

## MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 27TH APRIL, 2000

### BOROUGH OF SPELTHORNE

At the Meeting of the COUNCIL of the BOROUGH of SPELTHORNE, held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines on Thursday 27th April, 2000 at 7.30 pm

#### Present:-

|                   |                  |                                 |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Agarwal V         | Grant Mrs D L    | Read E I J                      |
| Amos Mrs P C      | Hermes A W       | Searancke E J                   |
| Appleyard M A     | Hirst A P        | Sider R W                       |
| Beardsmore I      | Hyams Mrs M      | Smith J E H                     |
| Blampied G G      | James P R        | Smith Mrs P A                   |
| Burrell L J W     | Martin Mrs M J   | Smith-Ainsley R A               |
| Ceaser G S        | Mellett Mrs H E  | Stubbs T                        |
| Crabb T W         | Napper Mrs I     | Trussler G F                    |
| Culnane E K       | Norcross Mrs G A | Watkins R                       |
| Davies F (Leader) | O'Hara E (Mayor) | Weston Mrs P                    |
| Drinkwater H V    | Paton J M        | Wood-Dow Mrs J M (Deputy Mayor) |
| Fisher C M        | Ponton Mrs J E   |                                 |
| Forsbrey G F      |                  |                                 |

Councillor E. O'Hara, Mayor, in the Chair

#### 171/00 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors F. Ayers, Mrs M. Hartley, A. Leedham and J.D. Packman.

#### 172/00 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24th February, 2000 were approved as a correct record.

#### 173/00 PRESENTATIONS BY MAYOR

##### a. Civic Pride Environment Awards

The Mayor, Councillor E. O'Hara, reported that the Civic Pride Environmental Awards were made to individuals and groups who had made an outstanding effort towards preserving or enhancing the environment of Spelthorne. The volunteers had undertaken numerous workdays at sites around the Borough including trees and bulb planting, footpath maintenance and pond restoration.

He reported that the Spelthorne Civic Pride volunteers had marked the occasion of their tenth anniversary, last November, by planting 10 hawthorn trees at different locations around the Borough. They also celebrated the Millennium by working jointly with the Spelthorne Tree Wardens to create the Millennium Wood at Donkey Meadow in Upper Halliford. Jill Stephens, the Chairman of the Spelthorne Civic Pride Steering Group presented the Civic Pride Environmental Awards for 1999 to the Tree Wardens involved in this initiative.

b. Staines Brass Band

The Mayor, reported on the success of the Staines Brass Band who were runners up in the Southern Counties Area Regional Qualifying Competition of the National Brass Band Championships. He presented the trophy to Bob Hawkins and

David Lamar and congratulated all members of the Band on their achievement.

The Mayor advised that the Brass Band would be participating in the National Championship being held at the Royal Albert Hall on 22nd October, 2000.

174/00 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor, Councillor E. O'Hara, referred to the By-Election in the Ashford North Ward of the Borough of Spelthorne held on 23rd March, 2000, and welcomed

Councillor Mrs P Weston to her first Council meeting. The Chief Executive reported on the result of the poll.

175/00 DEMOCRACY WORKING PARTY

The Council considered the recommendations of the Democracy Working Party on the changes to the Council's Committee system which included a number of changes to the Committee structure, Committee Terms of Reference, procedural changes, allocation of outside bodies and other related issues.

It was moved by Councillor F. Davies and seconded by Councillor E.K. Culnane that the Council make the changes to its committee arrangements and standing orders as outlined in the report of the Democracy Working Party, with effect from the Annual General Meeting and approve the recommendations as set out in paragraphs 20, 22 and 23 of the report.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor A.W. Crabb and seconded by Councillor

I.J. Beardsmore that the recommendation of the Democracy Working Party at paragraph 11 (e) be deleted.

The AMENDMENT was LOST.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor C.M. Fisher and seconded by Councillor

I.J. Beardsmore that the recommendation of the Democracy Working Party at Paragraph 11(i) be amended to read:

"the responsibility for Best Value Reviews should be a function of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and each review should be carried out by a Panel of Members appointed for that purpose by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee."

