

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, 24 October 2019 at 7.30 pm

Present:

Councillors:

M.M. Attewell	J.T.F. Doran	V.J. Leighton
C.F. Barnard	S.M. Doran	M.J. Madams
C.L. Barratt	R.D. Dunn	J. McIlroy
R.O. Barratt	S.A. Dunn	A.J. Mitchell
C. Bateson	T. Fidler	L. E. Nichols
I.J. Beardsmore	M. Gibson	R.J. Noble
J.R. Boughtflower	K.M. Grant	J.R. Sexton
A. Brar	A.C. Harman	R.W. Sider BEM
S. Buttar	H. Harvey	V. Siva
R. Chandler	I.T.E. Harvey	R.A. Smith-Ainsley
N.L. Cornes	N. Islam	B.B. Spoor
J.H.J. Doerfel	T. Lagden	J. Vinson

Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillors N.J. Gething and O. Rybinski and Mr Murray Litvak, Chairman of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee

The Mayor, Councillor M.J. Madams, in the Chair

261/19 Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 July 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

262/19 Disclosures of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

263/19 Announcements from the Mayor

The Mayor had circulated details of upcoming charity events and mentioned, in particular, the Ladies Lunch to be held at the Thames Lodge Hotel on Wednesday 20th November 2019 with Russell Grant as the guest speaker.

264/19 Announcements from the Leader

The Leader made the following announcements:

“The Council submitted a detailed response to Heathrow’s final consultation, which closed in September, making it clear that we can only continue to support expansion if a) the 16 requirements outlined by the O&S Committee are adequately addressed b) impacted communities are properly compensated via the Wider Property Offer Zone and c) the Heathrow West proposal is explored further.

The application to develop a hostel for single homeless people on the site previously occupied by the White House on Kingston Road in Ashford has been approved by the Planning Committee. The facility, which will be completed in 2021, will provide modern purpose-built accommodation with 24 hour cover and space for training courses. It will be operated by the Salvation Army which has a wealth of experience in managing supported housing facilities. In addition, plans to demolish and rebuild Harper House in Ashford to provide emergency accommodation for up to 20 local families has also been approved. These are important developments and demonstrate our determination to deliver good quality housing for the Borough’s more vulnerable residents.

Sunbury Cemetery was declared the overall winner of Cemetery of the Year at the South East in Bloom awards, with Ashford and Staines Cemeteries also picking up Gold awards in the same category. There was also more good news for Sunbury, with the ever-popular Sunbury Walled Garden claiming Gold in the Small Park category. Congratulations to the Neighbourhood Services team for these fantastic achievements.

The Council has protected Staines Park for current and future generations to enjoy by signing a ‘Deed of Dedication’ with Fields in Trust, an independent charity which champions and supports the country’s parks and green spaces by protecting them for people to enjoy in perpetuity. I am pleased to have worked alongside Staines Park Residents Association to achieve this special status for Staines Park. Residents are understandably very protective of their local open spaces and I hope this announcement gives everyone reassurance that the park will remain unspoilt for future generations to enjoy. I am also delighted to announce that we have been awarded a grant of up to £15,000 from the London Marathon Charitable Trust for the creation of a fitness trail in the park and an additional £5,000 from Fields in Trust for other improvements.

An article was recently published which placed Spelthorne bottom in a league table of ‘most climate-friendly councils’. The Council disputes the findings as the scoring for the table was based on data obtained from the 2011 census and does not reflect the current picture. For example, it showed Spelthorne as having 10 electric vehicle charging points when in fact the Borough has 32 public charging units, enabling 53 electric vehicles to simultaneously charge. The Council has approached Friends of the Earth, who compiled the table, for more details on the methodology of their study.

We celebrated the hard work and achievements of local businesses at the Spelthorne Means Business Awards gala dinner at Shepperton Studios on 17 October. The range and quality of the entries we received for this year's competition is proof of the wealth of entrepreneurial spirit, talent and innovative thinking we have here in Spelthorne and I would like to congratulate all the finalists and winners.

