key objectives within this priority.**

1. Agree the 'offer to landlords' and then establish a SBC lettings agency that secures sufficient private rented properties to deal with homelessness prevention cases and the discharge of the homelessness duty.
2. Using SBC capital reserves, purchase street properties for use as temporary accommodation

**Expected outcomes.**

1. Sufficient private sector lets available to deal with homelessness cases.
2. Significant increase in number of landlords willing to work with SBC.
3. Portfolio of SBC properties secured as temporary accommodation.

**14.0 Strategic priority seven. (in collaboration with Runnymede and Elmbridge Councils) Adopt a 'no second night out' for emergency accommodation.**

**Why this is a priority.**

14.1 Rough sleepers represent the most complex group of single homeless people. They are known to have some common characteristics; often ex-offenders and ex-service personal; homeless following family breakdown; and a history of substance misuse and mental health issues. Rough sleeping is perceived as a significant blight in a community and SBC are committed to ensuring that the impact is minimised through good preventative work and inter-agency planning.

14.2 Joint work is being planned with neighbouring boroughs to secure a specialist single homeless practitioner funded by the DCLG 'Single Homeless Fund'. This post holder would work with Family Support teams and other agencies to identify clients and seek to engage with them in plans for settlement and rehabilitation.

14.3 The Council is also committed to supporting the work of local faith groups and community organisations who come together to run temporary night shelters over the winter months.

**Key objectives within this priority.**

1. Seek to reduce the number of rough sleepers by establishing a specialist post (in collaboration with other boroughs) that delivers proactive work with vulnerable single homeless people.
2. Support voluntary sector initiative to run a winter shelter.

**Expected outcomes.**

1. Reduce the number of rough sleepers and ensure 'no second night out'.

**15.0 Strategic priority eight. In partnership with the CAB prevent mortgage repossessions.**

**Why this is a priority.**

15.1 The majority of households in Spelthorne are owner occupiers so any significant rise in interest rates is likely to have a big impact. Shelter report

that about 2% of all homeless applications arising from mortgage debt. In Spelthorne over the last 3 years 241 households approached the Council for assistance.

Local Court activity relating to Mortgage possessions.	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Mortgage claims for possession	99	72	67
Mortgage order for possession	64	52	42
Total number	163	124	109

15.2 In 2011 the DCLG through the Homes and Communities Agency ran a mortgage rescue project, this scheme has now ended.

15.3 SBC jointly funds with Runnymede and Hounslow the CAB to offer a court desk service to assist those threatened with repossession. There is also an independent Court Desk service provided by Surrey Law Centre.

#### **Key objectives within this priority.**

1. Ensure that the Courts, CAB and Council work together to provide advice to households facing mortgage repossession proceedings.

#### **Expected outcomes.**

1. Reduce the number of households presenting as homeless following eviction for mortgage arrears.

#### **16.0 Developing an action plan, the annual review and engagement with partners.**

15.1 An implementation plan is attached to this report as Appendix Two. It includes the commitment to an annual review of this strategy.

**Action Plan for Homelessness Strategy.****Strategic priority one. Adopt a corporate and partnership commitment to preventing homelessness.**

<b>What we will do.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale.</b>
1.1 Council to adopt homelessness strategy.	Homelessness strategy presented to Council	Assistant Chief Executive - Liz Borthwick	October 2014
1.2 Establish SBC Housing Forum	<p>Agree terms of reference and membership.</p> <p>Partnership commitment confirmed at Forum.</p> <p>Commit to annual review of action plans associated with the Housing Strategy/ Private sector strategy and the Homelessness strategy.</p>	Assistant Chief Executive - Liz Borthwick	January 2015

**Strategic priority two. Develop and provide a comprehensive prevention housing options service.**

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
2.1 Develop a 'triage system'	Review current arrangements.	Housing Manager	Ongoing

<p>to filter all presenting cases relating to housing options and homelessness prevention.</p>	<p>Write new procedures that deal with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing options advice relating to general needs and prevention of homelessness</li> <li>• Housing options advice relating to special needs and prevention of homelessness.</li> <li>• Procedure for dealing with application under the Housing Act 1996 and the discharge of duty into the private rented sector.</li> <li>• Emergency and temporary accommodation.</li> </ul>		
<p>2.2 Identify the reasons for 'no fault' evictions and establish action plan to deal with aspects relating to Council or partners responsibilities.</p>	<p>Review existing data.</p> <p>Review Housing benefit arrangements</p> <p>Establish action plan.</p>	<p>Housing Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>2.3 With partners develop educational and pre-tenancy training courses.</p>	<p>Prepare information pack and interactive materials for SBC website and for local schools and youth clubs.</p> <p>Prepare materials for use by the Housing options team when working with vulnerable applicants prior to taking up a tenancy.</p> <p>Through the Housing Forum consider development of pre-tenancy training with other agencies</p>	<p>Housing Team</p>	<p>September 2015</p>
<p>2.4 Improve the life chances of households vulnerable to becoming homeless.</p>	<p>Through the Housing Forum identify the range of support available to vulnerable households as they relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welfare benefits advice</li> <li>• Access to training and employment</li> <li>• Debt counselling</li> <li>• Furniture and white goods</li> <li>• Food banks</li> <li>• Volunteering projects</li> <li>• Access to internet.</li> </ul>	<p>Head of Housing and Independent Living</p>	<p>April 2015</p>

**Strategic priority three. End the use of bed and breakfast accommodation by families.**

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
3.1 Ensure there are sufficient private sector rented units of a good standard available for homeless households	<p>Keep under active review all the households currently accommodated in B and B and develop a fast track plan to get them moved onto temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Support the establishment of the SBC Lettings agency (see below)</p> <p>Work with local lettings agencies and the SBC lettings agency to secure sufficient PRS homes for presenting clients.</p>	Head of Housing and Independent Living	September 2015

**Strategic priority four. Facilitate the discharge of the homelessness duty into the private rented sector.**

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
4.1 Prepare procedures for the processing of applications	Review current approach and draft new procedures.	Housing Manager	March 2015



under the Housing Act 1996.			
4.2 Prepare a communications campaign for the general public on the change of approach.	Devise materials for use in the campaign including reasoning behind the decision; timescales for implementation; simple guides for those in housing need; information for the SBC website.	Housing Manager and Communications Team	March 2015
4.3 Train all staff in the new approach.	Prepare training materials and run in-house course for all Housing Options front line staff and managers	Housing Manager	March 2015

**Strategic priority five. Through the Housing Forum develop housing pathways for vulnerable groups.**

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
5.1 Identify all the vulnerable groups	Through the Housing Forum review data and research relating to vulnerable groups.  Identify all bespoke service provides and voluntary groups engaged with these client groups.	Assistant Chief Executive – Liz Borthwick	December 2016

5.2 Develop housing option pathways for each of the groups (starting with the largest/ most at risk groups)	Pathway template devised to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice</li> <li>• Practical support</li> <li>• Specialist housing available</li> <li>• Supported housing offer</li> <li>• Pre-tenancy training</li> </ul>	Housing Manager	December 2016
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**Strategic priority six. Develop a private sector offer through working with landlords and through a SBC lettings agency and the acquisition of SBC properties for use as temporary accommodation.**

What we will do	Action	Lead	Timescale
6.1 Establish a SBC lettings agency.	Identify the SBC offer to landlords (see section 13.2)  Consider the governance models for a letting agency (in-house; voluntary sector; housing company?) and prepare a business case.  Launch the lettings agency and agree targets for year one.	Assistant Chief Executive – Liz Borthwick	September 2015

6.2 Acquire portfolio of SBC properties.	<p>Prepare business case for Council approval for use of reserves to buy properties.</p> <p>Establish governance arrangements (see above).</p> <p>Procure management agent for day to day running of the portfolio.</p>	Head of Asset Management	April 2015
6.3 Work with local lettings agencies to secure further private sector rental units.	Ongoing liaison and marketing to the PRS sector.		

**Strategic objective seven. Adopt a ‘no second night out’ for emergency accommodation.**

What we will do	Action	Lead	Timescale
7.1 Improve the service offer to single homeless people.	<p>Secure additional funding through the ‘Single homeless fund’ for a specialist worker.</p> <p>Include single homeless people in the definition of vulnerable groups and develop a pathway.</p>	<p>Elmbridge Borough Council</p> <p>(Head of Housing and Independent Living)</p>	Winter 2015

7.2 Ensure that there is adequate winter shelter.	Work with local voluntary and faith groups to ensure a cold weather shelter is available.	Housing Manager	Winter 2015
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**Strategic priority eight. In partnership with the CAB prevent mortgage repossessions.**

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
8.1 Ensure a co-ordinated approach to advising and supporting households vulnerable to mortgage repossessions	Through the Housing Forum identify agencies available to provide assistance.  Council to consider developing a business case for a mortgage rescue project using SBC reserves as funding.	Housing Manager	Ongoing

**Cabinet****30 September 2014**

<b>Title</b>	Capital funding for housing opportunities		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a recommendation to Council		
<b>Report Author</b>	Liz Borthwick Assistant Chief Executive		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Mrs Jean Pinkerton OBE	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Creating opportunity and prosperity for our borough		
<b>Cabinet Values</b>	Community and Opportunity		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>Cabinet resolved to recommend that Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authorises officers to continue negotiations with Thames Valley Housing for housing opportunities on the Crooked Billet site.</li> <li>• Agrees, in principle, to spend £500,000 of commuted sum funding on the Crooked Billet/Thames Valley Housing project.</li> <li>• Agrees, in principle, and subject to full development of the business case, including evaluation advice, to a supplementary capital estimate of £500,000</li> </ul>		

**1. Key issues**

- 1.1 Cabinet is fully aware of the housing situation in Spelthorne with a lack of temporary and private sector housing.
- 1.2 The Leader and Cabinet are very keen to support housing initiatives and as such officers have been sourcing potential purchase of properties and looking at development partnerships.
- 1.3 Officers became aware of the development of the Crooked Billet site in Staines. The developer of the site is Bellway Homes. There will be 29 apartments of which nine have been secured for affordable housing through a Section 106 Agreement. The social housing will be managed by Thames Valley Housing Association (TVHA).
- 1.4 The Council have approached TVHA whilst developing its housing strategy and TVHA are very open to partnerships. The Council have asked if there was an opportunity to work with TVHA to secure the proposed twenty private sale flats on the Crooked Billet site for affordable housing.
- 1.5 TVHA have already had discussions with Bellway Homes about the purchase of the further twenty private sale units. Bellway Homes have indicated that they are interested in a possible deal.

