

MINUTES OF THE SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting of Spelthorne Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames on Thursday, 25 April 2019 at 7.30 pm

Present:

Councillors:

C. Barnard	A.C. Harman (Deputy Leader)	J.R. Sexton
I.J. Beardsmore	I.T.E. Harvey (Leader)	R.W. Sider BEM
S.J. Burkmar	A.T. Jones	R.A. Smith-Ainsley
S. Capes	M.J. Madams (Deputy Mayor)	B.B. Spoor
S.M. Doran	S.C. Mooney	H.A. Thomson
S.A. Dunn	D. Patel	H.R.D. Williams
M.P.C. Francis	J.M. Pinkerton OBE	
A.E. Friday	O. Rybinski	

Councillor J.M. Pinkerton OBE, The Mayor in the Chair

In Attendance: Murray Litvak, Chairman of Members' Code of Conduct Committee

Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillors M.M. Attewell, R.O. Barratt, J.R. Boughtflower, C.A. Davis, P.C. Edgington, Q.R. Edgington, N.J. Gething, N. Islam, A.J. Mitchell and D. Saliagopoulos.

120/19 Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 February 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

121/19 Disclosures of Interest

There was one disclosure of interest from Councillor A.E. Friday in relation to Item 20 – Appointment of representative Trustees as he was nominated for appointment to the Sunbury Fuel Allotment Trust. He stated that he would leave the meeting for this item.

The Mayor advised that Michael Graham, Head of Corporate Governance had also declared an interest and would leave the meeting in relation to the same item.

122/19 Announcements from the Mayor

The Mayor announced her final events before the end of her Mayoral year: Mayor's Charity Ball on Saturday, 27th April from 6.15pm.

Staines Brass and Staines Lammas Bands concert in aid of the Mayor's Charities at St Hilda's Church, Ashford on Sunday 12th May at 7pm

Charity giving event taking place at 6.30pm on Thursday 16th May at The Orangery in Shepperton.

123/19 Announcements from the Leader

The Leader made the following announcements:

"Firstly, as many will now be aware, our MP Kwasi Kwarteng has this morning announced his engagement to Harriet Edwards. I'm sure all Members will join me in wishing Kwasi and Harriet a long and happy marriage.

I cannot believe how quickly the last 4 years have gone by. They say time flies when you are having fun and I can certainly endorse that.

I would like to take this opportunity firstly to thank you Madam Mayor and your predecessors Vivienne, Alfred and Mark, during this Civic Cycle for all your collective hard work as our Ambassadors for Spelthorne.

I would also like to thank all our Officers and Staff, without whose hard work and dedication we simply could not function. In particular I would like to thank Daniel for how quickly he has picked up from where Roberto left off. Roberto was a hard act to follow but Daniel is excelling himself

Tonight is the last Full Council of this cycle and this time next Thursday the polls will be getting close to closing.

I would like to also thank Members for their support during my leadership over the last three and a bit years. This Council has been overwhelmingly constructive and our residents have benefitted hugely as a result of this. I think it is fair to say that Spelthorne is now in a very different position to how it was at the 2015 elections; we have a Borough to be proud of. It is a shame that more of the opposition are not present tonight.

Finally I would like to mention the following Councillors who are not, for various reasons, seeking re-election:

Cllr Alfred Friday
Cllr Tim Evans
Cllr Howard Thomson
Cllr John Kavanagh
Cllr Penny Edgington
Cllr Colin Davis

I am sure everyone will join me in thanking them for their service and wishing them well in the future.

For those of us seeking re-election I wish everyone the best – but obviously my Conservative colleagues slightly more best wishes.”

124/19 Announcements from the Chief Executive

On behalf of the Council staff, the Chief Executive, Daniel Mouawad, sincerely thanked all councillors for their contribution to the Council over the past four years.

125/19 Questions from members of the public

There were no questions from members of the public.

126/19 Petitions

There were none.

127/19 Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Strategy

The Council considered the recommendation of Cabinet from its meeting on 24 April 2019 to approve the changes to the Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy following its annual review.

The Strategy forms part of the Council’s Constitution and in line with best practice, the Strategy underpins the Council’s commitment to prevent all forms of fraud, bribery and corruption, demonstrating the important role it plays in the overall corporate governance framework.

Resolved to approve the amendments to the Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy.

128/19 Appointment of Independent Persons

The Council considered the report of the Monitoring Officer on the Appointment of Independent Persons 2019-2023 under the Localism Act 2011.

Following a joint arrangements process with six other Surrey Borough and District Councils, a panel of participating councils’ monitoring officers interviewed new applicants. The current Independent Persons were invited to apply for re-appointment and submit updated CV’s, although it was agreed that they did not need to be interviewed.

The interview panel found that all new candidates demonstrated well-developed skills of independence, analysis, and fair dealing and commended all of them for appointment by the participating councils.

Resolved to approve:

(a) the re-appointment of:

- Vivienne Cameron
- Roger Pett

(b) the appointment of:

- Bernard Quoroll
- Bill Donnelly
- Paul Eaves
- Liz Lawrence
- John Smith

as Independent Persons for a four year term of office expiring in May 2023.