The AMENDMENT was LOST.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor C.M. Fisher and seconded by Councillor

I.J. Beardsmore that the recommendation of the Democracy Working Party set out

in Paragraph 12 (b) be amended to read:

"the principle of portfolios for members of the Executive be supported."

The AMENDMENT was LOST.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor I.J. Beardsmore and seconded by Councillor A.W. Crabb that the recommendation of the Democracy Working Party set out in Paragraph 15(c) be amended to read:

"officers bring to the Council a report on the feasibility of giving some budget and decision making powers to area forums. Having full regard to the experience of other local authorities where such procedures have been successfully introduced."

The AMENDMENT was LOST.

(In accordance with Standing Order 39(1)(b)(i) Members requested that the voting on each of the above amendments be recorded).

The Voting on each of the amendments was as follows:

FOR (4): Councillors I.J. Beardsmore, T.W. Crabb, C.M. Fisher and Mrs J.E. Ponton.

AGAINST (32) Councillors V. Agarwal, P.C. Amos, M.A. Appleyard, G.G. Blampied, L.J.W. Burrell, G.S. Ceaser, E.K. Culhane, F. Davies, H.V. Drinkwater, G.F. Forsbrey, Mrs D.L. Grant, A.W. Hermes, A.P. Hirst, Mrs M.Hyams, P.R. James, Mrs M.J. Martin, Mrs H.E.L. Mellett, Mrs I. Napper, Mrs G.A. Norcross, E. O'Hara, M.J. Paton, E.I.J. Read, E.J. Searancke, R.W. Sider, J.E.H. Smith, Mrs P.A. Smith, R.A. Smith-Ainsley, T. Stubbs, G.F. Trussler, R. Watkins, Mrs P. Weston and Mrs J.M. Wood-Dow.

RESOLVED that the following changes to the Council's committee arrangements and standing orders be approved, with effect from the Annual General Meeting on 18th May, 2000:

- a. Objectives: the 12 aims and objectives against which the committee arrangements could be reviewed, and as set out in the report at Appendix A, be reconsidered in detail later in the year, when the Local Government Bill has been enacted and the business system is reviewed, and before public consultation on alternative arrangements takes place.
- b. Public consultation: public consultation on alternative forms of executive arrangement be delayed until the requirements under the legislation are clear and Government guidance has been issued.
- c. Timing of changes: the changes outlined in the report be made to the committee system at the AGM in May and the position be reviewed again and further adjustments made when the final form of the legislation is clear.
- d. Role of Council meetings:

- (i) Council meetings be more widely publicised, including giving an outline of the issues to be decided;
  - (ii) public question time at meetings be brought forward to the start of the meeting (after any business required by statute) on the basis that any question to be asked must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive by noon on the day of the meeting and standing Order 18 should be amended to allow a maximum of 30 minutes for questions;
  - (iii) Members to ask the Leader of the Council or his nominee a question about any issue in their ward, provided notice in writing of their question is received by the Chief Executive by noon on the day of the meeting;
  - (iv) in addition to being able to ask a question at the beginning of the meeting any member of the public interested in a particular recommendation being considered at a Council meeting should be entitled to make a short statement to the Council expressing their views on it before the recommendation is moved and seconded and a decision on it is taken. Such a statement should not last longer than 3 minutes and any person wishing to make a statement must give notice of their wish to do so to the Chief Executive by noon on the day of the meeting;
  - (v) no restriction be placed on the number of members of the public making statements but the position be kept under review in the light of experience; and
  - (vi) proceedings at Council meetings to follow the order shown in the draft agenda at Appendix 'B' attached to the report with the exception that 'Declarations of Interests' be taken after 'Minutes'.
- e. General structure of committee arrangements:
- (i) the Council continue with executive arrangements based on the Leader/cabinet model;
  - (ii) the structure of the Council's committee arrangements be as shown at Appendix 'C' attached to the report;
  - (iii) the current Review and Scrutiny and Community Liaison Committees be replaced by three overview and scrutiny committees with the titles and terms of reference set out in Appendix 'D' to the report;
  - (iv) each of the three new committees have a membership of 11;
  - (v) the arrangements for political substitution of members unable to attend meetings of bodies to which they have been appointed set out in Standing Order 55(9) and (10) be discontinued;
  - (vi) the political groups consider whether agreement can be reached to ensure that all members not on the Executive, other than the Mayor,

have the opportunity to sit on one of three overview and scrutiny committees;

