

Minutes of Cabinet

25 February 2014

Present:

Councillor R.L. Watts, Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Cabinet and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Human Resources
Councillor T.J.M. Evans, Cabinet Member for Finance
Councillor N. Gething, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Fixed Assets
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

Apologies for absence: Councillor V.J. Leighton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Corporate Development; Councillor P. Forbes-Forsyth, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Young People, Leisure and Culture.

2031. Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 January 2014 were agreed as a correct record, except it was noted that Councillor Mitchell was in attendance at that meeting.

2032. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

2033. *Draft Capital Programme 2014-15 to 2017-18 – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed Capital Programme for 2014-15 to 2017-18.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council:

- Considers and approves the Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2017/18.
- Considers and approves the Prudential Indicators for 2014/15 to 2017/18.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that the level of spend proposed had been revised to reflect the level of capital resources which were available to finance future capital expenditure.

2034. *Fees and Charges 2014-15 – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed fees and charges for 2014-15.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves the charges as set out in Appendix B of the report of the Chief Finance Officer in the revised agenda dated 20 February 2014.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted the need to ensure that the appropriate level of charges was incorporated into the budget to maximise revenue in the current economic climate.

2035. *Detailed Revenue Budget 2014-15 – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Finance Officer on the detailed Revenue Budget for 2014-15.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND Council:

1. To approve the growth and savings items as set out in the appendices to the report of the Chief Finance Officer;
2. That the Council Tax Base for the whole council area for 2014-2015. [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)] should be 36,550.50 band D equivalent dwellings and,
Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purpose for 2014-2015 is £178.97 per Band D equivalent dwelling.
3. To approve a 1.94% increase in the Spelthorne Borough Council element of the council tax for 2014-15. Moreover:
 - a) The Revenue Estimates as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.
 - b) No money, as set out in this report, is appropriated from General Reserves in support of Spelthorne’s local Council Tax for 2014-15.

To agree that the council tax base for the year 2014/15 is 36,555.50 Band D equivalent dwellings calculated in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, made under Section 35(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

4. That the following sums be now calculated by the Council for the year 2014-15 in accordance with Section 31 to 36 of the Local Government Act 1992.

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

F	£178.97	above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings on those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
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5. All newly built commercial property completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016 will be exempted from empty property rates for the first 18 months, up to the state aids limits.

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

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

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

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

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

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the sum which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band 'D', calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different band.

That it be noted that for the year 2013-14 Surrey County Council and Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to Spelthorne Borough Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Precepts issued to the Council

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

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

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

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

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that the Council was required to set a balanced budget for 2014-15.

2036. Members' Allowances Scheme 2014-15

Cabinet considered a report on the outcome of an interim review by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) of the current members' allowances scheme.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council:

- Agrees that members' allowances for the year 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 remain unchanged.
- Notes that a thorough review of the scheme for 2015-16 will commence in October 2014.
- Engages positively with the panel in their consultation with councillors.
- Notes the removal, from Appendix A of the current scheme, of the paragraph entitled 'Suspension of Allowances'.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that the IRP's report represents a holding position until a thorough review of the members' allowances scheme for 2015-16 commences in October 2014.

2037. Calendar of Meetings 2014-15

Cabinet considered a report on the Calendar of Meetings for the municipal year June 2014 to May 2015.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council agrees the draft Calendar of Meetings for the period June 2014 to May 2015 as set out in Appendix A of the report of the Monitoring Officer.

Reason for the decision:

The Calendar of Meetings planned for the municipal year ahead ensures that the Council can conduct its business through its Committees in the most efficient and effective way possible.

2038. Leader's announcements

Recent Council achievements: February 2014

Flooding

Since the Cabinet update in January, the majority of departments have been working on flood response work and these are some of the key actions and achievements:

- We set up a Borough Emergency Centre (BEC) to co-ordinate the Council's response to the flooding
- We worked with our partner agencies including the Environment Agency, Surrey Police, Surrey Fire and Rescue, Surrey County Council, neighbouring local authorities, Public Health England and Thames Water to ensure a consistent approach
- We distributed thousands of sandbags to help residents protect their properties
- We worked with Surrey County Council to support vulnerable residents
- We opened rest centres to provide short-term emergency accommodation for people who had to be evacuated from their homes
- We coordinated the many offers of help which came from the public
- We lifted parking restrictions in our car parks so residents whose streets were flooded could leave their cars safely
- We provided continuous updates for residents via the website, Twitter and Facebook and advice leaflets
- We worked with the media to communicate key messages to residents and arranged television and radio interviews with Council staff
- We extended the opening hours of our customer service phone lines
- We used the knowledge of colleagues in Planning to give technical advice on flooding
- We opened four Flood Relief Centres to provide a focal point for advice and support for residents trying to recover from flooding

Other recent achievements include the following:

Environment

A new cashless parking system has been introduced. 'Phone and Pay' provides a quick, easy and safe way for motorists to pay for parking, whilst offering additional features such as text confirmation that parking has been booked and a reminder text when a session is due to expire.

The Council's website had been updated with Q&As which give residents information about the decision to introduce grazing cattle to Sunbury Park.

Planning/Legal Services

David Green from the Isle of Wight has been prosecuted for mooring his boat in excess of the 24 hours permitted in a 48 period on 5 specific dates between May and October 2013. He was fined £50 for each of the five charges and ordered to pay another £250 in legal costs to the Council. He was also required to pay a £20 victim surcharge.

A Planning Inspector has supported the Council's stance on protecting the Green Belt. A site in Stanwell Moor known as Lower Mill Farm was last used for agriculture in 2012 but since then a number of substantial buildings and two mobile homes have been placed on the site without planning permission. The Council successfully argued its case and the Inspector has given the owners a maximum of six months to remove four of the buildings.

Communications

The spring edition of the Bulletin is currently being printed and will be delivered to residents from 8 March.

Communications and Planning have been working together to help Heathrow Airport Limited publicise their consultation regarding airport expansion. Heathrow is aiming to ask around 140,000 residents for their views about the northwest runway option and possible variations to it. The consultation runs for six weeks from 3 February to 16 March. A link to the consultation has been added to the homepage of our website and hard copies have been placed in reception and in councillor's pigeon holes.

2039. Issues for Future Meetings

Councillor Evans asked for a report on the introduction of cattle in Sunbury Park to be submitted to a future meeting.

2040. 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 4 March 2014