It was noted that 21 councillors voted in favour of the appointments, in accordance with the requirement that the appointment of Independent Persons must be approved by a majority of the members of the authority.

129/19 Report from the Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council, Councillor I.T.E. Harvey, presented the reports of the Cabinet meetings held on 27 March 2019 and 24 April 2019, which outlined the matters the Cabinet had decided since the last Council meeting.

130/19 Report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee

The Chairman of the Audit Committee, Councillor M.J. Madams, presented her report which outlined the matters the Committee had decided since the last Council meeting.

131/19 Report from the Chairman of the Licensing Committee

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

132/19 Report from the Chairman of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee

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

133/19 Report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor S.C. Mooney, presented her report which outlined the matters the Committee had decided since the last Council meeting.

Councillor Mooney agreed to write to County Councillor Goodman in relation to the effect on levels of fly tipping in the Borough following Surrey County Council's decision to increase charges for waste disposal at Charlton tip.

134/19 Report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee

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

135/19 Motions

There were no motions.

136/19 Questions on Ward Issues

There were no questions on Ward issues.

137/19 General questions

The Mayor reported that two general questions had been received, in accordance with Standing Order 15 from Councillors Sider and Leighton.

1. Question from Councillor R.W. Sider BEM:

“Is the Leader and members of this council aware that Surrey County Council has withdrawn the free travel bus pass for people with a range of disabilities, for travel before 9.30am with effect from 1 April 2019, as a cost cutting exercise. And are members aware that the government is actively encouraging people with disabilities to go to work? Some of these people, for example those with a learning disability, may be unable to manage money because of their disability and thus will be confused when requested for the relevant fare they will be asked to pay. And will the Leader and members agree with me that the foregoing imposition has been made by persons of sound mind and body against people with disabilities who may not have the clout to defend themselves, and in doing so condemn this action.”

Response from the Leader, Councillor I.T.E. Harvey:

“Thank you Councillor Sider for your question and raising this matter. The Council is aware of Surrey County Council’s decision. Like you, I am sure we are all concerned at the possible consequences of these changes.

Spelthorne Council responded to the initial consultation in reference to the proposals, raising a number of concerns and questions. The response included the concern that the proposed cuts would discourage those who need to travel to work and who may be in low paid work.

We also highlighted that according to the Office of National Statistics, Spelthorne has the highest number of people with limited activity in Surrey (14.9%) so these changes could have a greater impact on Spelthorne residents in comparison with other Surrey Districts.

We note that Surrey County Council has made this decision in order to achieve savings of £400,000 across all 11 Districts and Boroughs in Surrey.”

2. Question from Councillor V.J. Leighton

"Will the Leader and members of this council agree with me that considering the two large fires this week, any reduction in fire cover by Surrey County Council would cause grave concern for this borough? And would the Leader agree that this council should use every avenue to bring the Surrey consultation to the attention of residents and encourage them to respond with their views?"

Response from the Leader, Councillor I.T.E. Harvey:

"Thank you for your question Cllr Leighton.

Like you, I was greatly concerned to hear of the two fires you refer to, which occurred on Sunday 14 April, one of which tragically resulted in a fatality. I am also aware that another fire occurred last week at Squires Garden Centre in Shepperton. Such events demonstrate the difficult job firefighters face tackling such incidents. I am sure you will all join me in expressing our gratitude for the dedication and bravery shown by all fire service personnel in protecting our community from harm.

Such events also highlight how important it is for Surrey Fire & Rescue Service to have adequate resources to tackle critical incidents in the county. I, and indeed Spelthorne Council, has for some time expressed significant concern about proposed cuts to fire services in our borough, which would result in reduced night-time cover. From when it was announced in 2017 that Staines and Sunbury fire stations were to be closed and replaced with a single station in Ashford, we have consistently argued for the current arrangement of two whole-time crews and appliances to be retained to protect our residents and businesses. Despite our concerns, Surrey County Council are currently consulting on proposals to cut night-time cover in our borough to one whole-time crew under their 'Making Surrey Safer plan'. This is, of course, of great concern to us all and yesterday evening our Cabinet agreed to submit a detailed response to Surrey's consultation on behalf of Spelthorne.

In this, we are expressing our deep concerns over the reduction in night-time cover and a number of other proposed changes under their plan, which we believe will adversely affect Surrey Fire & Rescue Service's ability to respond to emergencies, in particular high-rise fires and other large scale critical incidents which occur at night, in our Borough.

I would absolutely agree that it is important that we take every opportunity to bring this consultation to the attention of our residents and businesses, to encourage them to have their say on changes which could affect their future safety; and to this end we will continue to use all of our communication channels to remind people to respond to the consultation before the closing date on 26 May 2019."

Following this item Councillor A.E. Friday left the room together with Michael Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, in relation to their

interest in the item on the appointment of trustees to the Sunbury Fuel Allotment Trust.

138/19 Appointment of representative Trustees

It was proposed by Councillor I.T.E Harvey and seconded by Councillor A.C Harman and

Resolved that

- Michael Graham
- Alfred Friday
- Kaye Friday
- Paul Thompson

be appointed representative Trustees to the Sunbury Fuel Allotment Trust for a period of four years ending in April 2023.