



**Spelthorne  
Borough Council**

Council Meeting  
Thursday, 22 October 2020





14 October 2020

*Please reply to:*

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To the Councillors of Spelthorne Borough Council

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the Council to be held remotely via Skype for Business video conferencing on **Thursday, 22 October 2020** commencing at **5.00 pm** for the transaction of the following business.

Daniel Mouawad  
*Chief Executive*

Councillors are encouraged to wear their badge of past office at the Council meeting.

*Councillors are reminded to notify Committee Services of any Gifts and Hospitality offered to you since the last Council meeting so that these may be entered in the Gifts and Hospitality Declaration book.*

## AGENDA

Description	Page nos.
<b>1. Apologies for absence</b> To receive any apologies for non-attendance.	
<b>2. Minutes</b> To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Council meeting held on 30 July 2020 and the extraordinary meetings held on 10 and 24 September 2020.	21 - 54
<b>3. Disclosures of Interest</b> To receive any disclosures of interest from Councillors in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.	
<b>4. Announcements from the Mayor</b> To receive any announcements from the Mayor.	
<b>5. Announcements from the Leader</b> To receive any announcements from the Leader.	
<b>6. Announcements from the Chief Executive</b> To receive any announcements from the Chief Executive.	
<b>7. Items carried over from the Council meeting held on 30 July 2020</b> The following items of business were carried over from the Council meeting held on 30 July 2020.	
a) <b>Motions - 30 July 2020</b>	
1. To consider a report from the Monitoring Officer (to follow) on the following Motion which was proposed at the meeting held on 30 July 2020 and in accordance with Standing Order 28.2, was adjourned without discussion, to the next ordinary meeting of the Council:	To Follow
“The Leader said he would be more inclusive when he was elected and yet has not demonstrated this so under Standing Order 28.2, I propose a variation to Council Standing Order 8.3 little f. I move the following:	
8.3 little ‘f’ be amended to prevent the Leader assigning all the Outside Bodies to his own party as opposed to the councillors best suited to carry out these roles.”	
<b>Proposed by Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley</b> <b>Seconded by Councillor D. Saliagopoulos</b>	

2. There were two Motions outstanding from the meeting held on 30 July 2020, however Motion 3 was withdrawn by the proposer following the meeting. The remaining Motion reads:

**Motion 4.**

“The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee published its report on Local authority investment in commercial property on 13th July 2020. The Council notes the following conclusions arising from the report:

- That in the view of the PAC, Spelthorne Borough Council borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board since 2016 has been excessive and undertaken against DHCLG and CIPFA guidance.
- That in some authorities there have been failings in transparency, with decision making by small groups and inadequate scrutiny.

The Council resolves to take the following actions in response to the PAC report:

- To require greater member involvement in all future investment related decisions above a defined transaction value.
- To make available to members full information on significant portfolio expenditures, lettings and contractual amendments within 14 days of the decision.
- To revise accounting structures to clearly separate the property investment portfolio from other Council activities and to make this segmentation transparent in future reporting to members.
- To establish portfolio performance measures and risk management parameters to be reported periodically to members.

The details of these actions are to be agreed by the Leader's Property Investment Task Group and submitted to the Council for ratification.”

**Proposed by: Cllr Lawrence Nichols**

**Seconded by: Cllr Bernie Spoor**

b) **Questions on Ward Issues**

The Leader or his nominee to answer questions from Councillors on issues in their Wards, in accordance with Standing Order 15.

There were two Ward issue questions outstanding from the meeting held on 30 July 2020:

**1. Question from Councillor I.T.E. Harvey**

Regarding the Lendy Memorial

- Who exactly at the Council engaged this expert?
- Who is this expert? What qualifications does he or she have?
- Is this expert sufficiently knowledgeable about west African and southern African 19th century history so as to be able to make a valid judgement on the Lendy Memorial?

## **2. Question from Councillor D. Saliagopoulos**

"I would like to make Council aware that the Riverside area within my Ward needs some attention please. There is a stretch of River walk which runs from Penton Hook Lock towards Staines Town. For those of you who know, we also have the large grassed area called "Silvery Sands" which has housing fronting this large open area.

Until the unfortunate onset of the Virus Pandemic, this area was clean, free of dog fouling (thanks to the fabulous campaign organised by Councillor Joe Sexton a couple of years ago) and the bins never overflowed. Now, people leave plastic bags of litter, litter has been left on the grass and riverside area. One weekend there were hundreds of empty beer cans, all cleared up by local residents.

I have to recognise the work that my fellow Councillor, Michelle Gibson, who lives on the river, does every day to keep the area clean. Many residents are also doing this.

Every day there have been gatherings of people, all enjoying the River and it has been nice to see children out in the fresh air enjoying themselves. However, there's always a but isn't there? The area is now blighted by empty legal hi canisters, little small silver phials about the length of a cigarette. The users of these drugs must surely come from the nightly hoards of young people who congregate at Silvery Sands. I actually feel very sorry for those residents whose properties face directly onto this lovely area. Some have actually taken to putting up high fences and I have even heard of complete strangers walking through residents' gardens.

Crime is also on the rise with several properties being broken into. Litter, as I have mentioned and dog fouling is on the increase. Inconsiderate parking is rife. Two roads in particular, Penton Hook Road and parts of Wheatsheaf Lane are actually Private Roads - the residents pay for the upkeep of these roads, independently from the County Council. Visitors to the River in their cars were not respecting this.

The biggest complaint I hear from residents is regarding cyclists. Why are these cyclists not understanding that Pelatons do not have right of way over pedestrians. There have been many near misses, dogs being hit, and many complaints about the general attitude of cyclists. So far I have personally witnessed 2 accidents. Cyclists should at least slow down for pedestrians and give way. At the weekend you might be mistaken for thinking that 'would be' entrants to the Tour de France were out practising!

I therefore would like to hear from the Council how they will give some extra help to this area. What measures can be taken to put a stop to the continuous drug taking and loud noise at night? Are the Council willing to consider a zero tolerance policy towards youngsters doing this? Can we enforce a policy so that cyclists respect the River path and pedestrians? The Litter Campaign suggested by Councillors Rybinski and Sexton should start here!

Finally, I want to make it clear. I am not against young people having a good time. As I mentioned earlier it is nice to see young people out and about enjoying themselves. What I am extremely concerned about, especially for the residents of Riverside & Laleham is that their day to day lives are being seriously disrupted and it is just not fair.

I am sure Councillor Gibson would agree with me that we need to focus on our Riverside area to make it as nice as the River Areas in Lower Sunbury and Shepperton.”

c) **General Questions**

The Leader, or his nominee, to answer questions from Councillors on matters affecting the Borough, in accordance with Standing Order 15.

There were 10 questions outstanding from the meeting held on 30 July 2020.

**1. First Question from Cllr. R.W. Sider, BEM**

At the meeting of the full Council on the 18th of July 2019 I placed the following Motion before the Council. It was, ‘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 Travellers encamped when on the highway and append such charges involved to Surrey’. It was seconded by Cllr Barnard. The motion was debated and the Leader of the Council said- quote - ‘I think it is something that we can ask officers to explore and then report back to the portfolio holder. On that basis I will support your motion and ask members to do likewise.’ The Motion was carried and it was Resolved ‘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 County Council.’

My question is “It is now one calendar year since the foregoing resolution was debated and carried, and again Travellers have encamped in Old Charlton Lane, Shepperton, requiring officers from Surrey to deliver the relevant documentation to secure their removal. Can the Leader of the Council inform me what discussions with Surrey have taken place as required by the Motion of the 18th of July 2019, and what progress has been made in carrying out the requirements of the said resolution.”

**2. Second Question from Cllr. R.W. Sider, BEM**

“After a further invasion and encampment of Travellers in the borough in mid- summer last year, I requested that officers pursued through the legal means and through the courts, an injunction along the lines that had been secured by our neighbouring borough, which would prevent them entering Spelthorne on any occasion. After one year, can the Leader inform me of the progress that has been made by officers to

secure such an injunction?”

### **3. Question from Cllr. J. Sexton**

“At the Cabinet meeting on 15th July the Leader stated at the very beginning ‘**Can I remind everyone that mobile phones should be switched off or set to silent mode**’.

When Cllr Attewell was reading one of her reports regarding homelessness she stopped and said ‘**Sorry I’m reading this from my phone and someone just tried to call me.**’ This was followed shortly after by another interruption with Cllr Attewell saying ‘**Oh gosh I’m never doing this again, I am reading this from my phone and people keep ringing me.**’

Over 86 subscribers have now accessed the recording and it does not make the Spelthorne Council Cabinet look very professional. Will the Leader now ensure that Cabinet meetings are video recorded, as are the Planning Committee meetings, in order to ensure that Cabinet members can be seen to be giving the role they are undertaking the attention that it deserves.”

### **4. Question from Cllr. K. Grant**

“Given the importance of the Environment portfolio to our Council priorities and the general wellbeing of Spelthorne and its residents, can the Leader please explain why this position has not been filled in the new Cabinet? Can he begin to lay out his greener credentials that he expressed in his acceptance speech when elected Leader?”

### **5. Question from Cllr. S. Dunn**

“The Leader of Surrey County Council has announced that he intends to make the whole of Surrey one Unitary Authority. Can the Leader please advise us what communication or meetings have taken place to inform Spelthorne of these plans?”

### **6. Question from Councillor B. Spoor**

“When is Spelthorne Council going to lead the way and put 40-50% of their planned accommodation as affordable, which will provide the impetus for developers to increase their share of affordable housing in their submissions?”

And in this context, will the Council also reconsider the Thameside House development, where no affordable housing is proposed?”



The responses to the following two questions from Councillor Nichols were provided to him after the meeting on 30 July 2020, at his request. The questions and responses will appear in the minutes of this meeting.

#### **7. First Question from Councillor L. Nichols**

“The Cabinet paper which was used to obtain approval for the purchase of the Oast House site contains an estimate of the number of housing units that can be built, and which underpins the cost effectiveness of the acquisition. Could the Leader please explain why the Council is refusing to disclose this estimate to local residents?”

#### **8. Second Question from Councillor L. Nichols**

“Could the Leader please confirm whether the recently re-constituted Leader’s Task Group for the Local Plan will be looking again at the Green Belt site allocations?”

#### **9. Questions from Councillor I.T.E. Harvey**

1. Does the Leader still regard the Councils finances to be “in meltdown”?
2. Does the Leader agree that our Property Investment Strategy has made a profound contribution to our finances and our ability to provide and protect services to residents without financial constraints, as exemplified by our unconstrained response to the COVID19 crisis?
3. Can the Leader please explain why the following reports to Cabinet have been withdrawn / postponed, and advise what meetings have been cancelled or postponed during his leadership?
  - Asset Management Plan (this was originally scheduled to go to Overview and Scrutiny before Cabinet)
  - Annual Asset Investment Report
  - Community Asset Policy”

#### **10. Questions from Councillor J. Doerfel**

- How many applications for rent deferrals/rent remittals by commercial tenants has the Council received this year?
- How many of these have been granted and how many of these have been refused? How many are still outstanding for decision?
- Please provide us with information of the length of the rent periods for which rent will now not be paid by the companies in question (per company if the periods vary).
- How much is the total Council income that will now not be received by the Council during the length of those periods (i.e. the periods during which rent will not be received) and that would otherwise have been due under the pre-COVID 19 rental contracts?