Members will be aware that we have been working for a considerable time on the new Local Plan and they were briefed on this on Tuesday prior to initial public consultations commencing on 5th November. This has been and continues to be a very challenging and detailed project. Getting this right is very important to protecting the future of Spelthorne and I am very grateful to both officers and Working Party Members who have contributed to date. To this end I am creating a new role of special portfolio holder who will take on a specific role of Strategic planning, primarily related to the Local Plan. The Special Portfolio Holder will not be a full member of the cabinet and will have no role on any cabinet issues outside their portfolio.

Given the huge divide between - on the one hand what we as a Council and our residents want in terms of protecting our Green Spaces, and what the government and developers are forcing us to consume on the other, attempting to bridge that divide is – frankly - a Poisoned Chalice. Our Group will thus be relieved to learn that this role is not going to a Conservative Member.

The councillor taking up this unenviable position is Councillor Beardsmore. As many will be aware, he has wide experience in planning and he is our longest serving councillor but I asked him for his record:

- 27 years Spelthorne's Planning Committee
- 15 Years Surrey Planning Committee, where he was the last non-Conservative vice chair of that committee

There is one single caveat, Councillor Beardsmore as we know does not support the expansion of Heathrow. He's wrong, but I respect his opinion. So Heathrow matters in the Local Plan will be dealt with by another cabinet member.

For the record, by a wide margin this is the most senior role Spelthorne Borough Council has ever given to a non-Conservative member, but I think if anyone can pull off this difficult balancing act it will be Councillor Beardsmore and I am delighted to have him on the team."

265/19 Announcements from the Chief Executive

The Chief Executive thanked Neighbourhood Services staff for the Borough's success in the South and South East in Bloom Awards and recognised the huge amount of work and commitment which went into the upkeep and maintenance of our parks and open spaces. He commented that the awards were a tribute to the dedication of our staff and participating communities who created lasting improvements to their local environment for the benefit of all.

266/19 Questions from members of the public

The Mayor reported that, under Standing Order 14, one question had been received from a member of the public.

Question from Mrs. Shadia Doerfel:

“When will the Council consult with residents about the full plans Arora Group have for a Heathrow Expansion, known as "Heathrow West", which were so clearly supported by the Leader and Cllr Helen Harvey following Arora's "last minute" presentation at a Council meeting attended by the public on I believe the 3rd of September 2019, prompting even Cllr Smith-Ainsley to have said “We didn’t know anything about it at all and it’s been put upon us.”

If Arora appears to be the new midwife the Leader supports to deliver a Heathrow expansion, residents deserve to be fully consulted on their plans and have the opportunity to engage with that consultation as they have been able to with the previous and recent Heathrow Consultations.

So far all residents know about Arora from information in the public domain is that they already had property transactions with Spelthorne council around 2017 to the value of around £47.45mio on which the Leader is quoted on their website as describing Arora Group's Grove Developments team as "a pleasure to work with", and that Arora and/or its affiliates has been a Runnymede and Weybridge Conservative Party donor.”

Response from the Leader, Councillor Ian Harvey:

“Thank you for your question Mrs Doerfel.

The Council will not be consulting with residents about any Heathrow developments. That’s not how it works. It is for Heathrow Airport Limited or Arora Group to consult with residents if they intend to make an application for a Development Consent Order.

The Arora Group’s proposals have been in the public domain for several years. They initially announced their intention to seek rights to undertake the expansion of Heathrow during the government’s consultation on the draft Airport National Policy Statement (ANPS) back in 2017. This was followed by the initial launch of their Western Hub proposals in May 2018, two months before the government confirmed its support for the third runway and an expanded Heathrow in the final version of the ANPS. There was a formal presentation of their proposals to all authorities adjoining Heathrow in September 2018. Direct contact was made with the Council via their consultant team back in November 2018, when we were asked for views as part of their first round of informal stakeholder engagement.

They carried out public consultation events in Spelthorne in May 2019, specifically Stanwell Moor on 9 May and Stanwell Village Hall on 11 May. They also carried out a non-statutory stage 1 public consultation on their Heathrow West scheme in April 2019 and we responded to it. We also publicised the consultation on our own website. A further presentation was made to an internal Heathrow Expansion Working Group on 3 June 2019.