- 1.6 Preliminary discussions have taken place between TVHA and Bellway Homes and TVHA and the Council and there has been the indication that a one million pound investment from the Council would be sufficient to secure the 20 units when used with other funding sources from TVHA. TVHA have said they would be prepared to offer the Council 100% nomination rights to the properties, also to hold the freehold to the properties if a 150 year lease was granted.
- 1.7 There are much more detailed negotiations required but in order for officers to proceed, there needs to be confidence of agreed funding of one million pounds.
- 1.8 The Council already has funding of £590,000 within its commuted sum funding, but Councillors need to agree in principle that a further £500,000 capital should be available so negotiations can continue.

## **2. Options analysis and proposal**

- 2.1 The option is to agree in principle the allocation of £500,000 capital funding so negotiations on seeing a further 20 property nominations in partnership with TVHA.
- 2.2 To also agree to utilise £500,000 of funding from commuted sum. The remaining £90,000 may need to fund fees etc.
- 2.3 To continue negotiations with TVHA and then finalise the business case for final consideration by Cabinet later this year.

## **3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 Funding is already available within the commuted sum budget, but a further supplementary budget estimate of £500,000 needs to be agreed in principle to proceed further with TVHA.

## **4. Other considerations**

- 4.1 There is the need to continue with negotiations developing the final proposal and business plan, including evaluation advice, which officers will present to November / December Cabinet for final approval.

## **5. Timetable for implementation**

- 5.1 The timetable is as follows
  - Agreement that funding is available – Council 26 October 2014
  - Continue negotiations and development of the proposed for consideration of Cabinet - November/December 2014
  - Subject to decision legal requirement carried out – Jan/Feb 2015
  - Potential occupation – Oct/Nov 2015

# Cabinet

## 30 September 2014



<b>Title</b>	Employment monitoring 2014		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To note		
<b>Report Author</b>	Jan Hunt, Head of Human Resources		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Robert Watts	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Value for money Council		
<b>Cabinet Values</b>	Self-Reliance		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>To note the workforce and employment monitoring data.</b>		

### 1. The Council as employer

- 1.1 This report gives a snapshot of the Spelthorne workforce with an overview of a range of key workforce indicators set out in **the Appendix**. Employment issues are the responsibility of the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) and Management Team receive reports on a range of employment matters during the year.
- 1.2 Spelthorne has a range of employment policies, procedures and arrangements in place for the management of staff. Operational management matters are delegated to the Chief Executive, Management Team and heads of service, with heads of service/managers involved in specific issues arising in their service areas and with their staff. In a few specific instances Councillors are also involved; for example redundancy payments are agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and the Staffing and the Appeals Committee hears appeals against dismissal.
- 1.3 The size and shape of the Council's workforce is influenced by a wide range of issues including the council's statutory functions, discretionary services, changing responsibilities of local government, decisions on whether services are run in-house or contracted out, local priorities and Spelthorne's financial position. As a multi-faceted organisation there can be growth in some areas at the same time as contraction in others. Economic and societal pressures affect some areas, such as increasing homelessness and variations in the numbers of householder planning applications.
- 1.4 Where services are provided directly the aim is to have the right people in place, at the right time and with the right skills to provide quality outcomes for the delivery of services at the level that the Council determines. It is important that Spelthorne retains a good reputation as an employer of choice in the area so that we can recruit and retain good staff.

- 1.5 Spelthorne has always had a mixed economy of provision: services may be provided in a range of ways including by direct employment, contractual arrangements with external providers and partnership working. The aim is to continue to improve cost-effectiveness in service delivery. Recent changes that have impacted on staff numbers include bringing ICT services in-house at the end of the Steria contract, partnership working with a number of shared posts and a number of new areas of work funded by external sources such as the family support team funded by Surrey County Council and waste project funded by DCLG.
- 1.6 The Council takes its responsibilities as a good employer seriously and will consult with staff, involve them and support them through any workforce changes required during these challenging times. Consultation with affected staff and UNISON takes place where there are proposals for organisational change or changes to working arrangements in specific service areas, and UNISON are consulted on proposals to change any employment policies and arrangements across the whole organisation. We aim to maintain positive employment relations in order to meet the challenges ahead, to minimise disruption, maintain good morale and motivation.

## **2. The Spelthorne workforce**

- 2.1 A number of workforce indicators are reported to Management Team over the year, some of which were previously covered by Best Value Performance Indicators for publication. There are currently no mandatory employment performance indicators although the Equality Act requires all public authorities to publish workforce information, which is published on the Equality Pages of the website.
- 2.2 The Appendix shows information on:
1. Staff numbers
  2. Gender split
  3. Age profile and length of service
  4. Employee ethnicity
  5. Turnover
  6. Variations to establishment
  7. Recruitment and resourcing activity
  8. Sickness absence.
- 2.3 All these workforce indicators fluctuate over time and the Appendix includes brief comment if appropriate. The effective date is 1 April 2014 and the 2013/4 year unless stated. The overall trend on staff numbers is down with staff reductions and fewer management posts as Spelthorne seeks to reduce its budget and become a sustainable self-financing council.
- 2.4 Further changes to the size and shape of the organisation are likely over the next few years as Spelthorne moves towards a Sustainable Future.

## **3. Options analysis and proposal**

- 3.1 No options, the report is for information.

## **4. Financial implications**



4.1 Staff costs are a significant part of the council's budget being an investment in the staff resources to deliver the Council's services and priorities.

**5. Other considerations**

5.1 Spelthorne's employment policies, procedures and arrangements must comply with employment legislation and other statutory requirements. Employment arrangements must be adequate to be able to recruit and retain staff with risks to service provision if we are unable to do so.

**6. Timetable for implementation**

6.1 Management Team receive reports on workforce issues throughout the year.

**Background papers:** None

**The Appendix**

## The Appendix

**Spelthorne Borough Council Workforce Indicators 2014****1. Staff numbers**

**Figures at 1 April 2014** [1 August 2014 update in brackets]

Headcount is 344 employees, 304.83 full time equivalents [1 August - 336 people, 298.73 FTE]

Full time – 240 people (69.8%) [1 August – 234 full time staff, 69.6% of staff]  
 Part time – 104 people (30.2%) [1 August – 102 part time staff, 30.4% of staff]

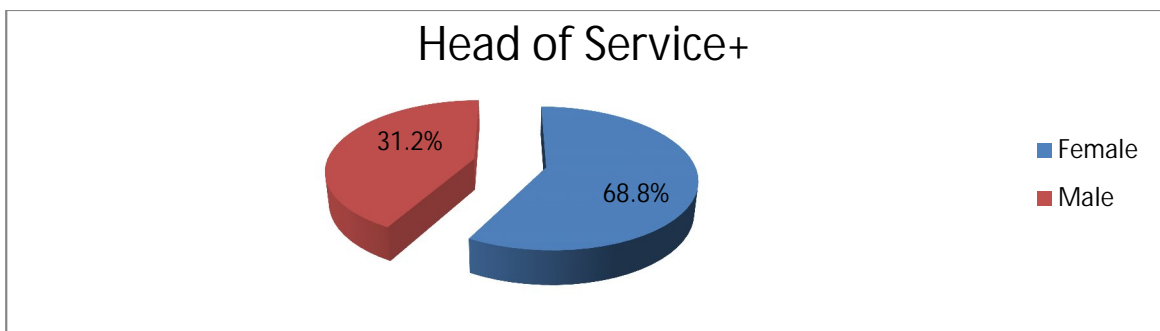
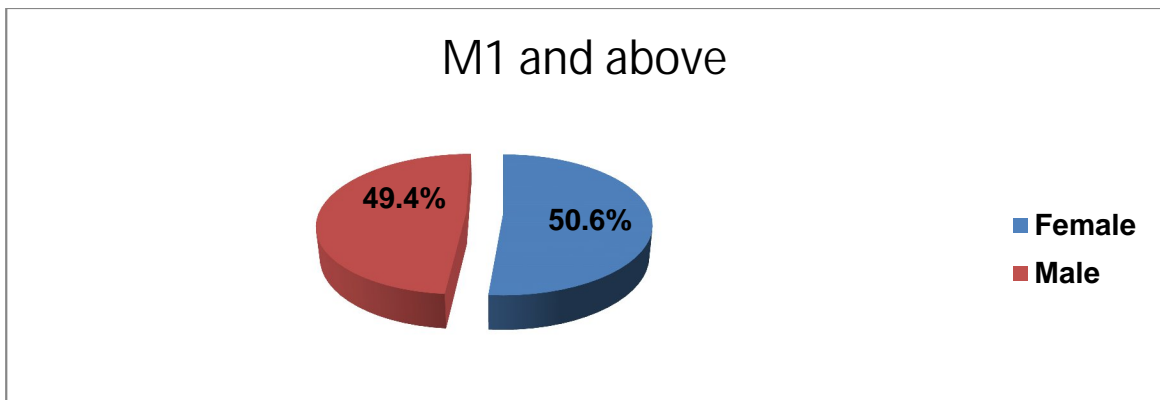
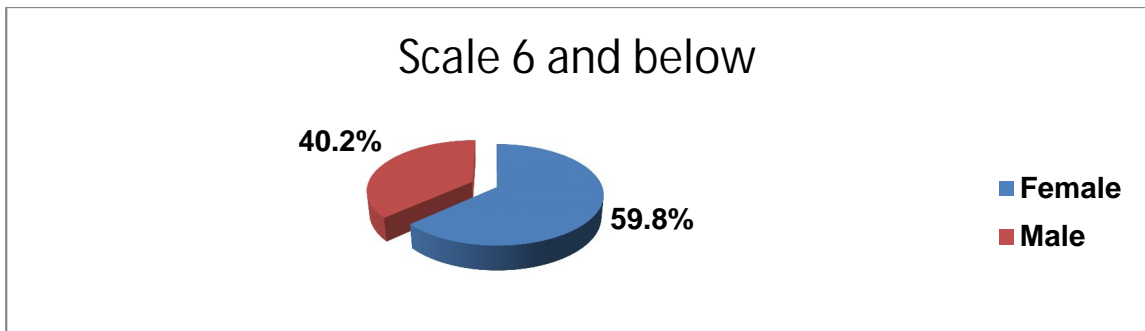
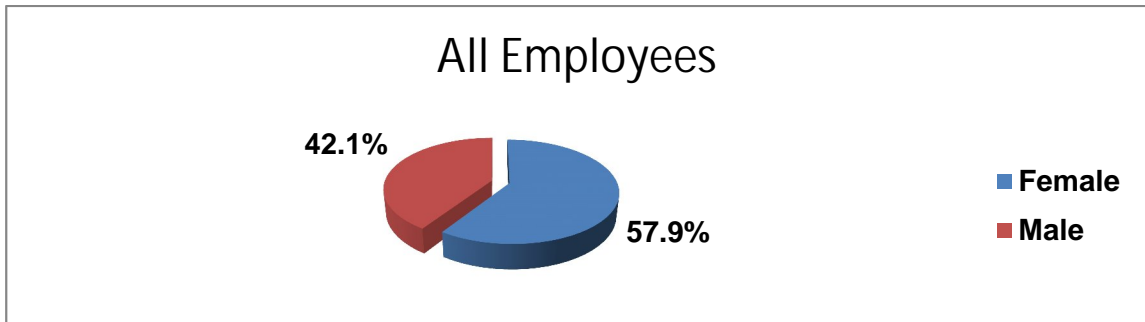


Spelthorne has one of the lowest staffing rates per thousand population compared to other Surrey districts who retain Streetscene direct services. Councils differ in the mix of services undertaken by direct employment / other external arrangements.