## **8. Questions from members of the public**

The Leader, or his nominee, to answer any questions raised by members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 14.

*Note: the deadline for questions to be considered at this meeting is 12 noon on Thursday 15 October 2020.*

At the time of publication of this agenda, 1 question was received

### **Question from Mr Andrew McLuskey**

“Given the decision by the Secretary of State to authorise the construction of a new, unnecessary and potentially extremely disruptive pipeline from Southampton to Heathrow and given the council’s previous lacklustre response to the proposal will Spelthorne Council now commit to whole heartedly using all means possible to mount a strong legal challenge to the plan in the few weeks remaining which are available for this.”

## **9. Petitions**

The Council has received a petition with 1800 signatories requesting that Spelthorne Borough Council and Surrey Police give their full assurance that:

- (1) The Lendy Memorial Lion will not be removed, dismantled, or toppled from its current location at Sunbury’s historical Walled Garden (The Walled Garden, Thames Street, Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 6AB),
- (2) the heroic and valiant efforts of Charles Fredrick Lendy Captain R.A and Edward Augustus William Lendy, D.S.O, to which this memorial was erected, will not be marred with a plaque or sign bringing into disrepute their upstanding moral integrity, and
- (3) that the memorial will be protected by the police from the threat of vandals, thugs, and terrorists.

The matter is referred to Council for consideration and a response. In accordance with Standing Order 16.4 in the Constitution, the options available to Council are:

- (a) take the action the petition requests; or
- (b) not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate; or
- (c) note the petition and keep the matter under review; or
- (d) if the content relates to a matter on the agenda for the meeting the petition be considered when the item is debated; or
- (e) the petition be referred to the Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.

- 10. Recommendations of the Cabinet** 55 - 56
- To consider the recommendations of the Cabinet from its meeting on 23 September 2020 in relation to the following two items:
- a) **Replacement of Spelthorne Leisure Centre** 57 - 90
- Reason for partial exemption**
- Appendix 5** to the report contains 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 Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because, disclosure to the public would prejudice the financial position of the authority in the tendering process for a developer to build the new leisure centre, allowing tenderers to know the Council’s estimated costs and budget for this development. This in turn prejudices the Council by (i) distorting the tendering process and (ii) prejudicing the opportunity for the Council to get the most financially advantageous deal for building the new centre.
- b) **Exempt Report - Victory Place Construction Costs - Key Decision** 91 - 100
- Reason for exemption**
- This report contains 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 Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because, disclosure to the public would prejudice the financial position of the authority in agreeing final financial and contract terms with the preferred bidder. If the bids were to be made public then it may make the Council vulnerable to a renegotiation with the preferred bidder.
- 11. Changing to a Committee system** To Follow
- To consider the report of the Monitoring Officer on a proposal for a change in the Council’s Governance arrangements.
- 12. Appointment of representative Trustees**
- To consider the reappointment of Council representative Trustees to the following charities:
- 1. Ashford Sick and Needy Charity**
- Mr A. Hatchman and Mr M. Mulford, each for a further four year period to October 2024.

**2. Ashford Relief in Need Charity**

Mrs M. Bushnell for a further four year period ending in October 2024.

**3. Laleham Charities - Village Hall and Recreation Ground**

Mr C. Squire for a further four year period to expire October 2024.

**13. Report from the Leader of the Council**

To receive the report from the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet at its meeting held on 23 September 2020. 101 - 104

**14. Report from the Chairman of the Licensing Committee**

To receive the report from the Chairman of the Licensing Committee on the work of his Committee. 105 - 106

**15. Report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

To receive the report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work of her Committee. 107 - 108

**16. Report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee**

To receive the report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee on the work of his Committee. To Follow

**17. Motions**

To receive any motions from Councillors in accordance with Standing Order 19.

*Note: The deadline for motions to be considered at this meeting was Monday 12 October 2020 and 6 were received:*

**Motion 1**

The following amendments to the SBC Constitution are to be proposed.

That the Constitution be amended as follows:

**Part 4 section (d)**

**Financial Regulation B: Financial Planning  
Capital**

**Authorisation of Capital Expenditure**

Para B24 be amended as follows

‘Capital expenditure on a scheme not included in estimates or budgets may only be incurred after full evaluation of that scheme by the Leader (if under £20,000) or Cabinet (between £20,000 and £1million) Any proposed capital expenditure over £1 million must be evaluated and agreed by majority of Council Members’.

The paragraph will continue as detailed- ‘This will include a statement.....’

A final sentence to be added: 'This paragraph (B24) shall take priority over any other clause or paragraph within this Constitution that may be, or appear to be, in conflict.'

**Para A38 be amended as follows:**

The Leader is authorised to approve a total supplementary expenditure in a year not exceeding 5% of the approved net revenue budget and £20,000 on any approved capital scheme.

**Part 4 section (c)**

**Who May Make Cabinet Decisions**

Para 2.1 be amended as follows

'The arrangements for the discharge of Cabinet functions may be set out by the Leader. The Leader may, after full consultation and agreement of the majority of Cabinet members, provide for Cabinet functions to be discharged by: The list (a) to (g)

**Quorum**

Para 6.1 be amended as follows:

The quorum for a meeting of the Cabinet is 5.

**Proposed by Councillor T. Mitchell**

**Seconded by Councillor R. Barratt**

**Motion 2**

"Members will undoubtedly have noticed the growth in the number of small silver canisters lying around in our borough. These are Nitrous Oxide gas cylinders which are not being used for the purpose that they were manufactured but are being used by youngsters to give themselves an instant 'high'.

The gas does unfortunately have side effects. It is very dangerous to inhale nitrous oxide directly from the canister and doing it in an enclosed space is also very dangerous. If you take too much nitrous oxide you risk falling unconscious and/or suffocating from the lack of oxygen. People have died this way.

This is a psychoactive drug and is covered by the 2016 Psychoactive Substances Act, which means it's illegal to give away or sell. There's no penalty for possession unless you're in prison. Supply and production can get you up to 7 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.

In order to try to protect our residents from the effect of this drug:-

This Council resolves to:-

- a) Hold an advertising campaign to
  - i) remind local businesses of the legislation regarding supply of these canisters.
  - ii) remind parents/guardians of the harm that inhaling Nitrous Oxide from these cylinders will cause for their children.
- b) ask schools and youth organisations to highlight the dangers of

inhaling Nitrous Oxide from these cylinders.

c) use our JET team to carry out test purchases in the same way we do for licensed premises

d) write to the Home Secretary to ask that the Psychoactive Substances Act be reviewed to remove loopholes which prevent prosecutions and increase fines for illegal importation and sale.”

**Proposed by Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley  
Seconded by Councillor I.J. Beardsmore**

### **Motion 3**

“This Council notes: The publication by Government of the White Paper, Planning for the Future on 6 August 2020, which set out proposals on reforms to the planning process for the future.

This Council believes:

1. That existing planning procedures, as currently administered by our own team, allow for local democratic control over future development, and give local people a say in planning proposals that affect them.
2. That proposals for automatic rights to build in growth areas, and increase permitted development rights, risk unregulated growth and unsustainable communities.
3. That local communities must be in the driving seat on shaping the future of their communities, and local determination of the planning framework and planning applications play an important part in this process.

And this Council resolves to:

1. Take part in the consultation on the planning proposals, and to make representations against the proposals as outlined in this motion.
2. Write to and lobby our Member of Parliament, urging him to oppose these proposals and to circulate the reply to members.
3. Highlight its concerns over these proposals with the public and local residents.

This Council is concerned that the proposals seek to:

1. Reduce or remove the right of residents to object to applications near them.
2. Grant automatic rights for developers to build on land identified for growth.
3. Remove section 106 payments for infrastructure and their replacement with a national levy.

The vast majority of planning applications are given the go ahead by local authority planning committees, with permission granted to around 9 out of 10 applications.

And research by the Local Government Association has said that there are existing planning permissions for more than one million homes that have not yet been started.

This Council further notes: The Royal Institute for British Architects called the proposals shameful and which will do almost nothing to guarantee delivery of affordable, well-designed and sustainable homes. RIBA also said that proposals could lead to the next generation of slum housing. The reforms are opposed by the all-party Local Government Association, currently led by Conservative Councillors.”

**Proposed by Councillor B.B. Spoor**  
**Seconded by Councillor T. Fidler**

#### **Motion 4**

“This Council recognises that the provision of affordable housing in Spelthorne is in extremely short supply, having delivered just 427 affordable homes over a period of 10 years from 2009-2019. With a housing waiting list of over 2500 and an estimated annual level of affordable housing need of 459 per annum, it is imperative that we increase the supply of genuinely affordable homes for our constituents, as a matter of urgency.

We are facing a national housing emergency exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Thousands of people across the country are living without a permanent home and clearly, Spelthorne is no exception.

In its final report on Affordable Housing, the Affordable Housing Commission has called on the government “to make affordable housing a national priority and to put it at the centre of a national housing strategy.”

In line with this, this Council resolves to making the provision of affordable housing a critical priority and pledges:

1. To provide at least 1000 affordable homes over a 5-year period from 2021-2025. The difference between the number of affordable homes supplied by private developers and the pledge of 1000 homes, will be supplied by Spelthorne Council/Knowle Green Estates. The affordable homes will be built on brownfield sites and not on Greenbelt or Public Urban Open Spaces.
2. That a minimum of 50% of housing on sites will be affordable where the development comprises 10 or more dwellings or the site is 0.5 hectares or larger irrespective of the number of dwellings.
3. To adopt the measurement of housing affordability as recommended by the Affordable Housing Commission, which states that the measurement of affordability should be at the point where rent does not exceed a third of household income.”

**Proposed by Councillor V. Siva**  
**Seconded by Councillor J. Doerfel**

## **Motion 5**

"According to the Royal College of Physicians an estimated 40,000 deaths a year in the UK are linked to air pollution, with engine idling contributing to this. Engine idling can release 150 balloons worth of exhaust emissions in just one minute.

As stated by the RAC "(t)hese fumes contain a number of harmful gasses including carbon dioxide, which is bad for the environment and contributes towards climate change, as well as a range of other harmful gasses including nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons which are linked to asthma and other lung diseases."

As a Council that wishes to improve air quality across the borough, this council herewith decides to:-

- a) Declare a Borough-wide "Clean Air and no idling zone" by 1st January 2021,
- b) encourage all residents and businesses to stop engine idling in the Borough through awareness-rising in Council publications, communications and as part of a general awareness campaign pointing out the harm of idling and that engine idling is already liable for a penalty notice under existing legislation,
- c) encourage and assist schools, businesses, and other partners in the Borough to highlight the health hazards and environmental impact of idling and to take measures to combat idling through signage and other measures,
- d) write to Surrey County Council urging the Council to proactively address and combat idling as a matter of urgency including through the implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order to this effect, increased use of custom signage, idling penalties and increased enforcement resourcing for monitoring of idling hotspots including in busy shopping areas, car parks, near schools and in residential areas.
- e) Write to the Government urging for a substantial increase in fines for stationary idling and repeat idling through legislative reform and statutory operational guidance to authorities.
- f) Work with other local authorities to learn from best practices and work together for legislative reform."