Their website states they will be undertaking a statutory consultation in January 2020. Again, it will be for the scheme's promoter to undertake the consultation but we will raise awareness of it using our own channels. It is therefore patently not the case that nothing is known about the scheme. Furthermore, I would point out that after the presentation and discussion at Overview and Scrutiny on 3 September 2109 that this committee decided to recommend to Cabinet that "we are clear there are potentially more beneficial alternative proposals to HAL's, specifically the Heathrow West proposal which needs to be explored in greater depth." Councillor Jan Doerfel is a member of that Committee and took a full part in discussions and decision making.

The question makes various other points which I feel I should correct for the record:

It was only right and proper for Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be made aware of this alternative proposal so members had the full facts in front of them. HAL were also invited to attend the meeting on 3 September but they did not take us up on the offer as they were content that, through their own consultation and engagement, they had undertaken all the public consultation they needed to.

The Arora Group were the counterparty to the Council's purchase of World Business Centre 4. I am happy to be on record to confirm that as regards that transaction, the Council was pleased with the outcome and the approach of the Company to working with the Council as a local authority investor. Being able to work with counterparties of this calibre is a significant benefit for the Council as it marks us out as serious players in a very competitive commercial market. Our reputation and track record with best in class commercial property investments speaks for itself and is something which attracts the property world to deal with us. It is this approach which has quite literally kept the lights on in Spelthorne when other councils around us are cutting back services and making staff redundant. So we have nothing to be bashful about in our approach. We have everything to be proud of in working with companies such as Arora.

I am not sure what donation is referred to. This Council has no connection to the Runnymede and Weybridge Conservatives. I am here to answer questions about Council functions not the finances of the Conservative Party on the other side of the River Thames."

267/19 Petitions

There were none.

268/19 Proposed new extension to Fordbridge Day Centre

The Council considered the recommendation of Cabinet from its meeting on 25 September 2019 to approve a supplementary capital estimate of £130,000 for the proposed extension at the Fordbridge Centre, and its inclusion in the 2019/20 capital programme.

The extension at the Fordbridge Centre would increase seating capacity in the dining room from 81 seats to 101 and offer a flexible area for other activities such as classes, games or exercise to take place. It would also enable the Opal Group to be more integrated into the wider community.

Resolved to approve the supplementary capital estimate of £130,000 for the proposed extension at the Fordbridge Centre, and its inclusion in the 2019/20 capital programme.

269/19 Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel member

Council considered a recommendation of Cabinet from its meeting on 25 September 2019 to approve the appointment of Alison Osmond to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

The Independent Remuneration Panel provides advice to the Council on the type of its members' allowances and the amounts to be paid. Two candidates were interviewed and both were considered to be suitable and well-qualified for the role.

Alison Osmond was recommended due to her long HR experience in the field of compensation and benefits and in the interpretation of comparative data and economic trends in that field.

Resolved to appoint Alison Osmond to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

270/19 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 11 and 25 September 2019, which outlined the matters the Cabinet had decided since the last Council meeting.

271/19 Report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee

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

272/19 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.

273/19 Report from the Chairman of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee

In the absence of Murray Litvak, Chairman of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee, Councillor C.F. Barnard presented a report which outlined the matters the Committee had decided since the last Council meeting.

274/19 Report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor V.J. Leighton, presented her report which outlined the matters the Committee had decided since the last Council meeting.

275/19 Report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee

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

276/19 Motions

In accordance with Standing Order 17 the Council received five written Notices of Motions.

Councillor I.T.E. Harvey moved and Councillor R.W. Sider BEM seconded the following Motion:

“This Council supports the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of Anti-Semitism (decided on 26 May 2016 at Bucharest) and henceforward adopts this definition and the illustrative examples for all relevant aspects of Council policy particularly in the field of anti-discrimination and the promotion of human rights.”

Councillor S.M. Doran, proposed the following amendment (additional words have been italicised) which was seconded by Councillor C.L. Bateson:

“This council supports the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of Anti-Semitism (decided on 26 May 2016 at Bucharest) and henceforward adopts this definition and the illustrative examples for all relevant aspects of Council policy particularly in the field of anti-discrimination and the promotion of human rights.

Additionally, Council welcomes, endorses and hereby adopts, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) definition of Islamophobia including all of its examples, again for all relevant aspect of Council policy particularly in the field of anti-discrimination and the promotion of human rights.