- (vii) the sizes of the other committees remain unchanged;
- (viii) in future the Executive Committee be called simply the Executive;
- (ix) the responsibility for Best Value reviews should be a function of the Executive and each review be carried out by a panel of members appointed for the purpose by the Executive comprising one member of the Executive and four members from the relevant overview and scrutiny committee;
- (x) the political groups should consider their practices on taking group decisions and whipping, particularly in relation to the exercise by the Executive of its delegated powers and the work of overview and scrutiny committees, and how these can be reconciled with the need to achieve more transparency and openness in decision making and meaningful overview and scrutiny;
- (xi) appointment of any County Partnership Committee be deferred pending the outcome of discussion with the County Council;
- (xii) the political groups consider in advance of the AGM whether agreement can be reached whereby the Executive is formed solely from the majority Conservative Group;
- (xiii) the principle of portfolios for members of the Executive be supported and they be introduced when the Executive becomes one party;
- (xiv) when portfolios are introduced it should be on the basis that the individual portfolio holders be decided by the Executive but have no decision making power;
- (xv) the "call in" procedure be retained but amended to relate only to decisions made by the Executive under its delegated powers as opposed to recommendations it makes to Council;
- (xvi) any three members of an overview and scrutiny committee be able to "call in" an item within the review functions of their committee;
- (xvii) to avoid delay in considering an item "called in" a special meeting of the relevant overview and scrutiny committee be convened within seven days of a "call in" being received if an ordinary meeting is not scheduled in that period;
- (xviii) when calling in an Executive 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 their committee needs to have before it to conduct a review in addition to the written report made by officers to the

Executive;

- indicate whether they wish the Leader or his nominee (who when portfolios exist should normally be the portfolio member) to attend the committee meeting; and
  - indicate whether the officer making the report to the Executive or his representative should attend the meeting;
- (xix) where requested on "call in", officers will arrange for the additional information to be supplied to the meeting, the Leader or his nominee will attend the meeting and the officer making the report to the Executive or his nominee will attend; and
- (xx) when an Executive decision is called in for review the Chairman of the relevant Committee may arrange for any additional information he/she considers necessary to be made available to the Committee when it meets.

f. Frequency of meetings:

- (i) the calendar of meetings as set out at Appendix 'E' attached to the report be adopted subject to the Economic Committee meeting being moved from the 20th June to 15th June, 2000 and the Social Committee meeting being moved from the 20th June to 15th June, 2000; and
- (ii) for consistency, seminars for Members should normally take place on Mondays.

g. Area Forums and Special Interest Panels: Area Forums and Special Interest Panels to continue, with the changes in membership and procedures as set out below;

- (i) the main purpose of the Area Forums should be recognised as being:
  - area/ward consultation on major policy issues;
  - to debate issues of local interest;
  - general information giving; and
  - to allow those attending to identify and raise issues of local concern/interest;
- (ii) no budget or decision making powers be given to Area Forums;
- (iii) each area forum meeting should be chaired by a Member appointed for the purpose at the AGM;
- (iv) the Members attending Area Forums should be:
  - the Ward Members;
  - the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee covering

the main topic for the meeting;