**Proposed by Councillor J. Doerfel**  
**Seconded by Councillor T. Lagden**

## **Motion 6**

Climate Emergency Motion

Spelthorne Borough Council herewith

1. declares a climate emergency immediately.
2. decides to commission a detailed study by the end of this year identifying practical steps, precise targets and concrete courses of action that can achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible,
3. decides to network with other local authorities and the Local



Government Association with a view to learning from best practices by other Councils that have adopted carbon neutrality targets and/or other measures mitigating the effects of Climate Change,

4. decides to establish a Climate Change Citizens Assembly for residents to help address our climate emergency before the end of the year with the first meeting to be held remotely in January 2021.

**Proposed by Councillor J. Doerfel**  
**Seconded by Councillor V. Siva**

#### **18. Questions on Ward Issues**

The Leader, or his nominee, to answer questions from Councillors on issues in their Wards, in accordance with Standing Order 15.

*Note: the deadline for questions to be considered at this meeting is 12 noon on Thursday 15 October 2020.*

#### **19. General questions**

The Leader, or his nominee, to answer questions from Councillors on matters affecting the Borough, in accordance with Standing Order 15.

*Note: the deadline for questions to be considered at this meeting is 12 noon on Thursday 15 October 2020.*

At the time of publication of this agenda, 6 questions were received:

##### **Question 1 – Councillor Robin Sider BEM**

“Will the Leader and members of the council join me in congratulating the Council on being awarded the ‘Silver Award ‘ as part of the Ministry of Defence Employers Recognition Scheme, an award for organisations that pledge, demonstrate and advocate support to the Armed Forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant. And will the council also note the hard work undertaken by Kamal Mehmood, the council’s Armed Forces Partnership Manager and the Council’s Communication team in order to achieve such a high and prestigious award.”

##### **Question 2 – Councillor Robin Sider BEM**

“The annual South and South east in Bloom competition is designed to encourage councils, residents and businesses to work together to improve the local environment and make towns and cities greener and cleaner for everyone. That said, will the Leader and all members of this council join me in congratulating Head of Neighborhood Services and her staff on achieving a magnificent result by way of Staines, Ashford and Sunbury cemeteries all being awarded gold, and the Sunbury Walled Garden also striking gold in the Small Park category.”

### **Question 3 – Councillor Dick Smith-Ainsley**

“In the announcements made by the Leader at his first council meeting on 30th July he stated the following regarding Task Groups:-  
“Full details of this group (a Multi-Party Task Group on Governance) and all the other Task Group will be published in the next few days.”

Since then all efforts to find out the details of these Task Groups has been met with a wall of silence.

Why, two and a half months after he promised the details is the Leader deliberately withholding this information?”

### **Question 4 – Councillor Dick Smith-Ainsley**

“Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council Cllr John Boughtflower has made various statements which have been published on the council web site.

He stated on 17th August "When elected as leader, I promised that there would be an increase in cross-party working and, just over a month on, this administration is demonstrating that actions speak louder than words.”

At the same time the Deputy Leader, Cllr McIlroy stated with regard to the New Local Plan working party "Not only will this be the first of the new administration's promised cross-party engagement groups but, as it regards the New Local Plan which is so important to residents, it is arguably one of the most significant working groups for our Borough. This group will lead the way to prove *co-operative working over politics for the benefit of our residents*.

The emphasis on “*co-operative working over politics for the benefit of our residents*” is significant.

Can the Leader explain why he has decided to deliberately exclude every single member of the United Spelthorne Group, which is the second largest opposition group on the council from every one of his cross party working groups including the New Local Plan working party described by the Deputy Leader as “one of the most significant working groups for our Borough” and how can he justify that the group “will lead the way to prove *co-operative working over politics for the benefit of our residents*.” when everyone can clearly see that actions do indeed speak louder than words and that petty politics is front and centre of his working party selection criteria, over and above any thought about the benefits to our residents?”

### **Question 5 – Councillor Helen Harvey**

“Following the recent ‘Lichfields’ report re housing needs across the country, if their new methodology is adopted then there will be a reduction in Spelthorne’s housing need requirement from 606 to 489 homes per year (due, perhaps in part, to the effective lobbying of the MHCLG by Cllr Harvey, Cllr Beardsmore and Strategic Planning Officers

directly to the ministry commencing Nov 2019), this means c.1700 less residential units would be required to be built over the 15 year period of the new Local Plan. In the recent consultation it was identified that c.1650 units would need to be accommodated on Green Belt, there is now seemingly no need to build on any Green Belt in Spelthorne.

Given this, and widespread opposition from residents, will the 'leader' confirm that his new administration will remove any proposals to build on our Green Belt from the new Local Plan and furthermore any other developer application to build on our Green Belt will not be supported by Conservative members?"

**Question 6 – Councillor Helen Harvey**

"I am concerned by the apparent delays in progressing our key residential developments in particular at Ceaser Court II and Thameside House. I estimate that every month of delay costs the tax paying residents of Spelthorne c.£25k. How do you plan to recoup these losses and what action will you take to ensure that the Borough is not unnecessarily exposed to the anticipated increase in build costs post Brexit transition?"

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**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, 30 July 2020 at 6.00 pm**

**Present:**

Councillors:

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

**Apologies:** There were none

Councillor C.F. Barnard, The Mayor, in the Chair

**164/20 Minutes**

The minutes of the Council meetings held on 18 June 2020 were agreed subject to the inclusion of Shooting Star Chase as a charity supported by the Mayor in his announcements.

The minutes of the Council meetings held on 25 June and 2 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

**165/20 Disclosures of Interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

**166/20 Announcements from the Mayor**

The Mayor announced that he had been pleased to virtually attend the Surrey Chairman's Mayoral civic meeting. Participants had been addressed by the

Lord Lieutenant of Surrey and the High Sherriff of Surrey and encouraged to seek out those who in their charity work have gone the extra mile and deserve recognition in the Queens honours' list.

He had also been delighted to be able to present the Spelthorne Civic Awards to those nominated at their homes, observing social distancing of course, and reported that they were delighted that he had made the effort to do so.

### **167/20 Announcements from the Leader**

The Leader made the following announcements:

““Good evening everyone and welcome to this Full Council Meeting and the first Leader’s Announcements of the new Administration.

My administration wishes to make a clean break with Mr Harvey’s administration and promote a different kind of local politics in Spelthorne - the announcements we will make this evening will evidence this commitment.

I want it to be known that we are no longer a property investment speculator who happens to provide Council services. We are a local Borough Council which is there to serve our Residents; a Council that will help families, the young, the elderly and the needy; a Council that will help protect the environment and our Green Belt. A Council that is there to promote and help grow the local economy; a Council which will provide critical front-line services to all Residents.

Our objective now is to press this Council’s reset button.

We will - where possible - seek residents’ views, listen to what they have to say, and where appropriate incorporate their views into our plans.

This Council will become more aware of our reason for being, of who we are, and how we are perceived by Residents, business, and the public at large.

At the earliest opportunity we will drop SBC’s strapline “Spelthorne Means Business”. We will obviously support businesses where we can – after all they provide jobs, career and growth opportunities for our Residents, and income security - but we will always put “Residents First”.

“Residents First” will be the philosophy which underpins everything we do.

My next announcement is about the Multi-Party Task Group on Governance

I have previously made public my Administration’s wish to establish a Multi-Party Task Group to review this Council’s governance processes and it’s constitution, including whether we should be moving to a Committee-based system from 2021.

All four elected party leaders have accepted invitations to join this group and I look forward to working together. Our first meeting is in the next couple of weeks.

The move to a committee system will be designed by members for the Monitoring Officer to implement after a full member vote within the chamber.

This is a key priority for the new Administration and again signals a clear break from the historic secretive decision-making practices of Mr Harvey. Once established I will report back to Full Council on next steps. Colleagues, please understand, this will be an inclusive process and there will be an opportunity for members to participate in this critical process.

Full details of this group and all the other Task Group will be published in the next few days.

My next announcement is the Multi-Party Property Investment Task Group

Since becoming Leader, I have reflected on the property acquisitions and the concern of Residents and others outside Spelthorne.

As a result of these concerns, I am pleased to confirm that my Administration is inviting the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake, in the autumn, an independent Peer Review into our corporate finances and property activity.

Please note that Peer Reviews are regularly used by Councils to obtain a constructive and independent perspective to recognise good practice and identify opportunities for improvements. I can provide full assurances that this Council will fully co-operate with the review.

We have listened to concerns raised by Residents, by fellow Councillors, parliamentarians, and professional bodies – including those expressed in the media - relating to the excessive borrowings of the previous Administration.

This new Administration will establish a Task Group to review some of the property investment decisions made by the previous administration. Many of these decisions were taken by a secretive inner cabinet, with Councillors being asked to take or approve decisions at short notice. This is not how things should be run.

We therefore need to fully understand and assess the current and future financial viability of this Investment Portfolio. I will also ask this Group to review the structure of Knowle Green Estates Ltd with a view to it moving away from purchasing properties and instead focusing on the development of housing.

Part of this Group's remit will be to comment on the affordable allocations for schemes which have been proposed by the Council, and to make

recommendations on any changes in policy required to deliver more affordable units under the Council's development schemes.

As part of our Governance Review, we will also look at the membership of the Council's Property Investment Committee. Our objective is to make it more inclusive.

Until these changes are made, and in the interests of openness and transparency, Group Leaders will be kept informed of proposed decisions of the Committee on any major developments. This is an important and positive step forward and a further break with the previous administration.

Let me be clear. This will be a thorough review and investigation showing no fear or favour. This new Administration has nothing to hide.

My next announcement is the establishment of a Local Plan Task Group

I will begin by confirming we have listened to and understood the concerns, worries and frustrations raised by Residents with many of us having supported Residents through the Consultation process.

Although we must form a Local Plan, I would like to assure Residents that we will not be moving forward with those preferred options identified and proposed by Mr Harvey's Local Plan Working Party, as was presented during the consultation.

I have disbanded this Working Party and created a new Task Group that will include cross party members from each of the Borough wards to ensure local concerns and knowledge are considered.

The New Task Group will begin by considering the findings of the consultation and any new recommendations from this, and they will carry out a complete review of the previously identified preferred options, that concerned many Residents.

This will be an inclusive Local Plan Task Group, with cross-party membership and one working elected party member from each ward.

Part of the remit of this group will be to oversee the sensitive subject of the Green Belt and how we can best protect this whilst meeting our legal obligations in developing a new local plan.

My next announcement concerns the Staines Development Group.

In a further signal of our intention to break with the past, I can today announce that the Staines Masterplan Task Group will be renamed the Staines-upon-Thames Development Group. This is not some mere cosmetic change of name – our intention is that the Staines Development Plan group will focus on the Development of Staines, and ALL ward Councillors from Staines Town, Staines South, and Riverside & Laleham will be invited to join this group.



My next announcement concerns Affordable Housing.

As a Council, we have already started to deliver essential affordable units for our Residents. The new administration strongly supports this approach, but we want to go further. We believe we now have a real opportunity to increase the number of affordable units we deliver from our development schemes, which will align with the Council's policies and set an example to private developers, who unfortunately continue to fail to deliver the number and types of affordable units this Borough so badly needs.

Myself and my Deputy are strong advocates for affordable housing - Indeed it is a view held by many colleagues and I will be addressing this in response to a Councillor question later.

My next announcement concerns Climate Change and the need to fast forward!.

I am pleased to announce that Cllr Bob Noble will become Portfolio Holder for Climate & Environment. He is an advocate of climate change and will appoint the Climate Change Task force within the next week.