Spelthorne is rightly proud of its diverse community and recognises the valuable part played by the communities of all faiths and beliefs.”

The amendment was not carried and the original Motion put to the vote.

The original Motion was carried.

Resolved that this Council supports the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of Anti-Semitism (decided on 26 May 2016 at Bucharest) and henceforward adopts this definition and the illustrative

examples for all relevant aspects of Council policy particularly in the field of anti-discrimination and the promotion of human rights.

The second Motion was moved by Councillor I.T.E. Harvey and seconded by Councillor A.C. Harman:

“The Council is currently working on the development of its new Corporate Plan to cover the next three years of this administration. In doing so it will be reaffirming its four Corporate Priorities of:

1. Housing
2. Economic Development
3. Clean and Safe Environment
4. Financial Sustainability

This Council notes that many other Councils have recently declared a “climate emergency”. We understand that there is rightly much concern about climate change and that urgent action is needed. This Council is committed to its priorities including a clean and safe environment. It is the right thing to do to tackle climate change for future generations and to further community wellbeing.

Therefore, this Council commits to establishing a Leader’s task group to work towards delivering a strategy in 2020 that clearly outlines how we plan to deliver the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. We are also committed to delivering to our residents safe and secure homes, and secure employment, as sustainably as possible.”

Councillor I.T.E. Harvey spoke and gave a commitment that the proposed task group would be a members’ cross-party group which would report back to Cabinet regularly on proposed actions on climate change, monitoring and delivering on carbon neutrality by 2050 in line with current Government policy. The target date would be continually reviewed and amended in line with Government Policy changes.

Councillor L.E. Nichols proposed and Councillor C.L. Bateson seconded the following amendment (additional words have been italicised and deleted words struck through):

“The Council is currently working on the development of its new Corporate Plan to cover the next three years of this administration. In doing so it will be *adding a new priority of Environmental Sustainability and* reaffirming its four *existing* Corporate Priorities.~~of~~ *The Corporate Priorities will be:*

1. *Environmental Sustainability*
2. Housing
3. Economic Development
4. Clean and Safe Environment
5. Financial Sustainability

This Council notes that many other Councils have recently declared a “climate emergency”. We understand that there is rightly much concern about climate change and that urgent action is needed *and this is why Environmental Sustainability is to be added as a Corporate Priority. This new priority will place emphasis on the need for carbon reduction, waste and recycling, sustainable housing and energy efficiency.* ~~This Council is committed to its priorities including a clean and safe environment.~~ It is the right thing to do to tackle climate change for future generations and to ~~further community wellbeing.~~ *commit to an increased and special emphasis on Environment Sustainability.*

Therefore, this Council commits to establishing a Leader’s task group to work towards delivering a strategy in 2020 that clearly outlines how we plan to deliver the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. We are also committed to delivering to our residents safe and secure homes, and secure employment, as sustainably as possible.”

The amendment was not carried.

Councillor L.E. Nichols proposed and Councillor C.L. Bateson seconded a second amendment to the Motion (additional words have been italicised and deleted words struck through):

“The Council is currently working on the development of its new Corporate Plan to cover the next three years of this administration. In doing so it will be reaffirming its four Corporate Priorities of:

1. Housing
2. Economic Development
3. Clean and Safe Environment
4. Financial Sustainability

This Council notes that many other Councils have recently declared a “climate emergency”. We understand that there is rightly much concern about climate change and that urgent action is needed. This Council is committed to its priorities including a clean and safe environment. It is the right thing to do to tackle climate change for future generations and to further community wellbeing.

Therefore, this Council commits to establishing a Leader’s task group to *report to the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This task group to comprise a minimum of 7 members drawn from all political groups. The task group will work* towards delivering a strategy in 2020 that clearly outlines how we plan to deliver the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. We are also committed to delivering to our residents safe and secure homes, and secure employment, as sustainably as possible.”

The amendment was not carried.

A third amendment was proposed by Councillor L.E. Nichols and seconded by Councillor C.L. Bateson (additional words have been italicised and deleted words struck through):

“The Council is currently working on the development of its new Corporate Plan to cover the next three years of this administration. In doing so it will be reaffirming its four Corporate Priorities of:

1. Housing
2. Economic Development
3. Clean and Safe Environment
4. Financial Sustainability

This Council notes that many other Councils have recently declared a “climate emergency”. We understand that there is rightly much concern about climate change and that urgent action is needed. This Council is committed to its priorities including a clean and safe environment. It is the right thing to do to tackle climate change for future generations and to further community wellbeing.