- a member of the Executive Committee, who should ideally be the portfolio holder for the main topic being covered at the meeting (if they are not already amongst the Ward Members); and
  - the Member appointed at the AGM to chair the particular forum.
- (v) the possibility of Members instead of officers presenting some items at Area Forum meetings be kept under review;
- (vi) notes (but not formal minutes) of Area Forum meetings be prepared by officers and circulated to all Members via the Members Bulletin. Views expressed and issues raised should be fed into the committee system by reports to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees and/or the Executive Committee;
- (vii) the Special Interest Panels should be chaired by the Chairman of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (viii) the members to attend the Special Interest Panels should be appointed by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee and a member of the Executive should be in attendance, normally the Executive Member holding the relevant portfolio;
- (ix) notes (but not formal minutes) of the Panel meetings be prepared by officers and circulated to those present and to all Members via the Members Bulletin. Issues raised and views expressed should be fed into the committee system by reports to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees and/or the Executive Committee; and
- (x) a standard item to appear on the agendas of the Executive and the three overview and scrutiny committee meetings following each Area Forum or Special Interest Panel meeting titled "Issues arising from the recent Area Forum or Special Interest Panel meetings"
- h. Appointments to outside organisations:
- (i) responsibility for making appointments to outside bodies be as indicated in Appendix 'F' attached to the report;
  - (ii) the Spelthorne Elderly Services Liaison Group and the Health Promotion Group be discontinued;
  - (iii) all members appointed to outside bodies should arrange circulation to all other members and the Chief Executive of brief reports of their involvement with those bodies and particularly meetings they attend; and
  - (iv) the Chief Executive liaise with Group Leaders prior to the AGM to discuss whether any further reduction in the number of appointments can be agreed.

- i. Involvement of all Members: arrangements should be considered for informal seminars or briefing sessions by the Leader and Chief Executive for all Members every three months, to brief them on current issues and policies.
- j. Officer support for Members: Assistant Chief Executives, Bob Coe and Brian Harris, to provide a dedicated support service to the new Social, Environment and Economic Committees and, in the longer term, this be reviewed to consider whether some Heads of Service could provide support for areas outside their normal area of professional expertise.
- k. Housing Benefit Reviews: all Members except those appointed to the Executive form a Panel from which Housing Benefit Review Boards can be drawn.
- l. Members' Allowances: the chairmen of the new Social, Environment and Economic Committees each receive a special responsibility allowance of 2,200 per annum.
- m. Member Development: the Executive be asked to consider the issue of member development and the two charters on member development issued by the IDeA and LGIU.
- n. Ethical Governance: the Standards Committee be asked to consider and manage an ethical governance audit of the Council when the proposals in the consultation paper are finalised.

(In accordance with Standing Order 39(1)(b)(i) Members requested that the voting on the resolution be recorded).

The Voting on the resolution was as follows:

FOR (32): Councillors V. Agarwal, P.C. Amos, M.A. Appleyard, G.G. Blampied, L.J.W. Burrell, G.S. Ceaser, E.K. Culnane, F. Davies, H.V. Drinkwater, G.F. Forsbrey, Mrs D.L. Grant, A.W. Hermes, A.P. Hirst, Mrs M.Hyams, P.R. James, Mrs M.J. Martin, Mrs H.E.L. Mellett, Mrs I. Napper, Mrs G.A. Norcross, E. O'Hara, M.J. Paton, E.I.J. Read, E.J. Searancke, R.W. Sider, J.E.H. Smith, Mrs P.A. Smith, R.A. Smith-Ainsley, T. Stubbs, G.F. Trussler, R. Watkins, Mrs P. Weston and Mrs J.M. Wood-Dow.

AGAINST (4) Councillors I.J. Beardsmore, T.W. Crabb, C.M. Fisher and Mrs J.E. Ponton.

Councillor F. Davies, the Leader of the Council, made reference to the way in which the members of the Democracy Working Party had undertaken their role in bringing changes to the committee system in light of the Bill and acknowledged the time, effort and commitment given.

Councillor F. Davies also expressed his thanks and appreciation to the officers involved for their guidance, in particular to Mrs Ann Davey, Assistant Chief Executive, for the commitment and contributions given to the work of the Democracy Working Party and in processing the details in such a tight timetable.



176/00 SPELTHORNE LEISURE CENTRE

The Council considered the recommendations of the Executive Committee on the need for a Supplementary Estimate to cover the overspend on the Spelthorne Leisure Centre Contract. The outcome of the meeting, held on 5th April, 2000 between the Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Sports and Leisure Management and the Consultant, Tom Devin to discuss the Consultants report in detail was reported. The progress made at the meeting confirmed that the works required to the pool plant would secure the longer term future of the pool, for at least 10 years.