The new administration takes protection of the environment for this, and future generations, seriously. Whilst the previous Administration's approach aligned closely with delivering the Government's target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050, we want to take steps to enable us as a Council to meet this target much sooner, so that we can pass on a better legacy to future generations of Spelthorne Residents.

I will therefore be asking the new Climate Change Task Group to meet in the near future to make recommendations as to how we can accelerate this process, with more challenging targets and actions for the Council, which will help deliver zero net carbon emissions for this authority much sooner than the target set by the previous administration.

My next announcement concerns the reopening of Leisure Centres.

I am pleased to confirm that the Council's two leisure centres in Staines and Sunbury will be reopening this Saturday, having been closed for some 4 months due to the Government's restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

This follows detailed discussions between the Council and the operator of the centres, Sports and Leisure Management Ltd., to agree a one-off financial support package from the Council for this financial year, which will assist SLM to reopen the centres and keep them running during these continuing difficult times.

Our leisure centres provide a range of essential services which help to support the health and wellbeing of our community, and I know that many of

our Residents are desperate to get back to some form of normality and return to the sports and fitness activities they used to do.

In view of the importance of these centres to so many individual people, clubs and schools, it was essential that we get them open as quickly as possible.

My next announcement concerns Surrey County Council's Unitary Bid.

On 21st July 2020, Surrey County Council's Cabinet decided to promote the concept of a Surrey-wide Unitary Authority covering the whole County. This has already led to the dispatch of a letter from the County Council's Leader to the Secretary of State, outlining this intention.

Surrey Leaders, at their meeting on 17th July, expressed their disappointment at not being consulted ahead of the County's decision to push ahead with these actions.

Although it is said that the former SBC Leader, Mr Harvey, supported a Single Unitary Council at a meeting of Surrey Leaders, the new administration does not.

We recognise the principles of localism, many of which are incompatible with a single unitary authority within Surrey. I am therefore instructing the Chief Executive to:

Firstly, urgently investigate alternative forms of Unitary Authorities and the timing of any such reorganisation that may be more advantageous to Spelthorne and its Residents, including any opportunities to collaborate with neighbouring authorities on this issue, and secondly, present such considerations to the September Full Council considering the emerging Government White Paper on devolution (should it be available at that point), if it insists on the establishment of Unitary Authorities, Combined Authorities and elected Mayors.

In the meantime, I have joined other Borough and District Leaders across Surrey in signing a letter to the Secretary of State registering that a Surrey-wide Unitary is not the optimum solution and that we are committed to exploring what would be.

My next announcement concerns Spelthorne veterans.

We owe much to the men and women of our armed forces, and to those who have served our country so bravely.

The Council is supporting a change that will be made to the next Census, which will see a new question added to ask Residents if they have ever served in the Armed Forces. This will give us a better idea of the number of ex-service personnel living in Spelthorne and help us tailor our services for this community.

They gave much for us, and it is important we support them where we can.

My next announcement concerns how we can help build cleaner, greener, and safer communities

We all want to see a Spelthorne which is safe, clean, and green.

The radical initiative we are proposing will bring together drivers and Residents enabling them to work in partnership to create cleaner, greener, safer communities. We must not demonise drivers but instead recognise that we can work together to achieve common and worthwhile aims.

We will support those Residents who wish to see 20mph zones and roads within their communities. Whilst SBC cannot enforce speed restrictions (this is Surrey County Council's responsibility), we can establish 20mph advisory speed limits. We will be encouraging communities on a street by street basis to petition us in support of us introducing 20mph advisory speed limits in their immediate area.

Details for this will be placed on the Council website for Residents to use. Once the official petition form is submitted, and if there is enough local support, we will erect advisory signage.

Whilst we and the Police cannot enforce advisory speed limits, they will send a clear community message to Surrey County Council AND drivers about how they can help us create a cleaner, greener, safer Borough and help us put Residents First.

We need to all make a difference, and this is a start which I'm sure all will support

My next announcements concern specific and heart-warming community initiatives.

SBC has been working closely with Shepperton resident Diana Moran BEM, also known as the Green Goddess, to share her 'Keep Fit and Carry On' exercise sessions on the Council's website and social media.

During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Diana was brought back to the BBC after 40 years, with her easy-to-follow exercise sessions for the over 65s and people who find exercising difficult. On behalf of Residents and the Council I would like to thank her for all her hard work, energy and wonderful commitment to our community.

The work of the nationally acclaimed Swan Sanctuary in Shepperton has received a welcome boost thanks to the donation of a veterinary ambulance by Heathrow. The Swan Sanctuary was founded by Dorothy Beeson in the early 1980s and has been based in Shepperton since 2005.

The team are on 24-hour alert, 365 days a year. When a 'swan in distress' call comes in, a local rescue squad is on its way within minutes to provide treatment. If the birds are seriously injured, they are transported to the sanctuary via veterinary ambulance and then assessed. Once a swan has been treated and regains its strength, it is transferred to a rehabilitation pen before being released back into its natural habitat.

The Council has been working with the Rotary Club and 'Painting Our World In Silver' to create activity packs for elderly Residents, who may be feeling bored or lonely as a result of the changes brought about by Coronavirus. Many elderly Residents have been forced to self-isolate during the pandemic and users of the Council's Community Centres have been greatly missing the companionship offered by our Centres.

To help tackle the problem, Cllr Robert Noble set about raising funds and worked alongside the Shepperton and District Rotary Club which together donated £2,000. The packs have been distributed via local groups including the Greeno and Fordbridge Centres, Purple Angels, Shepperton Community Support, community foodbanks and Spelthorne's Meals on Wheels service. On behalf of the Council and our Residents I would like to thank Cllr Noble and everyone involved in this tremendous initiative,

My next announcement concerns the establishment of a cross-party working party.

The Financial Reporting Task Group will be looking at how the Council reports financial information and how this can be made more graphical in reporting and much easier to understand.

My next announcement is to update colleagues and Residents on our response to COVID-19.

The Council continues to play a key role in tackling COVID-19 and supporting our communities through the pandemic. Our role has now moved more from emergency response to recovery, supporting our wider society; assisting with the reopening of our High Streets and issuing the Government Grants which are so hugely important to keep businesses afloat.

We have been paying government grants to businesses affected by Coronavirus and to-date have paid 980 retail, leisure and hospitality grants, totalling £12.7 million; and 109 discretionary business grants worth a total of around £508,000.

Our Economic Development staff continue to look for options to support local businesses at this difficult time and our Community Wellbeing team continues to help those in need, with housing and welfare support. Our officers have also been working to minimise the prospect of a second wave, whilst also preparing for the possibility that this will occur.

Our Environmental Health staff continue to work with Surrey Public Health on the development of the county's test and trace system. The infographics we have published on our website and in the Borough Bulletin outline the sheer scale of support this Council has provided since the pandemic began.

The social and economic impacts of this virus have been immense. We are far from being out of the woods, so as a Council we must remain strong and, above all, focused. Our officers are stretched trying to progress our recovery plans and there are some big-ticket items which we must progress, such as the Local Plan, climate change and now Surrey's bid for unitary authority status.

Whilst these pressures remain, we must be mindful of our corporate capacity, particularly when many of our staff have been fully engaged for some four months without respite. All I am saying to you and our Residents is please be patient with us.

On the subject of our staff I would like to say a huge thank-you to all of the Council's teams who have done so much amazing work supporting our communities during such difficult times. We have all seen so many messages of appreciation from Residents of our wards for the support they've received from this authority.

For many, this has been a lifeline that has simply made the difference between life and death. I would therefore ask you all to take this opportunity to show your appreciation again for the fantastic work our staff have delivered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

My next announcement concerns local democracy and Resident engagement.

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has been a cause of great worry and, in some cases, tragic loss for Residents, it has also shown our Borough at its best. The Council stepped up to the plate and our officers and staff were exceptional.

But above all, our community came together. If we are to build a strong connected Council which serves Residents - which is relevant to their lives - we need to involve everyone.

This is why I propose establishing a forum ensuring we engage properly with Residents, to seek their views on what we are doing, and to hear their voice. I am therefore proposing that we establish a Residents Forum to be made up of the Leaders of recognised Residents' Associations (RA).

This will give RA's direct access to Councillors and Officers. We do not want layers of bureaucracy slowing down decision making and frustrating Residents.

We want to ensure we can listen to the concerns and constructive contributions of Residents Associations and act decisively to put Residents First.

People asked what we had been doing in the four weeks since I became Leader.

This ...

We said we would be bold, and we would be different. We said we meant business, and that we would bring multi-party unity to our Council. Outside of dealing with the huge backlog created and left by the previous administration this is what we've been doing. I ask that the majority of the Chamber tonight gets behind these bold new plans for real democracy and do not buy into the spiteful tactics of a few seeking to divide this Chamber again undermining our Residents and your voters. Take this opportunity to join together to bring true democracy to Spelthorne Borough Council!

My final announcement concerns Neighbourhood Grants.

I would like to announce some further assistance to support our communities and help them get back on their feet.

In order to assist Councillors across the chamber with engaging and supporting their local communities, the theme for this year's locality neighbourhood spend will be 'Recovery'.

To assist this process, I am proposing that the sum available for this financial year for all Councillors to spend in their wards be increased to £1,500. I know all of you are anxious to work with your communities and would urge all of you to make the best use of this funding to assist in your localities, in whatever way you can.

Thank You."

**168/20 Announcements from the Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive made the following announcement:

"Whilst we all feel the profound impact of coronavirus, not just on ourselves, but on our loved ones and our communities, we also have a great deal to be thankful for. For the dedication and professionalism of hundreds of essential workers from this Borough, I want to place on record my personal thanks and heartfelt appreciation to all my fellow colleagues who have worked flat-out for the past four and a half months of this emergency to safeguard our most vulnerable and to maintain the public services our communities rely on."

**169/20 Update on the Council's Emergency Response to COVID-19**

The Chief Finance Officer provided the following update to Council on the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's Revenue Budget for the current financial year:

“As promised to Councillors at the Extraordinary Council Meeting (ECM) of 21 May when the Council received a detailed report on the initial estimates impacts on the Council’s 2020-21 Revenue Budget, this is a further update on the estimated impact of COVID-19 on the Council’s Revenue Budget. As the impacts of the pandemic become clearer there will be further updates to councillors. We will also highlight COVID-19 impacts in the normal budget monitoring reports which will go to future Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny meetings. For the 2021 -22 Budget we will be looking at how we can provide greater opportunities to scrutinise draft budget assumptions and options, clearly COVID-19 will have very considerable impacts on the 2021-22 and future budgets.

The focus of this update is primarily on the 2020-21 (i.e. current financial year) Revenue Budget. In the autumn the Government will undertake the next Comprehensive Spending Review setting the high level spending parameters for the public sector for the next three financial years for revenue and next four years for capital. These parameters will be very much driven by the financial impacts of COVID-19. This will in turn drive the 2021-22 Finance Settlement for local government, which hopefully we should receive by Christmas, in which we also await to see if the proposals for negative grant, which would hit this council, have been postponed a further year. The Surrey districts and boroughs are taking some expert advice with respect to the option the Government has provided to Councils to choose whether to bear business rates and council tax COVID-19 related deficits in 2021-22 or spread over three years. In a two tier area the impacts are more complex.