Therefore, this Council commits to establishing a Leader’s task group to work towards delivering a strategy in 2020 that clearly outlines how we plan to deliver ~~the~~ a target of net zero carbon emissions *for Spelthorne Borough Council by 2050 2030*. We are also committed to delivering to our residents safe and secure homes, and secure employment, as sustainably as possible.”

Councillor L.E. Nichols requested a recorded vote on the amendment.

The voting on the amendment was as follows:

FOR (14)	Councillors: Bateson, Cornes, Doerfel, J. Doran, S. Doran, R. Dunn, S. Dunn, Fidler, Grant, Lagden, Nichols, Siva, Spoor and Vinson
AGAINST (21)	Councillors: I. Harvey, Harman, Attewell, Barnard, C. Barratt, R. Barratt, Boughtflower, Brar, Buttar, Chandler, Gibson, H. Harvey, Islam, Leighton, Madams, McIlroy, Mitchell, Noble, Sexton, Sider and Smith-Ainsley.
ABSTAIN (1)	Councillor Beardsmore

The amendment was not carried.

The original Motion was put to the vote and carried.

Resolved that the Council is currently working on the development of its new Corporate Plan to cover the next three years of this administration. In doing so it will be reaffirming its four Corporate Priorities of:

1. Housing
2. Economic Development
3. Clean and Safe Environment
4. Financial Sustainability

This Council notes that many other Councils have recently declared a “climate emergency”. We understand that there is rightly much concern about climate change and that urgent action is needed. This Council is committed to its priorities including a clean and safe environment. It is the right thing to do to tackle climate change for future generations and to further community wellbeing.

Therefore, this Council commits to establishing a Leader’s task group to work towards delivering a strategy in 2020 that clearly outlines how we plan to deliver the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. We are also committed to delivering to our residents safe and secure homes, and secure employment, as sustainably as possible.

Councillor N. Cornes left the meeting at this point.

The third Motion was proposed by Councillor I.T.E. Harvey and seconded by Councillor J.R. Boughtflower:

“This Council caveats its support for a third runway and appropriate and proportionate expansion, subject to Heathrow meeting:

- a) the 16 requirements as recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its extraordinary meeting on 3 September 2019; and
- b) our demands that our impacted communities be properly compensated via the Wider Property Offer Zone scheme.”

The Motion was carried.

The fourth Motion was proposed by Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley and seconded by Councillor J.R. Boughtflower. A request by Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley to alter his Motion was agreed. The altered Motion was:

“Following the Prime Minister’s announcement that the UK will eradicate its net contribution to climate change by 2050 and in the light of the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, declaring a climate emergency: This Council resolves to:

1. Commit to working closely with the Government, the Environment Agency, our County colleagues, local businesses, our residents and other partners in meeting this target;
2. Update our strategy in 2019/20 which clearly outlines how we plan to deliver the target; and
This to be undertaken by a cross-party task group and their findings shall be presented to Cabinet.
3. Write to the Government asking them to confirm what support will be made available to local authorities to help achieve this goal.
4. Update our target date following the publication of the IPCC Synthesis Report, due in 2022.”

An amendment to the Motion was proposed by Councillor I.J. Beardsmore and seconded by Councillor R.O. Barratt (additional words have been italicised):

“Following the Prime Minister’s announcement that the UK will eradicate its net contribution to climate change by 2050 and in the light of the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, declaring a climate emergency: This Council resolves to:

1. Commit to working closely with the Government, the Environment Agency, our County colleagues, local businesses, our residents and other partners in meeting this target;
2. Update our strategy in 2019/20 which clearly outlines how we plan to deliver the target; and
This to be undertaken by a cross-party task group and their findings shall be presented to Cabinet.
3. Write to the Government asking them to confirm what support will be made available to local authorities to help achieve this goal.
4. Update our target date following the publication of the IPCC Synthesis Report, due in 2022.

Further, this Council requests that the Local Plan Working Party considers putting in a specific policy on this into the next draft of the Local Plan”

The amendment was carried and the new substantive Motion put to the vote.