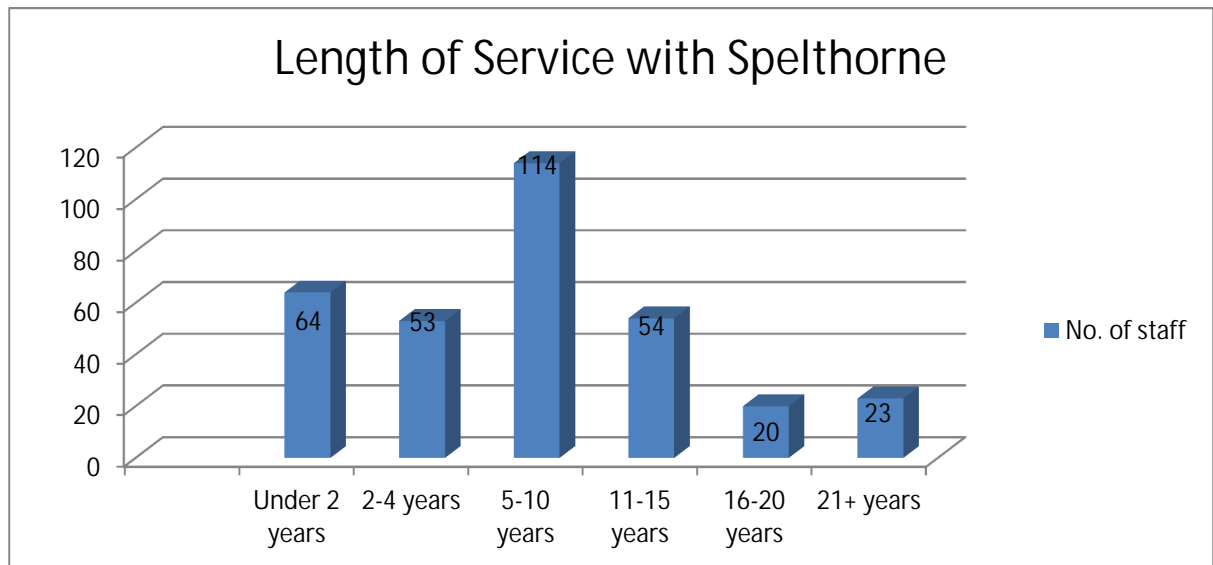
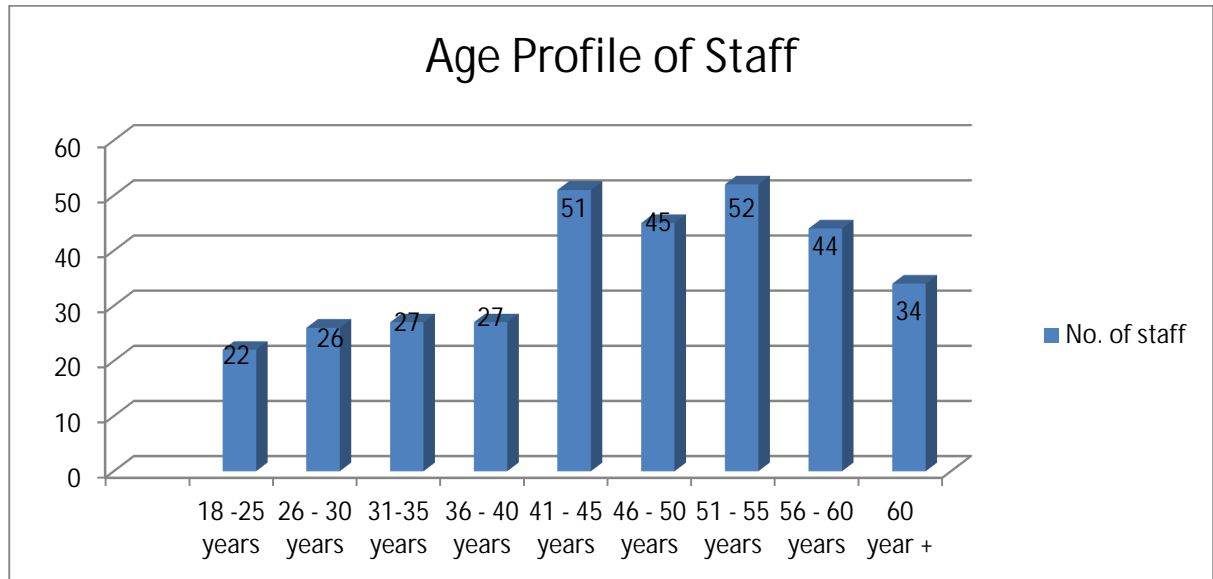
**Disability**

8 staff (2.33% of all staff) declare that they have a disability, this may be an underrepresentation as individuals wish to focus on abilities rather than disabilities. The 2011 census showed that 22.7% of households in Spelthorne included one person with a long term health problem, so this is likely to be an underrepresentation compared to the general population.

## 2. Gender Split of Spelthorne Employees



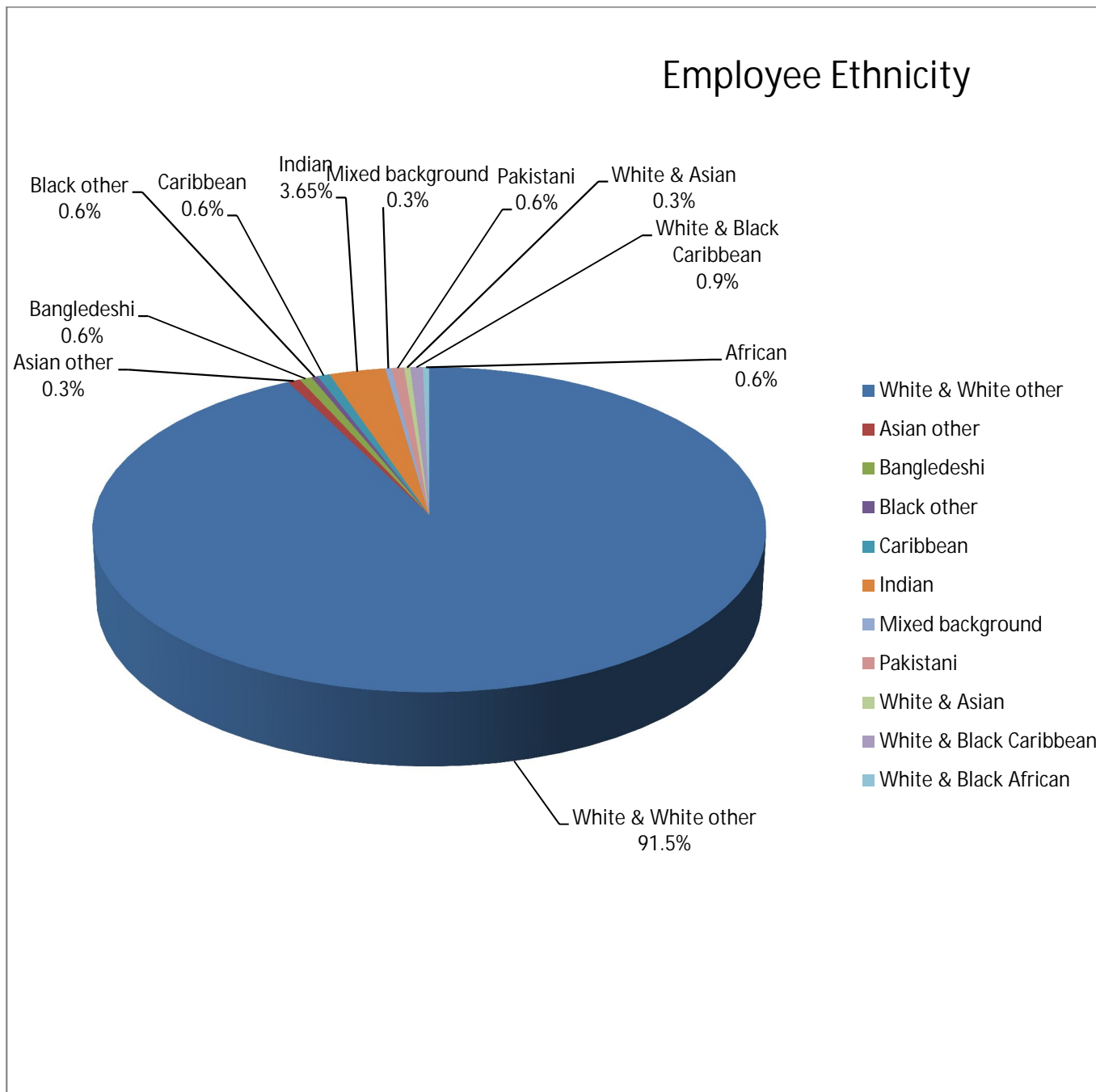
### 3. Age Profile and Length of Service



A number of staff have long service representing a wealth of experience. Service planning arrangements include succession planning and service resilience to cover essential skills.