This update is based on our most up to date estimates of the financial impacts of COVID-19 on this Council, as we have been updating those estimates in order to submit a COVID-19 financial impacts return to Government required by end of tomorrow. So the Accountancy team have been liaising with service managers across the Council to confirm impacts to date and their latest estimates for the year.

As presented to the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 21 May due to the uncertainties as to how the pandemic may evolve and the scale of economic impacts we have projected a range of estimates from a pessimistic set of scenarios through a mid range “realistic” to an optimistic case. We are using the realistic figures in our returns to Government. The figures are likely to continue to change as the economic impacts on the residents of our borough become clearer. In particular we await to see the impact of the ending of the furlough scheme and the scale of job losses at the airport and in associated sectors. The Economic Development team are drawing together an economic recovery plan whose initiatives and resourcing will draw on funds from the additional retained business rates we set aside after the 2018-19 “100%” Surrey Business Rates Retention pilot.

On the revenue expenditure impacts, we now have much more certainty as to the extent of the expenditure hit arising from supporting the leisure centres re-opening following the support approved by Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. This will

enable our two leisure centres to reopen from 1<sup>st</sup> August. The swimming pool at Sunbury Leisure Centre requires some repairs so will not be reopening until January 2021 (note the Swimming Pool at Spelthorne Leisure Centre opens on Saturday at same time as rest of the centre). We are aware from confidential feedback from other councils in the south east some with the same operator as us and others with different operators that we have negotiated a relatively less expensive deal for this council than a number of other councils have incurred.

The expenditure on shielded residents has proven significantly less than originally feared which has helped improve our expenditure figures.

The projected range for expenditure COVID-19 revenue impacts is now:

<b>Pessimistic</b>	<b>Realistic</b>	<b>Optimistic</b>
<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
2,121	1,360	1,047

On the income side, as a result of the Government announcement at the beginning of July of a scheme to partially reimburse councils for fees and charges income loss (not including rental loss) our figures have improved since May. The Government scheme deducts the first 5% income from across a council's fees and charges income from a reimbursement of 75% of COVID-19 income loss. This 5% deductible for us equates to approximately £370k. After deducting the 5% the net estimated reimbursement we anticipate on our central scenario is approximately £680,000. This figure is lower than originally anticipated as a result of clarification of the 5% deductible and also as a result of some of our estimated income losses due to COVID-19 having improved on the basis of recent months performance. Not all our fees and charges streams have seen reductions in income as a result of COVID-19, for example Meals on Wheels income has gone up and garden waste income has been maintained.

Excluding impact of potential shortfalls on Elmsleigh Centre rental the overall projected income shortfalls estimates now range from:

<b>Pessimistic</b>	<b>Realistic</b>	<b>Optimistic</b>
<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
3,084	2,019	1,116

It is acknowledged that the scale of the impact on the retail sector of COVID-19 has become clearer. The potential shortfall for the year on Elmsleigh Centre could be approximately £3.3m. However, this can be borne without any impact on the 2020-21 Revenue Budget as a result of cash balances relating to commercial assets which can be used to offset, without reducing the Elmsleigh or the commercial assets sinking funds.



On the commercial assets rentals we have now collected 95.2% of the rent due for the first three months of the financial year and 94% of the rent due for the second three months. This is a much better performance than most other commercial landlords. Of the balance not received yet all but 0.2% is covered by deferral agreement with tenants. We are not anticipating writing off more than 0.2% of the rental income relating to this period at most. Additionally we have been reviewing on a weekly basis our worst case and expected case sinking funds 10 year COVID-19 scenarios. Even on the worst case modelling the £20m of funds we have to date set aside into the sinking funds from a slice of our rental income will be more than enough to cover any commercial rental shortfalls, and therefore to protect the revenue budget and council tax payers from adverse impact. **Therefore we are not assuming any COVID-19 Revenue Budget adverse impact relating to commercial rents.**

Taking into account grant support the net projected range for COVID-19 2020-21 Revenue Budgets is as follows:

		Pessimistic	Realistic	Optimistic
		£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Net Revenue Budget £12.63M</b>				
Net impact on 2020-21 Budget		8,705	6,678	4,963
As percentage of Net Budget		69%	53%	39%
Less Contributions Received to date				
Government Emergency grant & homelessness SCC		-1,027	-1,027	-1,027
A) Rough sleepers		-9	-9	-9
b) Category A residents		-75	-50	-25
Less use of windfall commercial assets savings to offset Elmsleigh shortfall		-3,500	-3,300	-2,800
Less income reimbursemet		-1,164	-679	-192
Less application of contingency within Project Delivery Fund		-500	-500	-500
<b>Net Estimated impact on Revenue Budget</b>		<b>2,430</b>	<b>1,113</b>	<b>410</b>
<b>As percentage of Revenue Budget</b>		<b>19%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>3%</b>

In comparison councillors will recall at the 21<sup>st</sup> May ECM the realistic estimate was £2.2m and the pessimistic scenario was £4.5m. So a realistic estimate of a net impact of £1.1m represents roughly a net £1.1m, improvement, roughly halving the gap, since that report. In turn this means we are now more confident that the upto £2.2m additional supplementary revenue estimate to be funded from reserves approved by Council on 21<sup>st</sup> May will be more than sufficient to offset 2020-21 Revenue impacts. Therefore currently we are not, subject to the earlier caveats about the uncertainties of predicting future COVID-19 impacts, anticipating a need to be making further requests to councillors for additional use of reserves.

A gap of £1.1m represents 9% of our net Revenue Budget. Alternatively the gap is equivalent to 3% of our total cash reserves.”

There were no comments or questions. It was **Resolved** to note the report.

**170/20 Questions from members of the public**

The Mayor reported that, under Standing Order 14, questions had been received from nine members of the public. In view of the number of questions and the fact that several related to the Green Belt and raised the same or similar issues, the Mayor directed that similar questions would be grouped together and one response provided to those.

**Question from Mr. A. Woodward**

“In answer to my earlier question about why Spelthorne Borough Council had not declared a Climate Emergency I was informed that “we do not feel that we must declare a climate emergency in order to deliver meaningful action. We believe in action not words.” Could the Leader detail the meaningful actions that have been taken in the first half of 2020 to address the Climate Emergency?”

**Response from the Leader, Councillor J. Boughtflower:**

“Thank you for your question. The Council sees climate change as an important issue to address in relation to our community and estate. The emergency response on COVID-19 has placed considerable demands on the Council, however, it did not stop us continuing to take actions to reduce our own emissions. We have purchased two electric bikes and two electric pool cars for staff to use, plus two electric vans for use by our operations team. We have also installed a solar array on the West Wing of Knowle Green. In looking at further measures we had solar PV surveys carried out on several more buildings and undertook energy surveys on eight of our buildings to identify energy saving opportunities which we will put to Council to take forward as appropriate. We are currently preparing a tender in conjunction with LASER to ensure our future electricity supply is solely from renewable energy.

On a wider scale we are progressing an on-street Electric Vehicle (EV) charging point trial with Surrey County Council, which will provide 20 on-street charge points in the Borough. We also have a feasibility study being undertaken to assess opportunities for EV charge points in Council car parks.

We actively engaged, albeit remotely, in the development of the Surrey climate change strategy and its proposed actions, which we will now look at in relation to our own estate. Just prior to lockdown a working group on climate change was initiated to drive forward the climate change agenda in the Borough. As I outlined earlier in my Leader’s announcements, I am looking to kick-start this working group again, with a view to the Group making recommendations for more challenging targets and actions for the Council, which will help deliver zero net carbon emissions much sooner than the 2050 target set by the previous administration.”

**Question from Mr. A. McLuskey**

‘In the light of the Green Jobs Challenge Fund recently established by Government to create new jobs in conjunction with local councils and aimed at improving the landscape - will Spelthorne Council commit to seeking funding from this source to enable extra, desirable elements (such as the

rebuilding of the West Lodge) to be added to the scheme for a historically themed Nature Reserve on the former Lord Knyvett estate in Stanwell?’

**Response from the Deputy Leader, Councillor J. McIlroy**

“Thank you for your question Mr McLuskey. The Council welcomes the Government’s announcement about a £40m Green Recovery Challenge Fund (which combines money from the Nature Recovery Fund and Nature for Climate Funding). The intention is for the fund to create a broad range of short and long term jobs such as ecologists, surveyors, nature reserve staff and education workers in environment organisations; and support their suppliers.

In its announcement the Government indicates the funding will help charities and environmental organisations to start work on projects across England to restore nature and tackle climate change. It has also made clear it will be inviting organisations to bid for the money (with details in due course). Once the additional information is provided we will be in a better position to understand the funding mechanisms, whether the Council can assist organisations in gaining access to funding and what the detailed criteria are.”

**Question from Mr. C. Hyde**

“At the Council meeting on 27 February 2020, the Council was asked to consider and respond to a petition which requested “that Spelthorne Borough Council does not release 19 Green Belt areas currently identified in the Local Plan for building or other commercial purposes and to protect the entire existing Green Belt in Spelthorne for generations to come”. The petition had 5,270 signatories when it was received by the Council and the number of signatories has now risen to over 6100. On the basis of a 13:13 Council vote and the Deputy Mayor’s casting vote, the Council voted to support a motion “that the Council notes the petition and keeps the matter under review”. Five months have now passed since the decision to keep the matter under review. What work has been carried out by the Council to take the review forward, what decisions have been reached and, in the event that no decision has been reached to date, when will a decision be forthcoming on the action requested in the petition?”

**Question from Mr Hollingsworth**

“Can the Council please outline what steps are being taken to defend our Green Belt, local Democracy, and our Finances from gross mismanagement? We as a community, at least 6,000 or so, signed a petition to stop GB development. Since the outset of COVID, it has become even more important for our mental and physical health to enjoy our green spaces. If you are a democratic body, SBC, you will not have this "under review" but listen to our wishes. You may come and go but our GB stays. For future generations.”

**Questions from Ms Mulowska**

“I understand that the former Council leader Cllr Ian Harvey (during whose time as leader the current draft local plan was developed) believes that a Brownfield First Policy could protect all our Green Belt sites for the duration of the next local plan i.e. for the next 5 years. Is the new administration and Council leadership going to take this to heart and remove all Green Belt sites

from the draft local plan considering the huge amount of opposition to Green Belt release?"

"In July 2016, Spelthorne Borough Council passed a motion stating that 'the Green Belt in Spelthorne is considered sacrosanct'. If this is the case, why then does the current local plan seek to release 19 Green Belt sites including two sites in Stanwell for warehouses?"

**Question from Ms Pratley**

"Have any of the 19 Green Belt sites been removed from the Draft Local Plan?"

**Questions from Mrs Doerfel**

Spelthorne Borough Council held a Council meeting on 21st July 2016. In that meeting, 2 Councillors proposed the following motion: "The Green Belt in Spelthorne is sacrosanct. This Council confirms that there is no intention whatsoever to allow development of the Green Belt." Let's call this "the Green Belt motion."

That motion was accepted by the Council to be put on the Council Meeting agenda to be debated and voted upon in the Council Meeting on 21st July 2016.

At the Council Meeting of 21st July 2016, 2 other Councillors proposed an amendment to the Green Belt motion to effectively qualify it in a "yeah, but subject to relevant policies and the Special Circumstances caveats" kind of way.