The substantive Motion was carried.

The fifth Motion was withdrawn by Councillor B.B. Spoor.

277/19 Questions on Ward Issues

There were no questions on Ward issues.

278/19 General questions

The Mayor reported that five general questions had been received, in accordance with Standing Order 15, from Councillors R.W. Sider BEM, L.E. Nichols, C.L. Bateson and J.H.J. Doerfel.

1. Question from Councillor R.W. Sider BEM

“Will the Leader and Members of this Council join me in congratulating the Group Head for Neighbourhood Services and her staff in achieving what can only be described as phenomenal and outstanding awards in the South and South East in Bloom awards of 2019, these being Sunbury Cemetery declared as the overall winner of Cemetery of the Year, Ashford and Staines Cemeteries receiving Gold awards, and Sunbury Walled Garden yet another Gold in the Small park category.”

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

“We are happy to join you in congratulating Neighbourhood Services and the parks team for achieving these prestigious awards year after year. It is evident that there is a high level of commitment, not just from management but also from the operational staff who keep up the high the standards in our parks, open spaces and cemeteries.”

2. Question from Councillor R.W. Sider BEM

“At the meeting of the Full Council on July the 18th 2019 I placed a Motion before the council which read ‘That officers investigate whether it is feasible to enter into a reciprocal agreement with Surrey County Council for Spelthorne Borough Council to act on their behalf to remove Traveller encampments when on the highway, and append such charges involved to Surrey’. In view of the fact that since the 18th of July there has been a further encampment by Travellers on the highway in Old Charlton Road Shepperton in September, can the Leader inform me of the progress that officers have made in their investigations with Surrey County Council with regard to the statement in my motion of the 18th July 2019.”

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

“Thank you for your question Councillor Sider. Officers have given consideration to the matter. You are correct that the site in Old Charlton Road is a difficult site and we have to be alert to all possible ways to deter unlawful encampments and then remove them swiftly should they occur. The site in question is a quiet location which is part highway and part off-street parking. Having considered ways in which to deal with future encampments officers have considered a variety of ways to best deal with the problem. First by taking on Surrey’s legal responsibility, as was suggested, or alternatively by instituting parking and waiting restrictions in the area to make enforcement easier. It was concluded that both options had drawbacks. The current proposal is to seek the agreement of the County Council and get that portion of Highway put in the Borough’s application for a High Court injunction against unlawful encampments. This would mean that any person camped there in breach of the injunction would be liable to arrest. This is considered the best deterrent in this location. I will ask officers to update ward councillors as the matter progresses, but I am informed that the application will be ready to be made in the next couple of weeks and it also seeks to cover all our parks and open spaces. If this injunction is granted I think it will give a great deal of comfort to residents.”

3. Question from Councillor L.E. Nichols

“The Redmond review is an “independent review into the arrangements in place to support the transparency and quality of local authority financial reporting and external audit in England”. Will the Council be making a formal submission in response to the Call for Views which closes on 22nd November 2019?”

Response from the Deputy Leader, Councillor A.C. Harman

“Yes the Council welcomes the Redmond Review, reviewing how external audit of local government could be made more effective, and will be making a formal response. In particular we welcome the opportunity to respond to the strand asking for comments on how the issuing of value for money opinions could be made more useful and more timely. We have experienced the adverse impacts of having an auditor take two years to issue a Value for Money opinion. We will also take into account and contribute towards a discussion amongst the Surrey Chief Finance Officers with respect to additionally making a Surrey wide response.”

In accordance with Council Standing Order 15.2, Councillor L.E. Nichols asked the following supplementary question:

“The Call for Views explicitly seeks the views of recipients of these reports. Will the Council be seeking the views of members of the Audit and Overview and Scrutiny Committees to support this part of the response? Will the Deputy Leader undertake to circulate the response to all members and to be published on the public website within two days of the closing date of responses please.”

The following written response was provided following the meeting:

“Yes the Council will produce a set of draft responses and will give the members of Audit Committee as the relevant committee (and as the Committee who are recipients of auditors’ reports) the opportunity to comment on and request refinements to the responses.

The Deputy Leader will circulate the response to all members and ensure that the response is published on the Council’s website within two days of the closing date (22nd November).”