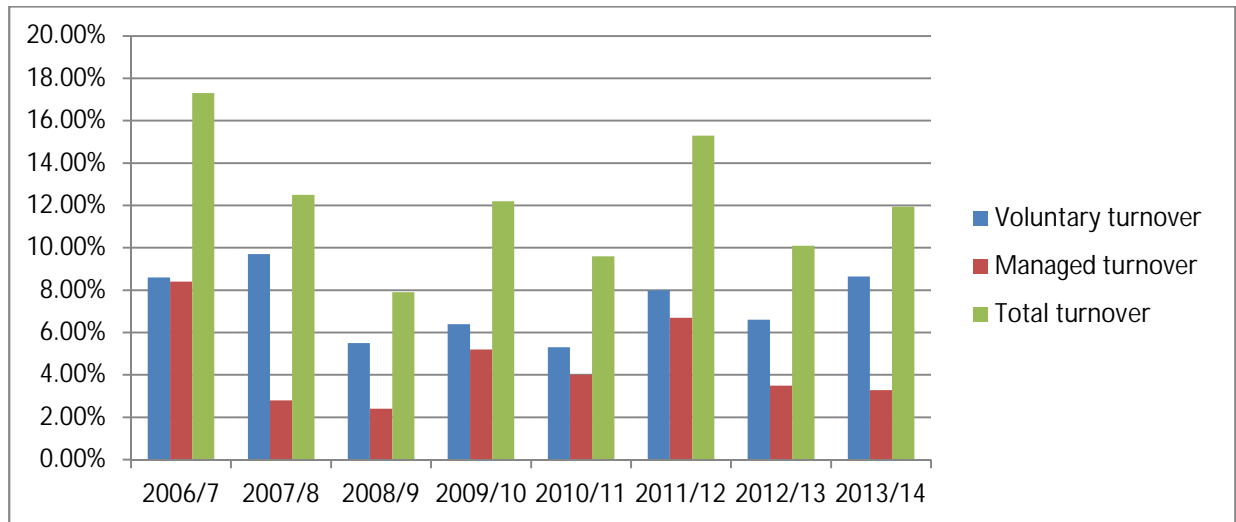
There is no longer a compulsory retirement age and staff can continue to work beyond the previous normal retirement age of 65. As state pension ages increase, many of our staff will now expect to work to age 68 before they can receive their pension. We do not yet know how employment patterns will be affected by these changes.

#### 4. Employee ethnicity



The 2011 census figures show that 87.3% of the Spelthorne population is from a white background with 12.7% from an ethnic minority background. Spelthorne's workforce is therefore slightly under-represented with staff from other ethnic backgrounds compared to the population in general. Spelthorne's recruitment market is wider than Spelthorne alone with staff coming from the rest of Surrey, Berkshire, outer London, Thames Valley and wider afield.

## 5. Turnover



Turnover in the year to 31 March 2014 was 11.94% of the workforce, with 8.66% voluntary turnover and 3.28% managed turnover.

The 40 leavers in 2013/4 included 29 voluntary leavers and 11 managed leavers. Turnover increased compared to the previous year (32 leavers in 2012/3).

**Managed turnover** covers all dismissals where Spelthorne has taken action to bring the employment to an end (the 'fair' reasons for dismissal include conduct, capability/ill-health, redundancy, end of temporary contract). Each of the 'managed' cases generally requires a significant amount of manager and Human Resources input and time. Last year the 11 managed leavers included 5 dismissals for conduct/capability, 3 redundancies and 3 dismissals at the end of temporary contracts.

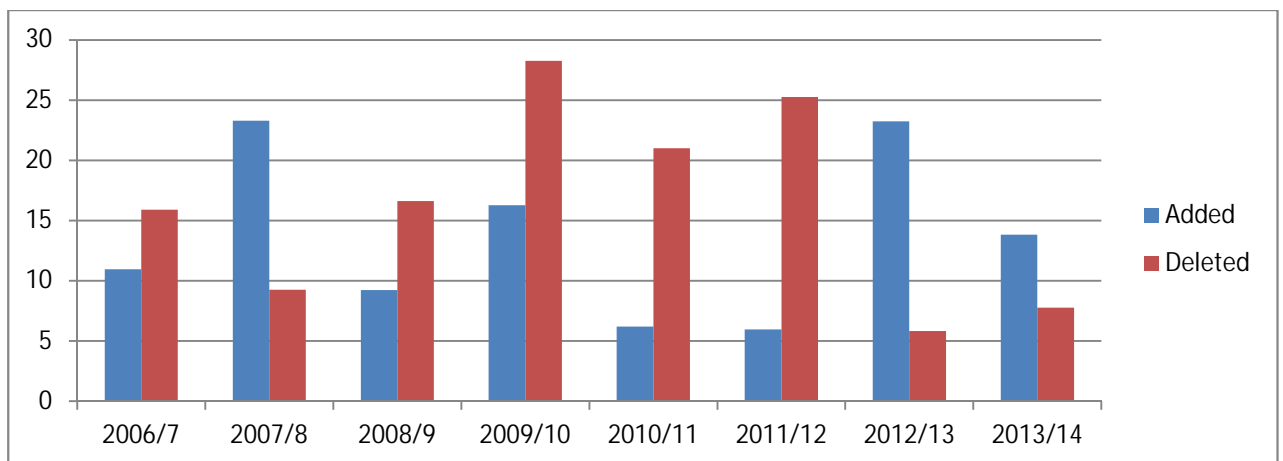
**Voluntary turnover** is a significant indicator/risk factor, representing the loss of staff that we would have expected to continue working for us, and now need to replace (albeit that it presents opportunities to change arrangements). The level of voluntary turnover is rising but remains under 10%. There were 29 voluntary leavers including 4 who decided to retire and 5 who left to join other councils, 4 of whom moved for promotion at other councils.

Voluntary Turnover is at the highest level since 2007/8 and some areas are beginning to have difficulties. For example Streetscene struggle to retain skilled drivers and manual workforce when the local economy picks up and they are competing with local airport/freight businesses as well as other councils.

The turnover rates include permanent staff and longer term temporary posts/staff, but not casual cover or short term temps. The total number of leavers processed by HR/Payroll in the year was 110, including 70 casual workers / election staff as well as the 40 permanent/temporary staff noted above.

## 6. Variations to establishment

The establishment fluctuates over time as services change, expand or contract. In a multi-service organisation like Spelthorne some areas may be increasing staff numbers (or increasing working hours) at the same time as others are deleting posts (or reducing working hours). The chart takes account of increases and decreases to working hours in a post as well as structure changes. All changes are approved by Management Team where within budget/funded, or by Cabinet if a new service or extra budget is required.



Establishment changes in 2013/14 included the appointment of apprentices in ICT and Economic Regeneration, additional resources for the Staines-upon-Thames regeneration programme, changes in Planning, Parking Services and Customer Services, temporary changes due to secondments to Asset Management and within Sustainability and Leisure, the closure of Lord Knyvetts as an Independent Living venue and the ending of support to Neighbourhood Watch. The significant changes in 2012/13 included the addition of 10 posts in the family support team and 7 posts in ICT for former Steria staff transferred to Spelthorne as the service was brought back in-house.

13.82 full time equivalent new posts/added hours in the year.

7.76 FTE deleted posts/reduced hours in the year

The establishment at 1 April 2014 now stands at 328.27 full time equivalent, a net increase of 6.06 FTE in the year.

This is a reduction of 4.99 FTE compared to the establishment of 333.26 FTE in June 2008, with the trend remaining downwards compared to 2008.

## 7. Recruitment and resourcing activity

The table below shows the comparative position on numbers of vacancies and applications received in recent years.

	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Total vacancies	40	55	46	41	25	52	46	62
Internal only	4	10	8	20	9	21	10	18
External	36	45	38	21	16	31	36	44
Total applicants	639	803	961	1050	590	832	920	873

Application numbers have remained high overall, with an impact on increased manager and HR time required to process applications, and professional HR staff spending more time supporting managers with recruitment testing and at interviews.

A few posts attracted small numbers of applications. The Economic Development Apprentice was advertised twice and the Building Control Surveyor advertised 3 times, most recently with the addition of a Recruitment Allowance.

The chart covers the recruitment of permanent and temporary positions, culminating in a new appointment to the establishment. Casual workers and elections staff are also appointed. There were a total of 99 new appointments in the year: 44 permanent/temps and 55 casuals and elections staff.

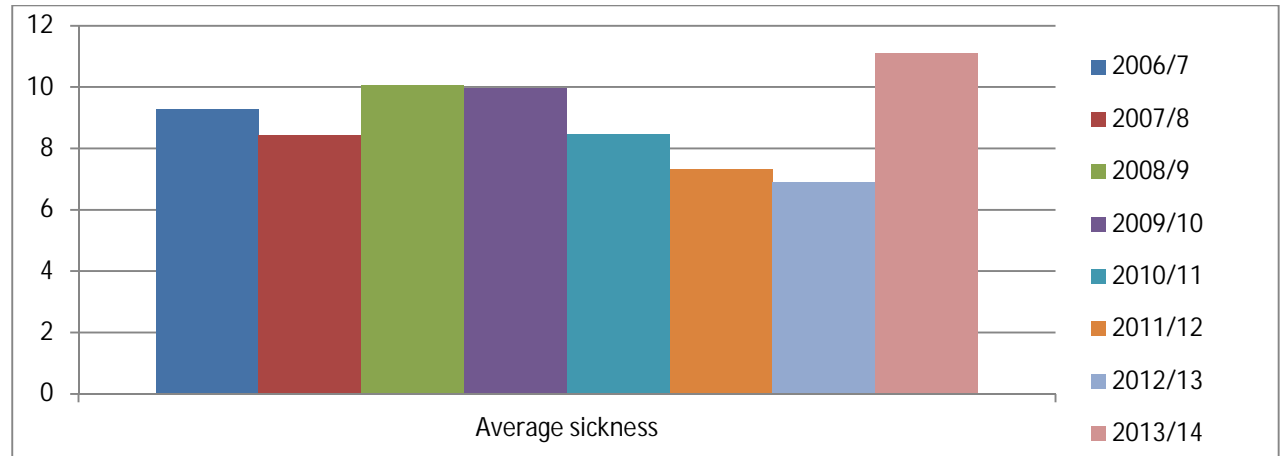
There are increased requirements for pre-employment checks to meet the Government's Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) in order to retain Spelthorne's Code of Connection access. More reference checks are required for a longer period and Disclosure Scotland criminal record checks needed for all new starters having access to the computer system, including temporary and casual staff. This will increase the time between appointment offer and start date. The 2014 Co-Co submission date is in November 2014 and HR are liaising with ICT and services for the scale of the impact this year (for all staff who have GCSX Government Secure mailboxes), further impact in 2015 when large numbers of existing staff will have to be checked to BPSS level as well as new appointments.