The Council nonetheless debated the Greenbelt motion and carried it - the result was that the Council "Resolved that the Green Belt in Spelthorne is considered 'sacrosanct'. This Council affirms that it will continue to apply its Green Belt planning policies as laid out in the Local Plan and any relevant PPGs (Planning Policy Guidance) from central government. Any inappropriate development on the Green Belt will only be approved if the applicant can demonstrate acceptable 'Very Special Circumstances' as to why it should be approved"

Cambridge dictionary defines "sacrosanct" as meaning "thought to be too important or too special to be changed."

Even with the amended version of the 2016 Greenbelt motion which was carried, the Council did nothing to actually refuse or amend the wording of "sacrosanct" - what the council did was replace the part of it which referred to no intention to allow development on Greenbelt with the qualification appended to the "sacrosanct" part and eventually carried it.

Cambridge dictionary defines "protect" as meaning "to keep someone or something safe from injury, damage or loss." This is a much lower threshold and standard than "sacrosanct" whose meaning is unequivocal.

In February 2020 the Council was compelled to debate a Petition which asked the Council in summary not to release the 19 Greenbelt sites identified in the Local Plan for development, and to protect Greenbelt in Spelthorne. Despite consensus and speeches that nobody wanted to build on Greenbelt and that it should be protected, the Council voted to merely note the petition and keep it under review.

Given the intervening pandemic and implications of COVID19 which represents a massive change in circumstances and underlines the need for greater environmental protections such that it begs the question whether the current Local Plan remains either current or local, and given the Council is obliged to make good on its resolution regarding the Greenbelt Petition per the February 2020 council meeting:

1. why can't the Council now debate or commit in a Council Meeting as it did in 2016, to protect Spelthorne's Greenbelt, even if such commitment is subject to the same kind of caveat or amendment as the motion in 2016?
2. if the Council can do so, when will it do this and why has it not been done already?
3. If the Council feels it cannot do so, then was it wrong or acting unlawfully when it did so in 2016?
4. Does the Council consider the word "protect" be more restrictively binding than the word "sacrosanct" including if qualified by the caveat which enabled the 2016 Greenbelt motion to be carried?"

#### **Response from the Leader, Councillor J. Boughtflower**

"A significant number of questions have been received asking for the removal of all the proposed site allocations in the green belt from the Local Plan (which is currently under review). As many of the questions overlap one another I will set out a single response to cover all the points which have been made. I understand why this is an issue which is close to residents hearts.

Before delving into the detail, I want to acknowledge the petition which now has over 6,000 signatures. It is always positive to see local democracy in action and to hear peoples' views. However, as a Council we also have a duty to consider the wider public benefit (we are a borough of over 90,000 residents). In terms of the Local Plan this is about being able to demonstrate that we can provide the housing, employment, retail and other uses needed for the next 25 years. There are a significant number of legislative requirements set down by central government which the Council cannot legally set to one side. This is the context within which we as a Council have to make our decisions.

It has indeed been many months since the decision of the Council was made to keep under review the potential release of Green Belt sites in the new Local Plan, and I will set out what work has been undertaken since then.

The Strategic Planning team has been analysing the responses to the Preferred Options consultation, which closed on 21 January 2020. The team was then redeployed to the COVID-19 response and work was therefore temporarily paused. However the Consultation Response document has now

been completed ready for Members to agree this for publication. This sets out all the comments made and officer feedback but does not make any decisions on the future direction of the Local Plan.

Other work currently being undertaken relates to housing need and viability. These are important pieces of evidence that Members will be reviewing when deciding on the content of the Local Plan before the next round of consultation scheduled for early 2021. Officers are also compiling an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which sets out where there are existing deficits in infrastructure such as healthcare, education, highway improvements, and where investment is needed through developer contributions to ensure the sustainable and managed growth of our Borough.

Work has also been progressing on the Staines Masterplan and this will sit alongside the Local Plan, showing how the town will be planned for in terms of housing, retail, employment and infrastructure.

All these work streams and pieces of evidence will be reviewed and responded to by both the Local Plan Working Party, which as outlined in my Leaders Announcements will comprise a cross-party membership of councillors, and Cabinet before any decisions can be made on the Plan, taking account of responses to the consultation. The Green Belt is clearly a key issue but must be reviewed in light of all the evidence on impacts arising from releasing and not releasing Green Belt sites, once this evidence is complete and presented to Members over the coming months.

What isn't possible is for the option of releasing Green Belt to be taken off the table as a point of principle, as we are required by national planning policy to assess all reasonable alternatives to meeting housing need. Whilst developing in the Green Belt will inevitably receive objections from local residents, we are still duty bound to consider that option in light of all the available evidence.

As it stands at the present time none of the 19 potential site allocations in the green belt which were consulted on at the end of last year have been removed from the draft local plan. When we consulted it was made clear that the consultation was not the end of the process. Councillors on the Local Plan Working Party will shortly be considering the responses from the consultation exercise, and using this and additional technical evidence to inform discussions on individual site allocations. It would be premature at this stage for the cross party Local Plan Working Party to make decisions on any site allocations.

In response to a previous motion in 2016 the Council stated that the Green Belt is sacrosanct and no development will be allowed. However the situation has changed between now and then. As a Council we must consider the situation as it stands now. When producing a Local Plan we have to assess all options available to us for trying to meet our housing need in full. One of those options is to release Green Belt in order to meet our need. National planning policy allows for Local Plans to redraw Green Belt boundaries if we have

'exceptional circumstances' for doing so, and this has been established through court cases to include meeting housing need.

We have taken specialist Counsel's advice on the lawfulness of the proposed notice of motion from Cllr Doerfel, which have also referred to the 2016 debate. Counsel has advised that there are a number of legal difficulties with the terms of the Motion which would lead the Council into adopting an approach which is not consistent with the NPPF. There is a statutory requirement to take that guidance into account, and the emerging Local Plan must be consistent with it to be sound. Counsel goes on to state that the proposed motion and/or a vote to adopt it would be 'tainted by legal error', and therefore it would be capable of being quashed in the High Court. The Council cannot follow such a proposal knowing that it would not be lawful. For these reasons we cannot debate the proposed notice of motion as suggested by Mrs Doerfel. This is not to stifle the democratic process as there is already a clear process for the Council to follow, as I have outlined above.

There has been much discussion and two public consultations so far on the new Local Plan and further consultation next year. The process of preparing a Local Plan provides opportunity for anyone to object to any element of it, including specific site allocations. This process cannot be pre-empted by a decision to remove Green Belt sites from consideration and to do so would be unlawful as it is contrary to national guidance on producing Local Plans.

However what I can advise residents and councillors is that we will keep in mind the level of objection to releasing Green Belt sites when taking the Local Plan forward to the next stage. In doing so, we are keeping the matter under review as promised in response to the motion to Council in February.

**Question from Mr Hollingsworth**

"How, may I ask, will you defend Spelthorne Borough Council's financial position given rental deferrals that have put a hole in the budget, the result of an unwise debt-funded property frenzy?"

**Question from Mr. M. Beecher**

"How does the Council propose to recover the £4.5 million loss in revenue following the 18-month rent deferral agreed in secret with 'WeWork' and further losses from other rent deferrals?"

**Response from the Deputy Leader, Councillor J. McIlroy:**

"Thank you for the questions. I will explain later why it is in the interests of council tax payers for such negotiations to be undertaken in private. I do, however, understand the concerns of residents, particularly when they are reading press coverage which is not wholly accurate. It is partially in response to these concerns that the Leader is setting up the Leader's Property Investment Review Working Group to review how we move forward.

In respect of the financial position, I am pleased to report that, contrary to the statement that 'rental deferrals have put a hole in the budget', Spelthorne

Borough Council's financial position is better than many councils impacted by COVID-19.

For the first three months of the financial year the Council has received 95% of the rent due, with all but 0.15% of the balance covered by rent deferral agreements with tenants. Of those rent deferrals, 70% will have been received by 31 March 2021. For the period June to September 2020 we have received to date 93.6% of the rent due, and all but 0.5% of the balance is covered by rent deferral agreements, of which 72% will be received by 31 March 2021. These percentages reflect that We-Work rental due for the March and June quarter days have been received in full.

To be clear - there is no financial hole in the 2020-21 budget. Only around 0.2% at most may end up being written off.

The Council has been extremely prudent in light of COVID-19, and as set out in the Extraordinary Council Meeting report of 21 May 2020, we have taken a number of proactive steps to maximise income. For example we have:

1. Set aside £20m from rental streams to date, to provide a cushion against future temporary drops in rental income, and
2. Updated our sinking fund scenarios to look at worst case and expected case COVID-19 scenarios for the next 10 years.

I can report that even on the worst case scenarios, the sinking fund balances are more than sufficient to ensure no impact from any shortfalls in rental income streams on the Revenue Budget or council taxpayers over the next 10 years. After financing costs and contribution to sinking funds are taken into account, the Council has budgeted for £10m net contribution from its commercial assets in the current financial year towards the cost of provision of services for residents, and we remain confident that this will be the net contribution received.

Reference has been made by one local resident to 'gross mismanagement' of the Council's finances and an 'unwise debt funded property frenzy'. I have already set out the strength of our financial position and our investment portfolio even in the face of COVID-19. It is difficult to see how mismanagement, as referred to by Mr Hollingsworth could lead to an income receipt of over 93% in the first six months of this year, well ahead of the industry average. This authority has a professional team of officers, with an extensive private sector background, who are well used to managing property portfolios of this size.

One of the questions refers to a "secret deal" with a particular tenant. In order for the Council to protect the interests of council taxpayers, it is important that tenants feel able to have early and honest discussions with us as their landlord. If they are facing financial challenges, we need to discuss such matters in a 'safe environment' in order to have the best chance of negotiating deals which best protect the Council's financial interests. It is for that reason



that we have to treat the detail of the discussions as commercially confidential.

With respect to the specific rent free arrangement raised by Mr Hollingsworth, which has been commented on in press as a result of leaked confidential papers, I can confirm that this does not create any financial hole in the Council's Revenue Budget. This will be spread over a number of future periods and can be accommodated through Sinking Fund adjustments without any reduction in the amount of surplus being passed to the Revenue Budget to support the provision of services."

**Question from Mrs. C. Nichols**

"Covid 19

Nationally published pillar1 and 2 data shows that Spelthorne continues to experience occasional Covid 19 positive cases. Covid 19 will flare up again in the Autumn without effective test and trace, face masks across all age groups in crowded public spaces as well as enclosed spaces, and discipline in following separation distances.

September will present vulnerable residents with a particular challenge when children – the older ones of whom are thought to be a vector for Covid 19 transmission – return to school. This is a particular problem in Lower Sunbury where thousands of children discharge onto Green Street during term time.

Spelthorne has worked tirelessly to help the community through its Support4Spelthorne scheme. However, the Borough Bulletin gives no indication of a role for the Council in emerging local test and trace programmes although this is the level of local government that is very well informed as to where residents are located.

How is Spelthorne working with Surrey's public health department to ensure that residents have regular up-to-date information on where the local flare ups are occurring? When can residents expect to receive an information leaflet on a multi-agency action plan for control of Covid 19 as it applies to Spelthorne?"

**Response from the Leader, Councillor J. Boughtflower**

"Thank you for your question. Like the rest of the country, Spelthorne will continue to experience occasional COVID-19 positive cases and we will be monitoring those closely through the NHS pillar 1 and 2 data, which we now have access to. Current NHS data at 27 July 2020 shows that in a 7 day testing period of Spelthorne residents there were 753 tests and 3 positive cases.