RESOLVED:

- a. that a Supplementary Estimate to fund the additional works required to secure the longer term future of the Pool be approved as follows:-

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Outstanding matters re:                                   |                |
| Extension/Stock Condition works:                          |                |
| Loss of income  | 16,000         |
| Gym equipment   | 29,000         |
| Less profit share/variations                              | -32,259        |
| <b>SUB TOTAL</b>  | <b>12,741</b>  |
| Essential works to pool plant                             | 60,000         |
| Potential loss of income associated with pool plant works | 40,000         |
| Beneficial works to secure longer term improvements       | 160,000        |
| <b>Total aggregate figure</b>                             | <b>272,741</b> |

- b. that the Director of Community Services ensures that disruption to swimmers and users of the Centre is kept to a minimum during the duration of the works and that advance public notice is given; and
- c. that the briefing note of the meeting held on 5th April, 2000 between the Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Sports and Leisure Management and the Consultant, Tom Devin be circulated to all Members of the Council.

177/00 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990 SECTION

57 GRANT - 70 THAMES STREET, LOWER SUNBURY

RESOLVED as recommended by the Executive Committee, Listed Building Grants be delegated to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with Ward Councillors.

178/00 YEAR 2000 FINAL COSTS REPORT

RESOLVED as recommended by the Executive Committee a Supplementary Estimate of 40,378 be approved to cover the final costs of the Year 2000 Compliance project.

179/00 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Leader of the Council, Councillor F. Davies, presented his report which outlined the various matters the Executive Committee had dealt with since the last Council meeting and responded to a number of questions from Members. This included a request from Councillor M.J. Paton that a response be given to a letter submitted by Mrs S. Budd concerning the highway issues in Church Street, Staines. The Mayor requested that the Leader outline the response being sent to Mrs S. Budd.

The Leader referred to a letter that had been sent by the Director of Community Services to Mrs Budd, which read as follows:

- "1. As you may know, the CCTV scheme for Staines Town Centre is almost complete and we will be monitoring its effectiveness over the next few months. There are no proposals to extend it to other parts of Staines in the near future and, as you will appreciate, there is pressure for CCTV to be implemented in other towns in the Borough. These decisions will be based mainly on the incidence of crime in consultation with the local Police, but it is the Council's intention to keep the situation in Church Street under review.
2. Your proposals for signage need to be coordinated with the overall plan we have for pedestrian signs for the town centre. I will consider your suggestions in this context.
3. Under the terms of the new street cleansing contract which is due to commence in June there will be regular daily sweeping of Church Street. There are currently no plans to increase the number of litter bins in your area.
4. New street lighting and seating for Church Street will be considered in the scheme that is to be introduced during the current financial year. Before implementation, retailers and residents will be consulted on the scheme.
5. If the Council produces a map of Staines shopping areas I am sure we can accommodate a notation for Church Street. However, I do not consider "Church Street shopping area" would necessarily be the most appropriate identification for the street.
6. With regard to the alignment and camber of Church Street, substantial alterations would be extremely costly. However, it may be possible to accommodate some adjustments in a scheme for Church Street."

180/00 REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Review and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor G.G. Blampied,

presented his report which outlined the matters the Committee had dealt with since the last Council meeting.

181/00 COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Community Liaison Committee, Councillor L.J.W. Burrell, presented his report which outlined the matters the Committee had dealt with since the last Council meeting and responded to a number of questions raised by Members.

182/00 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor G.S. Ceaser, presented his report which outlined planning matters the Committee had dealt with since the last Council meeting and responded to a number of questions raised by Members.

183/00 VOTE OF THANKS

The Mayor, Councillor E. O'Hara, announced that this would be his last meeting of Council as Mayor, and thanked Members for the courtesy and support given throughout the year and extended an invitation to all Members to join him in the Mayors' Parlour.

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