## 8. Sickness Rates

Sickness rates vary over time. The average sickness absence rate in the year to the end of March 2014 was 11.11 days, an increase in sickness absence compared to previous years.

Absence was split between 3.8 days for short term absence and 7.31 days for long term absence.



### Breakdown of long and short term absence

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Total sickness	8.47	9.96	6.89	11.11
Long term (over 20 days)	4.92	5.67	2.79	7.31
Short term	3.55	4.29	4.1	3.8

Long term sickness increased in the year with a slight reduction in short term absence.

Long term sickness absence, representing cases of serious ill-health, has a distorting effect on overall absence rates. There were a very high number of cases of long-term sickness absence, with 33 cases of sickness absence of 4 weeks or more in the year (compared to 25 in 2010/11, 24 in 2012/13 and 20 in 2013/14), 25 of them with 6 weeks or more sickness. These are cases of serious ill health with surgery or other treatment programmes and lengthy recovery times before staff are able to return to work. There were no ill-health retirements in 2013/4.

Reviews of sickness absence reporting give typical long term absence rates (of 20 days or more) between 33% and 40% of absences: Spelthorne's experience last year is that some 66% of absences were related to long term ill health - a very high rate of long term absence.



**Cabinet****30 September 2014**

<b>Title</b>	Recovery Policy for Spelthorne Borough Council		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision		
<b>Report Author</b>	Linda Norman		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Tim Evans	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Value for money Council		
<b>Cabinet Values</b>	Accountability		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>The Cabinet is asked to accept the recommendations in the revised Recovery policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure a professional, consistent and timely approach to recovery action across the section.</li> <li>• To promote a coordinated approach towards sharing debtor information and managing debts owed to the Council.</li> </ul>		

**1. Key issues**

- 1.1 The Recovery policy was last reviewed in 2008 and with the amalgamation of Customer Services, Revenues and Sundry debtors in 2011, the policy needs to be reviewed to align procedures across the services and take into account changes in legislation such as the Courts and Tribunal Act 2007 that came into force in April 2014 with regards to fee structures and the changes to the Local Council Tax Support scheme.
- 1.2 The service has relied on custom and practice in recent years and as such, some staff are not necessarily fully aware of:
- Protecting the public purse ( reasonable steps on verifying discounts and exemptions)
  - Legislation ( enforcement issues and policy)
  - Financial transactions (refunds and write offs)
- 1.2 Specific areas of immediate concern are around:
- Backdating of discounts– beyond current and previous years
  - Recovery – bailiff returns, arrangements for persistent bad debtors
  - Write offs – regarding delegated authority
  - Refunds – refunding accounts in arrears and procedures for urgent refunds

**2. Options analysis and proposal**

- 2.1 By reviewing existing procedures, it may be possible to maintain or increase collection rates in the current economic climate
- 2.2 By amalgamating policies, there is a consistent approach to recovery across all debts owed to the Council
- 2.3 Having a clear policy as set out in Appendix A with proper segregation of duties, will ensure staff act in accordance with the Council's best interest and protect the public purse.
- 2.4 The policy includes good practice principles which should strengthen the Council's recovery of debt (See Appendix A):

**3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications but it is anticipated that overall income collection will improve.

**4. Other considerations**

- 4.1 The policy should have due regard for customer care to encourage early contact to avoid build-up of debt.
- 4.2 The policy should have due regard for the more vulnerable residents and comply with the Council's Equality and Diversity scheme.
- 4.3 The policy and procedures should be monitored by senior staff to ensure staff and partners are adhering to the policy.

**5. Timetable for implementation**

- 5.1 The policy should be approved from 1 October 2014.

**Background papers:**

There are none

Appendix 1 Recovery policy for Spelthorne Council

**Appendix 1****Recovery Policy for Spelthorne Borough Council****August 2014****Background information**

Customer Services merged with Revenues and Sundry Debtors in 2011 and following an audit review, recommendations were made that the Revenues recovery policy be updated to reflect suitable divisions of duties and robust internal controls and checks.

**Debts covered by this policy**

The debts involved in debt recovery are primarily:

- Council Tax
- National Non Domestic Rates
- Housing Benefit Overpayments
- Sundry Debtors
- Parking fines

This Policy applies to all sums owing to the Council and has been developed to ensure a consistent approach to the management of debts across the section. The policy also includes provisions to help prevent our customers and tax payers from falling into debt, and details how we can help those that do fall into debt.

This Policy sets out the general principles to be applied in relation to debt management across services provided by Customer Services. It is to be used together with more detailed procedural guidance for staff, held and developed by the Service.

**Policy Aims**

The key aims of this policy are as follows:

- To improve the levels of income collected by the Council.
- To ensure a professional, consistent and timely approach to recovery action across the section.
- To consider fully the debtor's circumstances and ability to pay and so distinguish between the debtor who won't pay and the debtor who genuinely can't pay.
- To promote a coordinated approach towards sharing debtor information and managing debts owed to the Council.
- To ensure that debts are managed in accordance with legislative provisions best practice.
- To maximise cost income to reduce the cost of administration to the Council
- Ensure the separation of duties to safeguard the Council and protect individuals.
- To treat individuals consistently and fairly regardless of age, sex, gender, disability and to ensure that individual's rights under Data Protection and Human Rights legislation are protected.

**How this policy links to the Council's Overall Aims.**

The provision and delivery of quality, cost effective and customer focused services.

- In identifying genuine hardship, advice on Local Taxation can be given to prevent situation worsening and may enable a long-term arrangement at an affordable amount.
- Prompt recovery action against debtors with the means to pay will improve debt collection rates and benefit the Council's financial resources.

## **The legal and policy framework for Recovery**

The Council has a legal duty to ensure cost effective billing, collection and recovery of all relevant sums due.

Council Tax recovery procedures are laid down by statute in The Local Government Finance Act 1992 and specifically in The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 as amended.

National Non-Domestic Rates recovery procedures are laid down by statute in The Local Government Finance Act 1988 and specifically in the Non Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement (Local Lists) Regulations 1989 as amended

Housing Benefit overpayments are reclaimed in accordance with Regulations 98-105 of the Housing Benefit (General) Regulations 1987 (as amended).

Sundry debts; recovery is outlined in the Council's standard contract or hire agreements, terms and conditions.

## **Policy Details**

### **The principles of good practice**

Debt is a feature of everyday life and in the event of late or non-payment may lead to serious consequences for an individual or a business. This can lead to ongoing problems and has a knock on effect such as poverty, homelessness, illness and social exclusion. In economic terms it may result in a loss of employers or jobs and accelerate a decline in local communities. The impact of debt is not restricted to the individual or business concerned. It may affect families, dependants and employees or customers of a particular business. The cumulative effect should not be underestimated. The Council will as far as possible take account of these issues when making decisions upon the collection, recovery or enforcement of debt. Every effort will be made to ensure that any entitlement(s), reductions or assistance which may be available are made known or granted to the individual or business concerned.

However, others may deliberately set out to delay or not make payments and all methods of enforcement will be used to secure payment in these cases. Additional fees will be charged where appropriate to reduce the burden on people who pay promptly.

The following good practice principles should strengthen the Council's recovery of debts:

- Efficient well trained staff who are effectively monitored and act in the Council's best interest
- Accurate and prompt billing
- A wide range of payment options for customers
- Agreement of affordable repayment arrangements for those customers experiencing financial difficulties
- Advice on ways to reduce bills and maximise income
- Access to advice and information at every stage of the collection and recovery process
- Communication between the different parts of the Council that collect and recover debts
- Appropriate recovery action is taken
- Review of irrecoverable debts
- Minimise irrecoverable debts
- Maximise collection of costs incurred to the authority

### **Accurate and prompt billing**

Delay in sending bills, accounts or invoices can inadvertently create debt problems from the outset. Debt will accumulate and if no provision has been made by the debtor for a liability that will create pressure for the household or business concerned. Services standards are used to ensure that

information received is assessed and processed as quickly and efficiently as possible. It is the relevant service area's responsibility to ensure invoices are raised as quickly as possible to avoid any issues from the debtor.

For this policy to be effective it is vital that we provide:

- accurate and clear bills promptly i.e. Full names, contact address and a phone number and email address will be established wherever possible prior to billing
- a clear summary of what the invoice relates to
- a quick response to changes in circumstances and applications for exemptions, discounts and reliefs. It should be noted that recovery staff may establish that a discount or an exemption is appropriate, but the information must be passed to Customer Services managers, who will check that the discount or exemption is appropriate and correct before being applied to the account.
- that discounts and exemptions will only be backdated beyond the 1<sup>st</sup> of April of preceding year only on documentary evidence
- fast and accurate delivery of benefit entitlements and amendments

The information provided with the bill will be clearly written, in plain English and will show:

- what the bill or liability is for
- the amount due and, where appropriate, the instalment amounts and payment due dates
- how to make a payment
- a contact point for enquiries - including e-mail and website details

In the case of Housing Benefit Overpayments we will also provide:

- the amount of deduction from future benefit – if the overpayment is to be recovered this way
- the person's right to request a written statement and the timescale for this
- the person's right to appeal and the timescale for this.

### **A range of payment options**

It is acknowledged that the easier it is to pay, the more likely it is that payment will be made. We will provide a choice of convenient methods of payment for bills and invoices and details of these options will be advised on each bill.

A range of payment options currently includes Direct Debit, Standing Order, cash, cheque, debit and credit card (which can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week using the automated telephone line or Internet facility) and our latest mobile app. We will endeavour to explore cost-effective payment methods for people who do not have access to bank accounts or debit / credit cards.

### **Repayment arrangements**

We acknowledge that people do not pay their debts for a variety of reasons. Some customers will have difficulty in paying and we recognise the need to agree payment arrangements that reflect the ability to pay as well as the level of debt owed. By enabling people who fall into arrears to come to payment arrangements appropriate to their circumstances we can help to reduce the risk of further action and unnecessary additional costs becoming payable.

It is very important that customers get in touch with us when they are experiencing difficulties. Where a customer does make contact we will consider their circumstances with a view to agreeing a reasonable payment arrangement.

We will require customers to complete an income and expenditure form and to provide documentary evidence to help us to assess their circumstances and confirm particular details before we can agree an arrangement.

Where customers fail to make contact or maintain arrangements recovery action will continue.