The Government has proposed a range of measures to prevent flare up of COVID-19 cases, including the Test and Trace programme and requiring the wearing of facemasks in situations where effective 2m social distancing is not possible.

Direction on the NHS Test and Trace programme comes from Public Health England (PHE). In order to support this programme, Surrey County Council's

Public Health team are required to lead on local outbreak planning, and they have published a local outbreak control action plan, which can be found on their website. The [link to this information](#) will be provided in the written response to this question.

Whilst this plan deals with all local COVID-19 outbreaks, it also identifies and prioritises preventative and early intervention measures for key settings such as care homes, schools and other high-risk locations, including specific actions which must be followed in those settings in the event of an outbreak.

There is considerable guidance for schools on how to operate safely in a COVID-19 environment and many of the schools that have remained open during the past few months already have good operating procedures in place to minimise risk. The risks associated with children leaving school at the end of each day would have been considered in this guidance, although it is worth noting that transmission of the virus in the open is reported as having considerably less risk than in enclosed spaces.

The national NHS Test and Trace scheme has continued to evolve over recent weeks, along with the local outbreak plan. Any article in the July Bulletin would therefore have been out of date very quickly. The Borough's role is also still evolving and its exact role in Test and Trace and other functions will be dependent on the nature of any outbreak. In such situations, Public Health England will consider the severity and spread of any outbreak and will, in conjunction with Surrey Public Health, determine the need for an outbreak control team. Our Environmental Health Team has been involved in the development of this plan and will play a key role in controlling outbreaks within certain settings in the borough.

The Local Outbreak plan has a very clear communication strategy specifically tailored to the type of outbreak. The communications approach will include traditional offline channels and networks, as well targeted digital communications to ensure messages can reach residents within a few hours of a notification of a local outbreak. Our communications team have regular meetings with the Surrey-wide communications group so will, as they have done to date, transmit relevant information through Spelthorne's communication channels. It is not currently planned to produce any leaflets locally as the next steps for COVID-19 are still evolving and the overall Surrey Plan has mechanisms in it to ensure effective local dissemination of information for local outbreaks of the virus, including how the multi-disciplinary action plan will work. In the meantime, in order to raise awareness, Surrey County Council has launched a phased communication campaign entitled "Keep Surrey Safe". A specific toolkit for businesses is also due to be launched this week, which will incorporate advice from the Department of Health, including action cards for specific types of businesses."

**171/20 Petitions**

There were none.

**172/20 Report from the Leader of the Council**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J. Boughtflower, presented the reports of the Cabinet meetings held on 8 April, 15 July and 22 July which outlined the matters the Cabinet had decided since the last Council meeting.

**173/20 Report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee**

The Chairman of the Audit Committee, Councillor L. Nichols, presented his report which outlined the matters the Committee had considered since the last Council meeting.

**174/20 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.

**175/20 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.

Council noted the report subject to the amendment of the reference to the Surrey County Council Parking Task Group which was actually the Spelthorne Joint Committee Parking Task Group.

**176/20 Report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee**

The Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor T. Lagden, presented his report which outlined the matters the Committee had decided since the last Council meeting.

**177/20 Appointment of a representative Trustee**

In view of the length of the agenda and as this item had previously been listed to be heard at the Council meeting in April which was postponed, it was agreed that this item be brought forward to be heard before the Motions listed as agenda item 15.

It was proposed by Councillor J. Boughtflower and seconded by Councillor J. McIlroy and

**Resolved** that Matthew Calvert be appointed as a Council representative trustee to serve on the Laleham Charities – Village Hall and Recreation Ground for a further four year period to February 2024.

**178/20 Motions**

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

Councillor H. Harvey moved and Councillor O. Rybinski seconded the following motion:

“This Council resolves to implement a change in decision-making governance arrangements, comprising the cessation of the current Leader and Cabinet model of governance and the implementation of a Full Committee model of governance. This is to be developed during 2020 with a view to the arrangements taking effect at the earliest opportunity, but no later than the commencement of the next Council Municipal Year in May 2021, subject to a legally and constitutionally robust process. The changes are to be led by the Monitoring Officer and the Members Code of Conduct committee and agreed by the Council.”

Councillor J. Doerfel, proposed the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor V. Siva:

“This Council resolves to implement a change in decision-making governance arrangements, comprising the cessation of the current Leader and Cabinet model of governance and the implementation of a Full Committee model of governance. This is to be developed during 2020 with a view to the arrangements taking effect at the earliest opportunity, but no later than the commencement of the next Council Municipal Year in May 2021, subject to a legally and constitutionally robust process. The changes are to be led by the Monitoring Officer and the Members Code of Conduct committee- *debated* and agreed by the Council.”

The amendment was carried and the new substantive motion put to the vote. A recorded vote was requested by Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley. The recorded vote was as follows:

<b>FOR (20)</b>	Cllrs Bateson, Beardsmore, Brar, Cornes, Doerfel, R. Dunn, S. Dunn, Fidler, Grant, H. Harvey, I. Harvey, Lagden, Nichols, Rybinski, Saliagopoulos, Sexton, Siva, Smith-Ainsley, Spoor, Vinson
<b>AGAINST (17)</b>	Cllrs ~Boughtflower, McIlroy, Attewell, Barnard, C. Barratt, R. Barratt, Buttar, Chandler, Gething, Gibson, Harman, Islam, Leighton, Madams, Mitchell, Noble, Sider,
<b>ABSTAIN (2)</b>	J. Doran, S. Doran

The substantive motion was carried.

The second motion was proposed by Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley who, under Standing Order 28.2, proposed a variation to Council Standing Order 8.3. and moved “8.3 little ‘f’ be amended to prevent the Leader assigning all

the Outside Bodies to his own party as opposed to the councillors best suited to carry out these roles.”

This was seconded by Councillor D. Saliagopoulos and, in accordance with Standing Order 28.2, was adjourned without discussion, to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

It had been moved by Councillor I. Beardsmore and seconded by Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley to suspend Standing Order 5.1 and continue the meeting until the end of the business.

The motion was lost and the meeting adjourned at 9.00pm with the remaining business to be carried over to the next ordinary meeting.

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## MINUTES OF THE SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting of Spelthorne Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames on Thursday, 10 September 2020 at 6.00 pm

### Present:

#### Councillors:

M.M. Attewell	S.M. Doran	T. Lagden
C.L. Barratt	R.D. Dunn	V.J. Leighton
R.O. Barratt	S.A. Dunn	M.J. Madams
C. Bateson	T. Fidler	L. E. Nichols
I.J. Beardsmore	N.J. Gething	O. Rybinski
J.R. Boughtflower	M. Gibson	D. Saliagopoulos
A. Brar	K.M. Grant	J.R. Sexton
R. Chandler	A.C. Harman	R.W. Sider BEM
J.H.J. Doerfel	I.T.E. Harvey	V. Siva
J.T.F. Doran	N. Islam	J. Vinson

Councillor C.F. Barnard, The Mayor, in the Chair

**Apologies:** Apologies were received from Councillors H. Harvey, J. McIlroy, A.J. Mitchell, R.J. Noble, R.A. Smith-Ainsley

#### **191/20 Disclosures of Interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

#### **192/20 Motion**

In accordance with Standing Order 7.1 (d) the Council received a Notice of Motion signed by the following five councillors: I.J. Beardsmore, C. Bateson, S.A. Dunn, J. Sexton and V. Siva.

Councillor I.J. Beardsmore moved and Councillor C. Bateson seconded the motion:

“This Council is deeply concerned that the tragic events surrounding the death of 7 year old Zane Gbangbola, and the paralysing of his father have not been adequately dealt with. The tragedy occurred during the floods of 2014 when an old waste site behind the family’s house was inundated with water. We believe crucial evidence on the potentially toxic nature of the site has been ignored. The recent claims of the dumping of toxic waste behind the house by

a nearby military institution, only serves to make it more important that the truth behind this terrible incident be uncovered.

To this end within 14 working days this Council resolves to:

1) Write to the Secretary of State for the Home Department in the strongest possible terms expressing its deep unease and anger at the way this issue has been dealt with so far and

2) Call for an immediate, full Independent Panel Inquiry (similar to Hillsborough) into this tragedy and all the events surrounding it.

That

3) this letter to the Secretary of State is open to be signed by the leaders of all political groups on Spelthorne Council and

4) the letter is featured prominently on Spelthorne Council's web site and in attendant Council publicity.

Councillor I.J. Beardsmore called for a recorded vote on the motion.

The voting was as follows:

FOR (31)	J.R. Boughtflower, M.M. Attewell, C. Barnard, C. Barratt, R.O. Barratt, C. Bateson, I.J. Beardsmore, A. Brar, R. Chandler, J.H. Doerfel, J.T. Doran, S.M. Doran, R.D. Dunn, S.A. Dunn, T. Fidler, N.J. Gething, M. Gibson, K. Grant, A.C. Harman, I.T. Harvey, N. Islam, T. Lagden, V.J. Leighton, M.J. Madams, L.E. Nichols, O. Rybinski, D. Saliagopoulos, J.R. Sexton, R.W. Sider, V. Siva, J. Vinson.
AGAINST	None
ABSTAIN	None

The motion was carried.

**Resolved** that the Council will:

1) Write to the Secretary of State for the Home Department in the strongest possible terms expressing its deep unease and anger at the way this issue has been dealt with so far and

2) Call for an immediate, full Independent Panel Inquiry (similar to Hillsborough) into this tragedy and all the events surrounding it.

That

3) this letter to the Secretary of State is open to be signed by the leaders of all political groups on Spelthorne Council and



4) the letter is featured prominently on Spelthorne Council's web site and in attendant Council publicity.

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## MINUTES OF THE SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting of Spelthorne Borough Council held remotely by Skype video conferencing on Thursday, 24 September 2020 at 6.00 pm

### Present:

#### Councillors:

M.M. Attewell	S.M. Doran	M.J. Madams
C.L. Barratt	R.D. Dunn	J. McIlroy (Deputy Leader)
R.O. Barratt	S.A. Dunn	L. E. Nichols
C. Bateson	T. Fidler	R.J. Noble
I.J. Beardsmore	N.J. Gething	O. Rybinski
J.R. Boughtflower (Leader)	M. Gibson	D. Saliagopoulos
A. Brar	K.M. Grant	J.R. Sexton
S. Buttar	A.C. Harman (Deputy Mayor)	R.W. Sider BEM
R. Chandler	H. Harvey	R.A. Smith-Ainsley
J.H.J. Doerfel	I.T.E. Harvey	B.B. Spoor
J.T.F. Doran	V.J. Leighton	J. Vinson

Councillor C.F. Barnard, The Mayor, in the Chair

#### Apologies:

Apologies were received from Councillors N.L. Cornes, N. Islam and V. Siva

The Mayor gave permission for Councillor D. Saliagopoulos to address the Council before consideration of the agenda items. Councillor Saliagopoulos offered her apologies to the Chief Executive, Daniel Mouawad for the brusque tone and manner she had used towards him at the end of the Council meeting in July 2020.