4. Question from Councillor C.L. Bateson

“Given the Council’s decision to abandon building a new Leisure Centre on Staines Park, can we be updated as to the Council’s proposals for an alternative site, timescale for announcement and proposed means of consultation with local residents. Do these include rebuilding on the existing site or refurbishing the current Leisure Centre?”

Response from Councillor M.M. Attewell

“Thank you for your question Councillor Bateson. We are currently in the process of finalising our analysis of options for a new Spelthorne Leisure Centre and are hoping to be able to come forward with proposals for a new centre early in the New Year. In undertaking our analysis, all options have been considered, including whether the current centre could be refurbished or rebuilt in its existing location. You can be assured that we will be consulting

widely on our plans with local residents, councillors and other key stakeholders, using a wide range of communication channels to ensure that we get as much feedback as we can on our proposals.”

5. Question from Councillor J.H.J. Doerfel

“This Council, through Knowle Green Estates Ltd, applied for planning permission to build a warehouse on Green Belt land at Cleveland Park which was thankfully properly refused at the Planning Committee meeting on 18th September 2019.

Considering that this land is not owned by Knowle Green Estates Ltd and the fact that such an application previously lodged by somebody else had been refused by the Council some years back resulting in an award of still unpaid legal costs to the Council (when the applicant withdrew their appeal seeking to overturn that refusal), why did Knowle Green Estates Ltd now decide to make an 'about-face' turn and actually submit this planning application to build on Green Belt land themselves i.e. what were and are the interests of the Council leadership and KGE in this piece of land and their plans for it?”

Response from the Deputy Leader, Councillor A.C. Harman

“Knowle Green Estates Ltd submitted the planning application for Northumberland Close earlier this year.

Although as you correctly identify, the company does not own any land in the area, the Company was acting as a developer of Council projects. The strategy being deployed at that time was to develop Knowle Green Estates Ltd as a company which would undertake all the development management functions for the Council. That is no longer the strategy which the Cabinet has asked officers to follow.

Cabinet has asked officers to prepare the business plan for the Company only as a residential management company. Knowle Green Estates will have no further involvement or interest in this site. The Council is considering options with respect to the site in the wider context of the Heathrow DCO.”

In accordance with Council Standing Order 15.2, Councillor J.H.J. Doerfel asked the following supplementary question:

“How much did the Council or KGE spend on this planning application that was refused?”

The following written response was provided following the meeting:

“The total spend incurred in the process of preparing and submitting the Northumberland Close planning application, including staff opportunity cost, contractors and external consultants amounted to £251,887.”

279/19 Appointment of representative Trustees

Staines Parochial Charity

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

Resolved that Mrs Jean Pinkerton OBE be appointed as a trustee of Staines Parochial Charity for a four year term expiring 31 October 2023.

Laleham Parish Lands Trust

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

Resolved that Dominic O'Malley be appointed as a trustee of Laleham Charities – Village Hall and Recreation Grounds for a four year term expiring 31 October 2023.

280/19 Exempt Business

Resolved to move the exclusion of the Press and Public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.

281/19 Exempt report - Supplementary Capital estimate for property acquisition V

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Council considered a recommendation from Cabinet for approval of a supplementary Capital provision of £85.7m for the design team and the contractors for the development of the site known as 'Property Acquisition V'.

The development of this site seeks to support the Council to deliver its ambitious housing and regeneration programme across the Borough to help meet the needs of its residents. The site is also a key element in the emerging regeneration plans for Staines town centre.

Resolved to approve the supplementary Capital provision of £85.7m for the design team and the contractors for the development of the site.

282/19 Investment Acquisition 'X'

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Council considered a recommendation from Cabinet to approve a supplementary Capital provision of £42m to provide sufficient headroom in the Capital Programme for the acquisition of a property known as 'Property

Acquisition X'. This was considered a strategic asset with potential to improve the environmental and economic well-being of the area. The site was likely to be considered for numerous diversified uses all of which have the potential to help the Council achieve its strategic objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan.

Resolved that Council approves a supplementary Capital provision of £42m to provide sufficient headroom in the Capital Programme for the acquisition and for the appointment of the design team and the contractors for enhancement projects.