Staff should not set up arrangements for persistent defaulters and should advise that alternative methods of recovery will be taken such as Enforcement Agents, attachments of earnings/ benefits. Staff should remember that they should only make arrangements that are in the Council's best interest and where they are unable to do so, should refer to a senior officer for approval.

**We will work towards making computer systems and information about outstanding debts more accessible to recovery staff in order that we can adopt a co-ordinated approach to payment arrangements, particularly when dealing with multiple debts.**

#### **Advice on ways to reduce bills and maximise income**

We welcome the involvement of welfare agencies in connection with debts and recognise the benefits that these organisations can offer both the customer and the Council in prioritising debts and maximising income. We will work with such agencies whenever possible.

We will train our staff involved in the recovery of debts on anti-poverty and social inclusion awareness. This will enable us to:

- inform customers of their entitlement to Housing Benefits, Universal Credit and Council Tax Support, discounts, reliefs and exemptions and hardship applications
- inform customers of the general availability of other income related benefits such as Job Seeker's Allowance, Child Tax Credits, Working Tax Credits and Pension Credits
- give advice on all benefit entitlements
- direct customers who need help and advice on money management matters to the Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Inform customers who are at a serious stage of recovery, to seek independent help and advice from Citizen's Advice Bureau and other advisors such as "step change" or independent legal advice.

To make our services more accessible we promote use of technology through Connect (internet) and our mobile Engage app.

#### **Access to advice and information at every stage of the collection and recovery process**

We recognise the importance of keeping our customers informed about the recovery process, the consequences of not making payments and where they should go for help and advice.

We will:

- invite and encourage customers to make contact with us as soon as they begin experiencing difficulties paying their accounts
- ensure that advice and information given to customers by members of staff is consistent and that customers are treated fairly and equally
- assist customers with language and sensory communication difficulty by offering a translation service where appropriate
- ensure that all documents use plain English
- advise customers where to get help and advice about council tax support and money matters
- ensure that members of staff providing advice at the Magistrates' Court have access to account information
- Introduce arrangements to make direct referrals with debt advice providers

In addition to the information we include with bills and invoices we will work towards providing the following information via the Council's website:

- general information about debt recovery, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, Council Tax, Business Rates and Sundry Debts



- on-line forms (for example benefit change of circumstances, Direct Debit instructions, discount forms etc.) and links to benefit and council tax support information
- E-billing to enable customers to make balance enquiries

All communications with customers will be conducted professionally and all information collected is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **Appropriate recovery action is taken**

We will always seek to make realistic arrangements to clear outstanding debts by regular payments in preference to taking legal action for recovery.

Any reminders we issue will convey a willingness to discuss matters with customers and encourage them to make contact if they cannot pay as advised. They will also make the customer aware of the consequences of failing to pay or keep to arrangements.

If a customer fails to make contact or maintain arrangements we have a duty to collect what is due and will use all legal means available to recover debts using the following actions;

- **Enforcement Agents** it is important as a result of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007 that became law from the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014, that liability orders are passed correctly as they will only be called back from the bailiffs under extenuating circumstances which include
  - Errors on account
  - Vulnerability of debtor

This is because the Council could be held liable for the costs of enforcement action taken. Proof of extenuating circumstances is required in all cases except where an error has been made.

Enforcement Agents and "Taking Control of Goods regulations" is a pre-requisite of higher level enforcement action for Council Tax and Business Rate and will be used routinely to evaluate the prospect of obtaining payment for those debts. Removal of goods will, however, only be undertaken where sufficient goods, stock or possessions are available to recover the cost of the taking control of goods process and either a full or significant partial settlement of the debt involved. Removal of goods will not be used where the effect would be punitive and nothing more. Enforcement agents used in the enforcement process will be certificated and comply with a specific code of conduct agreed with the Council regulating their activity.

- **Attachment of earnings or allowances** will be used where a voluntary arrangement has failed, or previous payment history indicates a voluntary arrangement will create unnecessary administrative overheads or is unlikely to be successful. The law allows different attachments to run concurrently. Officers will use their discretion if that situation occurs to ensure that hardship is not inadvertently created.
- **Attachment of benefits** will be used routinely to secure payment. Regulations control the way in which this remedy is applied. Consequently, the Council has little or no discretion and may be a better option than enforcement agents given the debtors circumstances.
- **Charging Orders** will be used where the individual concerned cannot make payment and an equitable solution is to allow or enable payment of the debt from the equity within a property at a later date.
- **Bankruptcy proceedings** will be used as a last resort and only where sufficient equity is believed to exist to support a full or partial settlement of monies outstanding. In doing so however the Council recognises that there may well be situations where it is in the interest of the individual to take that option as a solution to their overall situation.
- **Liquidation** applies to companies and normally will only be used where sufficient funds to clear any debt either partially or in full, will be created from the outcome. However there may be occasions where a company is using the law to avoid payment. In that case the Council will take action to force a liquidation of the company.

- **Committal Proceedings** will be used to recover Council Tax and Business Rate where there is no evidence of hardship or extenuating circumstances.

Where contact or payments are not made for Sundry Debts we will terminate any non-statutory services.

We will follow the principles of enforcement outlined below:

- our action will be proportional – we will strike a balance between the potential loss of income to the Council and the costs of taking a course of action
- our approach will be consistent – with the aim of achieving consistency in the advice we give, the use of our powers and in the recovery procedures we use
- our actions will be transparent – to help customers to understand what is expected of them and to explain the reasons for taking any recovery enforcement action.

Where a debtor moves addresses and does not inform the council, they will be traced using the latest technology and recovery will continue as appropriate.

### **Review of irrecoverable debts**

Despite our procedures for recovering debts there are always cases that may be deemed impossible or not cost effective to pursue. There are a variety of reasons why this might happen, these include:

- the amount outstanding is below an agreed lower limit
- the customer has left an address and we are unable to trace them
- the customer has died and there are not sufficient funds from their estate to pay the amount owed
- the customer is bankrupt or if the company is insolvent (however we do submit a claim in bankruptcy and any payments received from the receiver are credited to the account accordingly)
- it is uneconomical to pursue the debt
- health and financial considerations
- statute barred – An invoice is irrecoverable if six years have elapsed from the date of the invoice, date of service or last payment date, whichever is the latter. If the debt is acknowledged by the debtor, the six years runs from this date. All debts which are statute barred will be processed through the agreed write off procedures as irrecoverable.
- Official error Housing Benefit overpayments, where the customer could not reasonably be expected to know they were being overpaid.
- Housing Benefit overpayments where the authority decides that it is unreasonable to recover the debt.

We will monitor all outstanding debts to ensure that they are recoverable and will take prompt action when irrecoverable debts are identified to write them off in accordance with our financial standing orders.

The relevant Heads of Service and Assistant Chief Executive (Chief Finance Officer) have delegated authority to write off debts. (Council Tax and Housing Benefit Overpayments to the value of £3,000.00 and Business Rate to the value of £5,000.00).

Where the court has remitted the debt, a copy of the court order should be sent to the Customer Services Control Officer to do. All other writes off should be prepared in the usual way and checked by the appropriate senior officers ie Revenues and Customer Services Manager or Housing Benefit Manager and then forwarded onto the relevant Head of Service for approval. The write off policy remains in force and for all write offs over £750, external checks such as Callcredit must be used.

For write offs over these limits, a cabinet report must be prepared in the required format.

The formal 'writing off' of any debts will not rule out recovery action being taken in the event that a customer's circumstances change.

## Refunds

Staff should not refund monies to people who owe the Council money or are in arrears but offset any credit against the oldest debt first.

Refunds should only be considered where the account is not in credit where;

- DD indemnity claim
- Banding reduction back to 1993 and future instalments are reduced
- Error on account (ie duplicate payment made)
- Reductions in rateable value of Business properties for previous financial years if the current year is up to date..

Refunds for debtors should only be considered if the refund would prevent the person becoming homeless and as such create a future liability to the Council and proof of impending eviction should be provided prior to consideration of the refund. Such cases should be referred to the Head of Service for agreement.

## Refunds in error

Where a refund has been refunded to an incorrect account, a replacement refund should not be made until confirmation has been received from payments or Customer Services Control Officer that the monies have been returned. The exception to this is where the lack of refund would cause the customer additional financial hardship and again proof must be obtained prior to proceeding.

Urgent Refunds (PL3) can only be authorised by Head of Service or ACX. Staff should have a clear separation of functions;

- Prepared by                      Officer doing refund
- Not previously paid          Officer doing refund
- Checked                              Approval officer (T/L, CS Operational Manager, CS Technical Manager)
- Authorised                          HoS/ ACX

Recovery staff should not authorise refunds as this is a conflict of duties and should pass refund applications to the operational or technical team for actioning.

The approving officer should only authorise refunds where all the paperwork/evidence is available for reviewing and should reject any refund irrespective of level of officer who has prepared it where the relevant paperwork is not present. The current procedure for checking all refunds over £350 plus 10% check remains in force.

## Recovery of Court costs

Court costs will not be withdrawn unless an error has been made by the authority or by senior staff agreement. Costs will be pursued through to Enforcement Agents where necessary. The level of costs charged by the authority will be reviewed each year and will be increased as appropriate with the agreement of Staines Magistrates court.

## Customer Care Policy

Our Customer Care Policy will be displayed at all of our enquiry points, will be included with our bills and invoices, and published on our website.

In order to ensure customer care we will:

- encourage customers to make early contact to avoid a 'build-up of debt'
- ensure that debts are collected in an efficient and sympathetic way
- provide advice and guidance on ways to reduce bills and maximise income
- advise customers how to complain if they are unhappy with the service they have received
- ensure that customer views are used to inform policies and processes on collecting debt
- ensure that any new initiatives do not have a negative impact on vulnerable people.

All staff will be trained in customer care.

### **Efficiency and cost effectiveness**

We will seek to ensure that our recovery and enforcement activities are delivered in the most efficient and cost effective manner. This will include the use of external suppliers of services such as tracing agents and enforcement agents and investigating the use of alternative suppliers of other recovery, legal and enforcement related services.

We will seek to maximise the use of IT and technology in order to improve efficiency and consistency.

### **Monitoring**

We will monitor our policies and procedures to ensure that they are effective. Monitoring will include:

- quality checks on work processes to ensure fairness and consistency
- audit and quality checks on work processed by individuals
- rate of collection – to identify our performance against the targets set for the collection of debts
- number of cases at each stage of the recovery process
- complaints received – to assist us with making service improvements
- setting of targets to improve performance
- consultation with our customers and with advice agencies
- regular monitoring of Service Level Agreements
- Analysis of Advice Centre feedback/surveys to ensure that the service is customer focused

### **Limitations on debt recovery**

#### **Extenuating Circumstances**

There will be occasions where the Council must look beyond the debt itself and take account of the potential impact upon the individual, family, household or business concerned, either to protect vulnerable people, to avoid the transference of a problem elsewhere or where there may be some impact upon the local community. Examples of this are:-

- The presence of very young or elderly people in the household
- Chronic or terminal illness, recent bereavement of a spouse or member of the household
- Potential homelessness.
- The ability of the individual, household or business to make payment.
- Additional factors may apply for business debts. Examples of this are:-
- Potential loss of employment for employees of the business
- Loss of key facilities for the local community
- A payment option is the only choice because the business has no assets
- Impact upon the local community if the business was forced to close

The list is not exhaustive. It is simply intended to reflect the type of issue that the Council may react to when recovering or enforcing debts.

Unless otherwise authorised, referral to enforcement agents for taking control of goods will not be made for less than £100.00. This covers Local Taxation debts where the power to remove goods is granted by the Magistrates Court.

Agents used by the council must comply with The Lord Chancellor Department's 'National Standards for Enforcement Agents' and our SLA /

### **Procedure and training**

This policy will be made available to all staff dealing with income collection and recovery. This will be reinforced with training and management supervision of all staff involved in collecting debt.

### **Monitoring**

The Recovery Manager will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to and effective. Management information will be required for each debt stream on a monthly basis to the Head of Customer Services and the Corporate Debt Group. Internal Audit may test compliance with this policy in future reviews.

Regular meetings between responsible officers will be held on a quarterly basis.

### **Complaints and Errors**

Errors or mistakes made in the process of collecting monies and revenue due to the Council will normally be resolved using the Council's established complaints process. However, in the process of enforcing payment of outstanding debts it is possible that facts, unknown at an earlier stage but which nullify or influence the situation, only emerge after proceedings have been taken or have been completed.

In the event of any situation occurring the Council will take appropriate action to remedy the situation as far as possible.

- Proceedings will be stopped immediately.
- The debtor's account will be noted to reflect the revised situation.
- Where appropriate the Court involved will be advised.

Although the Council will make every effort to resolve a misrepresentation of the true situation, once some legal documents have been issued they can only be rescinded or "quashed" by judicial review at the instigation of the Council.

This would apply for example where a liability order for Council Tax has been obtained by the Council in good faith but information received after the court hearing reveals a situation which had it been known at the outset would have stopped the matter going before the court.

Because of the cost involved in taking an issue to judicial review it is not in the public interest to take that action other than in exceptional circumstances.

### **External Contractors**

The Council uses private contractors to provide the necessary expertise and resource to complete specific parts of the enforcement process. In the main this will be the engagement of enforcement agents to undertake taking control of goods process or serve legal documents. Any contractor engaged to undertake part of the enforcement process will:-  
Be suitably accredited for the role they undertake.

### **Advice on priority debts from the Citizens Advice Bureau**

The following advice is supplied to debtors by the Citizens Advice Bureau for information. It does not override this corporate debt policy.

#### **Priority debts**

All debts are important, but some debts are more pressing than others

Priority debts are debts owed to creditors who can take the strongest legal actions against you if you do not pay. It is not the size of the debt that makes it a priority, but what the creditors can do to recover their money.

Priority debts are:

- Mortgage arrears
- Rent arrears
- Council Tax and Rates
- Water rates
- Gas and electricity
- Unpaid Magistrate Court fines
- Unpaid maintenance and child support
- Income Tax and VAT/National Insurance
- Telephone
- Hire Purchase for goods that are essential e.g. a car needed for work

If you have any of the debts above, you must deal with them before you offer to repay any of your non-priority debts.

#### **Non-priority debts**

Examples of non-priority debts are:

- Credit Card and Store Card arrears
- Catalogue arrears
- Bank overdrafts and loans
- Hire Purchase for goods that aren't essential e.g. a television
- Money borrowed from family and friends

You cannot be imprisoned for not paying non-priority debts. You are unlikely to lose your home or your essential goods. However, if you make no offers to pay, without explaining why, the creditors will take you to court. If you still fail to pay when the court has ordered it, the creditors can take further action – for example, they can get another court order allowing them to send bailiffs in.

L.Norman 06.08.14

**Cabinet****30 September 2014**

<b>Title</b>	Proposed amendments to the Council's Delegations to Officers		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a recommendation to Council		
<b>Report Author</b>	Jonathan Bramley		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Robert Watts	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	This item is not in the current list of Corporate priorities but still requires a Cabinet decision		
<b>Cabinet Values</b>	Accountability		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>To recommend to Council adoption of amendments to the current Delegations to Officers</b>		

**1. Key issues**

- 1.1 The current Delegations to Officers was last amended on 26 April 2012 as part of wider changes made to the Council's Constitution. Since this date there have been changes to existing legislation and new legislation has been enacted. In order for Council officers to enforce the provisions of such legislation, they need to be included in the Delegations to Officers.
- 1.2 The proposed changes to the Delegations to Officers are highlighted in **Appendix A** and are shown as tracked changes. A table explaining the reasons for these amendments is shown in **Appendix B**.
- 1.3 The main changes are as follows:
  - a) On 31 December 2013 the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 were revoked and replaced with the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013. These are the main regulations which provide authorised Council officers with powers to enforce food hygiene legislation.
  - b) The main provisions of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 came into force on 1 October 2013. These regulations introduced a licensing regime for scrap metal sites and collectors. They also provide local authorities with the powers to close unlicensed sites.
  - c) The Mobile Homes Act 2013 came into force on 1 April 2014 and provides local authorities with powers to administer and enforce a licensing regime for mobile home (caravan) sites within their boundaries.

- d) The Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010 prohibits the commercial use of sunbeds by persons under the age of 18 years. Local authorities have powers to enforce these provisions.
- e) There have been recent changes made under the Licensing Act 2003 that enable local authorities to suspend premises licences for non-payment of annual licence fees. Furthermore, licensing authorities have been awarded the status of "Responsible Authority under the Licensing Act 2003.
- f) Certain legislation, such as the Gaming Act 1968 and Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976 have been repealed and replaced by the Gambling Act 2005.

## **2. Options analysis and proposal**

- 2.1 The options are to either approve the proposed amendments to the Delegations to Officers in whole or in part or to decline them all.
- 2.2 The preferred option is to approve all the amendments to the Delegations to Officers. This will ensure either continuity of existing work streams (food safety inspections) or new ones, such as under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 and Mobile Homes Act 2013, to enable officers to use the powers granted to the Council under new and existing legislation.
- 2.3 If the amendments to the Delegations to Officers are not incorporated the Council runs a risk in any prosecution of the respondent claiming that there is no case to answer, as the officer did not have the appropriate authority to investigate in the first place.

## **3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 There are none arising from this report

## **4. Other considerations**

- 4.1 The decisions made by officers must be in accordance with a properly constituted scheme of delegations and officer delegations must show a clear audit trail. The Council must conform with all primary and secondary legislation relevant to its constitution.

## **5. Timetable for implementation**

- 5.1 If Cabinet agree to the recommendations in this report, Council will be asked to approve the amendments to the Scheme of delegation on 24 October 2014, to become effective straight away.

**Background papers: There are none.**

### **Appendices:**

**Appendix A – Proposed changes to Delegations to Officers**

**Appendix B – Explanations for the proposed changes to the Delegations to Officers**



## Appendix A – Proposed amendments to Delegations to Officers

<b>DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS</b>	
<b>7 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MATTERS</b>	
<b>Column 1 – Function</b>	<b>Column 2 – Authorised Officer</b>
<p>7.1 To issue, renew, approve, vary or refuse licenses, registrations, certificates or consents (including the imposition of conditions) relating to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Animal boarding establishments;</li> <li>b. Riding establishments;</li> <li>c. Dog breeders;</li> <li>d. Pet shops;</li> <li>e. The keeping of dangerous wild animals;</li> <li>f. Scrap metal dealers (including sites or collectors);</li> <li>g. Premises using rag, flock or other filling materials;</li> <li>h. Chimney heights and furnaces (including those for experimental and research purposes);</li> <li>i. Caravan and camping sites (including mobile home, traveller and gypsy sites);</li> <li>j. Game dealers;</li> <li>k. Tattooing; acupuncture; body piercing, semi permanent skin colouring and electrolysis;</li> <li>l. Exemption certificates for offices, shops and food premises; and</li> <li>m. Noise levels on construction sites</li> <li>n. Sex establishment under schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982</li> </ul>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health &amp; Building Control</p>
<p>7.2 Under the Licensing Act 2003 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Issue a personal licence where no relevant representations are received or are withdrawn;</li> </ul>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health &amp; Building Control</p>

## Appendix A – Proposed amendments to Delegations to Officers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Issue premises licences/club premises certificates where no relevant representations are received or are withdrawn;</li> <li>c. Issue a provisional statement where no relevant representations are made or are withdrawn;</li> <li>d. Issue variations to premises licences/club premises certificates where no relevant representations are received or are withdrawn;</li> <li>e. Determine minor variation applications to premises licences/club premise certificates made under sections 41A to 41C and 86A to 86C of the act, in consultation with the Chair of Licensing Committee. This includes the authority to consult with Responsible Authorities</li> <li>f. Issue variations to designated premises supervisor where there is no police objection;</li> <li>g. Accept requests to be removed as the Designated Premises Supervisor</li> <li>h. Issue transfers of premises licence where there is no police objection;</li> <li>i. Grant applications for interim authorities where there is no police objection;</li> <li>j. To make relevant representations to other Local Authorities about persons or premises licensed within their borough effecting Spelthorne Borough</li> <li>k. To serve a counter notice in respect of Temporary Event Notices</li> <li>l. To suspend a Premises licence for non-payment of annual licence fee(s).</li> <li>m. To make representations on behalf of the licensing authority under the Licensing Act 2003 in respect of: new</li> </ul>	
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## Appendix A – Proposed amendments to Delegations to Officers

	applications under section 17 and applications to vary licences under section 34 and to apply for the review of a premises licence on behalf of the licensing authority under section 51 of the Licensing Act 2003.	
7.3	<p>Under the Gambling Act 2005 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Issue a licence where no relevant representations are received or are withdrawn;</li> <li>b. Issue variations to licences where no relevant representations are received or are withdrawn;</li> <li>c. Issue transfers of licences where no relevant representations are received or are withdrawn;</li> <li>d. Issue a provisional statement where no relevant representations are made or are withdrawn;</li> <li>e. Issue a club gaming/club machine permits where no relevant representations are received or are withdrawn;</li> <li>f. Issue other permits under the act;</li> <li>g. Cancellation of licensed premises gaming machine permits where no relevant representations are made or withdrawn;</li> <li>h. Issue a temporary use notice where no relevant representations are made or are withdrawn</li> </ul>	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.4	Under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 to make a decision on whether a representation is irrelevant, frivolous or vexatious	Head of Corporate Governance
7.5	To exercise all powers of the Council under sections 19-22 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 concerning closure of unlicensed premises	Head of Environmental Health (in consultation with the Chair of Licensing Committee)
7.6	To issue street collection and house to house collection permits and licences in	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental

## Appendix A – Proposed amendments to Delegations to Officers

	accordance with the House to House Collections Act 1939 and any other relevant statutory regulations	Health & Building Control
7.7	To exercise the Council's powers under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Serving improvement notices;</li> <li>b. Exercising emergency powers in relation to animals in distress;</li> <li>c. Entry and searching of premises;</li> <li>d. Exercising inspections powers</li> </ul>	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.8	To exercise the Council's powers under the following legislation, including powers of inspection, entry and searching of premises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pet Animals Act 1951;</li> <li>b. Riding Establishments Acts 1964 and 1970;</li> <li>c. Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963;</li> <li>d. Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991;</li> <li>e. Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976.</li> </ul>	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.9	To exercise the Council's powers under the Hypnotism Act 1952	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.10	To exercise the Council's powers under the Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006; the Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2007; the Smoke-free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007; the Smoke-free (Penalties and Discounted Amounts) Regulations 2007; and the Smoke-free (Vehicles and Operators & Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.11	Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and any regulations made there under to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Serve statutory notices in relation to</li> </ul>	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control or Head of Street Scene

## Appendix A – Proposed amendments to Delegations to Officers

<p>the Councils responsibilities</p> <p>(b) To issue, vary, transfer refuse, suspend or revoke permits and authorisations</p>	
<p>7.12 To issue, vary, transfer, refuse, suspend or revoke permits under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 and any regulations made thereunder</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health &amp; Building Control</p>
<p>7.13 To exercise the Council's powers and duties under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 and any regulations made thereunder</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health &amp; Building Control</p>
<p>7.14 The service of statutory notices on the owners or occupiers of premises or other persons relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Drains, sewers, water closets and other sanitary apparatus and soil pipes;</li> <li>b. nuisances;</li> <li>c. light nuisance;</li> <li>d. a satisfactory supply of wholesome water;</li> <li>e. control of rats and mice;</li> <li>f. filthy or verminous premises, articles or persons;</li> <li>g. accumulations;</li> <li>h. Insects;</li> <li>i. safety of buildings;</li> <li>j. infectious diseases;</li> <li>k. Any other action necessary to make premises or persons comply with environmental health safety and pollution legislation</li> </ul>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health &amp; Building Control</p>
<p>7.15 The execution of work in default</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health &amp; Building Control</p>
<p>7.16 To discharge all duties and powers of</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive with</p>

## Appendix A – Proposed amendments to Delegations to Officers

	the Council under Section 46 of the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 and any regulations made thereunder.	responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control Or the proper officer identified for this purpose from time to time in the minutes of the Council
7.17	To exercise the Council's powers under Section 33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (restoration of water, gas and electricity).	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.18	Power to service Notices of Intention to make a Closing Order under Section 5(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.19	Authority under the Food Safety Acts and associated Regulations to make application for Emergency Prohibition Orders for appropriate premises and to issue certificates that the measures specified by the Prohibition Orders have been carried out.	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control or authorised officers from the London Borough of Hillingdon, in relation to Emergency Control Regulations governing imported foods within the Borough's Remote Transit Sheds
7.20	To exercise the Council's powers under the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 to serve/apply for (as appropriate) hygiene improvement notices, hygiene prohibition orders, hygiene emergency prohibition notices and orders, remedial action notices and detention notices	All Environmental Health Staff identified for this purpose by the Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control or authorised officers from the London Borough of Hillingdon, in relation to Emergency Control Regulations governing imported foods within the Borough's Remote Transit Sheds
7.21	To exercise the Councils powers under the Official Feed and Food Control (England) Regulations 2009, including (but not limited to) detention, destruction, special treatment and the re-dispatch of feed and food, the service of notices, the procurement of samples of food and to take other appropriate measures'	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control or authorised officers from the London Borough of Hillingdon, in relation to Emergency Control Regulations governing imported foods within the Borough's Remote Transit Sheds
7.22	To exercise all power delegated to the	Assistant Chief Executive with

**Appendix A – Proposed amendments to Delegations to Officers**

	Council by the Security Industry Authority under the Private Security Industry Act 2001	responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.23	To issue health certificates for food for export	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.24	To issue Movement Permits in respect of unfit or knackered meat under the Meat (Sterilisation and Staining) Regulations 1982	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.25	To serve Notice under the provisions of the Clean Air Act 1993	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.26	To authorise payment of claims for disturbance allowances under Section 37 of the Land Compensation Act, 1973, up to the maximum amount agreed from time to time	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.27	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council under the Sunday Trading Act 1994.	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.28	In relation to illegal traveller or gypsy camps, to give directions under Section 77 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and to authorise the issue of Court Proceedings under Section 78 of that Act, in the event of non-compliance with such a direction.	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.29	To exercise the Council's functions under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Food Safety Act 1990 and relevant legislation made under section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972 to authorise officers to carry out functions under these Acts	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.30	To exercise the Council's functions under the Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended) and to authorise officers to carry out functions under the Regulations.	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.31	Authorise third parties to attend	Assistant Chief Executive with

## Appendix A – Proposed amendments to Delegations to Officers

	premises with officers of the Council for the purposes connected with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974	responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.32	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council including issuing notices under the Public Health Act 1936, the Building Act 1984, the Building Regulations and the Building (Approved Inspectors etc) Regulations for the time being in force	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.33	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council under Section 34 of the Public Health Act 1961 for the clearance of rubbish.	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control or Head of Street Scene
7.34	Authority in relation to Waste Disposal to pass on to commercial customers the full increased costs of all future Landfill Taxes imposed by Central Government.	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control, Head of Street Scene or Head of Sustainability and Leisure
7.35	To deal with all aspects of registering Motor Salvage Operators including approval, refusal or cancellation of registration in accordance with the Vehicle (Crime) Act 2001.	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.36	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council under the Environmental Protection (Control on Ozone Depleting Substances) Regulations 2002	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.37	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council under the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.38	To discharge the Council's statutory responsibilities in connection with stray dogs	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.39	To make minor changes to the Building Control Charges Scheme No. 1.	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.40	To issue a Waste Transfer Notice and to exercise the powers and functions of the	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental



**Appendix A – Proposed amendments to Delegations to Officers**

	Council under the Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991	Health & Building Control, Head of Street Scene or Head of Sustainability and Leisure
7.41	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council, as the relevant Drainage Board, under the Land Drainage Act 1991 and to authorise the Officers to carry out powers and functions under the Act.	Head of Sustainability and Leisure
7.42	To issue and serve statutory notices and take follow up action under the Land Drainage Act 1991.	Head of Sustainability and Leisure
7.43	To administer the hackney carriage and private hire licensing Penalty Points Scheme and issue penalty points in accordance with the Scheme	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.44	To determine appeals lodged in respect of the hackney carriage and private hire licensing penalty points issued in accordance with the Penalty Points Scheme	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control in consultation with the Chairman of the Licensing Committee
7.45	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health and Building Control
7.46	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council under the Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.47	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council under the Mobile Homes Act 2013	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control
7.48	To exercise the powers and functions of the Council under the Water Industry Act 1991 in relation to private water supplies	Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for Environmental Health & Building Control

## Appendix B - Explanations for the proposed changes to the Delegations to Officers

Delegations to Officers	<p>Proposed changes to the Council's Scheme of Delegation have been shown as tracked changes. Explanations for these changes are summarised below:</p> <p>The numbering of the document will be checked prior to issue.</p> <p>7.1 Added the word "vary" to reflect the full range of delegated powers available to the Assistant Chief Executive when dealing with specified licences, registrations, etc.</p> <p>7.1 f Addition of the wording "... (Sites or collectors)" to reflect the two types of licences issued under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013.</p> <p>7.1 i. Addition of term "Mobile Homes" to reflect the introduction of this wording in the Mobile Homes Act 2013, which was enacted in April 2014.</p> <p>7.2 (j), (j) &amp; (k) Have been removed. The Gaming Act 1968 and Lotteries &amp; Amusements Act 1976 have been repealed and replaced by the Gambling Act 2005.</p> <p>7.2(l) (new) Changes under the Licensing Act 2003 have provided local authorities with powers to suspend premises licences for non-payment of annual licence fees.</p> <p>7.2 (m) Additional wording to reflect recent amendments made to the Licensing Act 2003 by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, to give status of "Responsible Authority" to the Licensing Authority (Spelthorne).</p> <p>7.20 The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 revoke and re-enact the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006</p> <p>7.26 Has been removed. The Game Act 1831 has been repealed.</p> <p>7.27 Has been removed.</p> <p>7.31 This addition is to reflect the fact that some imported food legislation enforced by local authorities was passed under the European Communities Act 1972.</p> <p>7.28 to 7.46 renumbered accordingly, due to the removal of 7.26 and 7.27.</p> <p>7.43 and 7.44 The wording "hackney carriage and private hire licensing" have been added for clarity.</p>
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**Appendix B - Explanations for the proposed changes to the Delegations to Officers**

	<p>7.45 (new) The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 provides powers to local authorities to administer and enforce a licensing regime for scrap metal sites and collectors.</p> <p>7.46 (new) The Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010 prohibits the commercial use of sunbeds by persons under the age of 18 years. Local authorities have been provided with the powers to enforce these provisions.</p> <p>7.47 (new) The Mobile Homes Act 2013 provides powers to local authorities to administer and enforce a licensing regime for certain mobile home sites within their boroughs</p> <p>7.48 (new) Regulations made under the Water Industry Act 1991 (i.e. the Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009) require local authorities (LAs) to carry out risk assessments of all private water supply distribution systems in their area. There is also a duty on LAs to monitor compliance with the outcomes of these risk assessments to ensure private water supplies are safe to drink.</p>
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