#### **202/20 Disclosures of Interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

#### **203/20 Motions on Surrey County Council's proposals to form a Unitary Authority**

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

**Motion 1**

In accordance with Standing Order 20.13, Councillor J.R. Boughtflower proposed an alteration to the first motion after receiving amendments from Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley:

“In response to SCCs recently publicised proposal, this Council strongly opposes a single Surrey-wide Unitary Authority and will write to Tim Oliver and SCC accordingly.”

The Council gave its consent to the alteration.

The motion was seconded by Councillor J. McIlroy.

The motion was debated and unanimously carried.

**Resolved** that in response to SCCs recently publicised proposal, this Council strongly opposes a single Surrey-wide Unitary Authority and will write to Tim Oliver and Surrey County Council accordingly.

**Motion 2**

In accordance with Standing Order 20.13, Councillor J.R. Boughtflower proposed an alteration to the second motion after receiving amendments from Councillor R.A. Smith-Ainsley:

“This Council is concerned by the prospect of a Government White paper as an attack on Local Government and local democracy. While the Council is open to taking part in discussions about Unitary Authorities it does not support Centralisation by National Government and recognises the value and contribution made already by this authority. In doing so it will only endorse change that actively improves the quality and provision of services available to residents and that demonstrably increases local democracy and accountability.

The Council will write to Mr Tim Oliver to this effect and express our concerns over the manner the proposals were published in particular the lack of prior consultation of and dialog with existing borough, town and parish councils in Surrey, specifically Spelthorne Borough Council.”

The Council gave its consent to the alteration.

The motion was seconded by Councillor J. McIlroy.

The motion was debated and unanimously carried.

**Resolved** that:

This Council is concerned by the prospect of a Government White paper

as an attack on Local Government and local democracy. While the Council is open to taking part in discussions about Unitary Authorities it does not support Centralisation by National Government and recognises the value and contribution made already by this authority. In doing so it will only endorse change that actively improves the quality and provision of services available to residents and that demonstrably increases local democracy and accountability.

The Council will write to Mr Tim Oliver to this effect and express our concerns over the manner the proposals were published in particular the lack of prior consultation of and dialog with existing borough, town and parish councils in Surrey, specifically Spelthorne Borough Council.

### **Motion 3**

In accordance with Standing Order 20.13, Councillor J.R. Boughtflower proposed an alteration to the third motion after receiving amendments from Councillor I.J. Beardsmore:

“This Council directs that all Local Government Structures be fully explored to ascertain the best options for Spelthorne and its residents. As part of this exploration, the Council expects to engage in active dialogue with neighbouring authorities about partnerships and other opportunities. A report on this would then be considered by Full Council.”

The Council gave its consent to the alteration.

The motion was seconded by Councillor T. Fidler.

The motion was debated and unanimously carried.

### **Resolved that:**

This Council directs that all Local Government Structures be fully explored to ascertain the best options for Spelthorne and its residents. As part of this exploration, the Council expects to engage in active dialogue with neighbouring authorities about partnerships and other opportunities. A report on this would then be considered by Full Council.

### **Motion 4**

Councillor T. Fidler moved and Councillor S.A. Dunn seconded the fourth motion:

“This Council recognises the importance of residents’ interests in the future of its local government and will commit to informing residents about progress in relation to opportunities for the future structure of Local Government in Spelthorne. The Council should consider methods of measuring public opinion, along with the cost effectiveness of such options, including the use of a referendum as outlined in the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).”

The motion was debated and unanimously carried.

**Resolved** that:

This Council recognises the importance of residents' interests in the future of its local government and will commit to informing residents about progress in relation to opportunities for the future structure of Local Government in Spelthorne. The Council should consider methods of measuring public opinion, along with the cost effectiveness of such options, including the use of a referendum as outlined in the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).

## Recommendations of the Cabinet

### Cabinet meeting held on 23 September 2020

#### 1. Replacement of Spelthorne Leisure Centre

- 1.1 Cabinet considered a report (attached) on the replacement of Spelthorne Leisure Centre.
- 1.2 The current Spelthorne Leisure Centre in Staines-upon-Thames had served the borough well but was likely to be nearing the end of its useful life by the end of 2021. In view of the importance of this Centre to the community, a feasibility exercise was undertaken to assess options for replacing the current facility. Cabinet had decided in January 2020 to pursue the development of a new leisure centre which met modern standards and today's customer expectations.
- 1.3 To ensure that the Council is able to progress with the proposals to develop a new Spelthorne Leisure Centre before the current facility becomes unviable to operate, Cabinet agreed amendments to the design of the new centre and modifications to meet the full Passivhaus standard, providing some of the strictest environmental standards currently specified for new buildings in terms of energy use, CO2 emissions, waste and internal air quality standards, and making this the first leisure centre in the UK to fully meet these standards.
- 1.4 Cabinet also agreed the submission of a planning application for the site and to delegate the decision on the selection of the contractor for the construction of the new centre to the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Leisure in conjunction with the Deputy Chief Executive.
- 1.5 **Cabinet recommends that Council approves** a supplementary capital estimate outlined in the confidential Appendix 5 to the report (attached as an exempt item) to cover the projected costs of developing the new centre.

#### 2. Victory Place Construction Costs

- 2.1 Cabinet considered an exempt report (attached as an exempt item) on the construction costs for Victory Place, Ashford. This development would provide much needed key worker (a version of affordable) and S106 affordable, housing primarily for the Borough's key workers including adjacent NHS staff.
- 2.2 In order to provide an additional 19 units over and above the initial feasibility, for which Cabinet gave its approval in December 2018, a further capital spend for construction works was required.
- 2.3 **Cabinet recommends that Council approves** the increase in Capital spend for construction works, from £16.25m to £25.93m.

Councillor J.R. Boughtflower  
*Leader of the Council*

**22 October 2020**

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**Cabinet****23 September 2020**

<b>Title</b>	Replacement of Spelthorne Leisure Centre		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision and a recommendation to Council		
<b>Report Author</b>	Lee O'Neil, Deputy Chief Executive Richard Mortimer, Property Development Adviser Jennifer Medcraft, Communications Manager		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Rose Chandler	<b>Confidential</b>	Main report: No Appendix 5: Yes
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Clean and Safe Environment		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>Cabinet is asked to:</b></p> <p><b>(a) Note the results of the consultation exercise on proposals for a new Spelthorne Leisure Centre (“the new centre”) undertaken in February – April 2020, seeking the views of residents, businesses and other stakeholders on proposals for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The revised location,</li> <li>• The proposed design and facilities mix for the new centre;</li> </ul> <p><b>(b) Approve the amendments to the design of the new centre as outlined in Appendix 4;</b></p> <p><b>(c) Approve modifications to the design of the new centre to meet the full Passivhaus standard;</b></p> <p><b>(d) Agree to the submission of a planning application for the development of the new centre on the proposed site outlined in Appendix 1, with the proposed facilities mix outlined in Appendix 2;</b></p> <p><b>(e) To delegate the decision regarding the selection of the contractor for the construction of the new centre to the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Leisure in conjunction with the Deputy Chief Executive;</b></p> <p><b>(f) Recommend to Council a supplementary capital estimate outlined in the confidential Appendix 5 to cover the projected costs of developing the new centre.</b></p>		
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	To ensure that the Council can progress with proposals to develop a new Spelthorne Leisure Centre before the current facility becomes unviable to operate.		

## 1. Key issues

### Background information

- 1.1 The current Spelthorne Leisure Centre in Staines-upon-Thames has served the borough well, but it is likely that by the end of 2021 this facility will be nearing the end of its useful life. It is a well-used facility which in 2019/20 had 507,845 visitors, 3,361 fitness members and 1,737 children registered on the centre's learn to swim scheme. The facility is also used by 8 schools for swimming lessons in addition to other school sports festivals such as indoor athletics, indoor football and swimming galas.
- 1.2 In view of the importance of this centre to the community, a feasibility exercise has been undertaken to assess options for replacing the current facility.
- 1.3 The options of refurbishing the current centre or rebuilding a new centre on the current site were considered and deemed not to be viable for the reasons outlined in paragraphs 1.2 and 1.7 respectively of the [report to Cabinet dated 29 January 2020](#).
- 1.4 Cabinet therefore made a decision to pursue the development of a new leisure centre which meets modern standards and today's customer expectations; and asked officers to identify a new location for this facility.

### Proposed location

- 1.5 In seeking a new location a range of criteria were considered which are outlined in paragraphs 1.5 – 1.6 of the report to Cabinet dated 29 January 2020.
- 1.6 A public consultation exercise was held in summer 2018 on proposals to build the new leisure centre on Staines Park. Despite strong support overall for a new leisure centre, there was significant local concern over the use of Staines Park for this facility. The Council therefore made a decision in September 2018 to seek an alternative location for the new leisure centre.
- 1.7 An extensive evaluation process was subsequently undertaken to identify alternative options for the relocation of the Spelthorne Leisure Centre, which identified that if the originally proposed facilities mix was modified, the most viable site for a new centre was the open space between the current leisure centre and the Knowle Green Council offices (site X in **Appendix 1**), but that in order for the new facility to fit on this site, this location would have to be combined with the existing leisure centre site (site Y in **Appendix 1**), which would be used as car parking for the new centre. By phasing the development it would be possible for the current leisure centre to remain open for as long as possible until the new centre is operational.
- 1.8 The proposed location is land owned by Spelthorne, not in the Green Belt and is not leased to any third parties. Although the open space (site X) is currently designated as public open space, the use of this site for a new leisure facility would ensure that no designated parks, recreation grounds or other significant community uses are affected.
- 1.9 A usage survey has been undertaken during school term and outside of term-time that demonstrates site X is only used minimally by the public.
- 1.10 A range of technical studies have also been completed which have confirmed the suitability of the proposed site for a leisure centre development.

### **Proposed facilities mix**

- 1.11 A detailed feasibility exercise has been undertaken to establish the optimum and most flexible facilities mix which should be provided at the new leisure centre, taking into account the need to remove the full-size 3G pitch originally planned, and the size of the site which is now being proposed for the development. This work, which included the development of a detailed business case, was undertaken by the Sports Consultancy, who have extensive expertise in assisting local authorities in the development of new leisure facilities.
- 1.12 This work has taken into consideration a range of factors including Spelthorne's leisure needs analysis, the borough's current and future demographics, current industry data and the Council's key drivers, including the need to maximise the financial viability of the new centre where possible. Work was also undertaken with local sports clubs to understand their preferences for facilities within the centre and feedback from over 2,300 consultee responses from the public consultation undertaken in 2018 was also taken into consideration. The proposed facilities mix arising from these exercises is outlined in **Appendix 2**.

### **Consultation process and results**

- 1.13 A consultation exercise on the Council's revised proposals was undertaken earlier this year, building on the information gathered from the first consultation undertaken in summer 2018.
- 1.14 This second consultation exercise was launched on 28 February 2020, starting with a two day drop-in event at the current Spelthorne Leisure Centre. The consultation process was originally planned to run until 27 March 2020 but, in view of the developing COVID-19 crisis, it was decided to extend the deadline for responses to 10 April 2020.
- 1.15 The attached report (**Appendix 3**) outlines the consultation process undertaken and the responses to the questions posed in the questionnaire, which sought comments on:
- (a) The proposed location for the new leisure centre,
  - (b) The proposed revised facilities mix, and
  - (c) Our design concept for the new centre.
- 1.16 The headline results from consultation are as follows:
- (a) 97% of respondents said they were in favour of the proposed location for the new leisure centre.
  - (b) 92% of respondents said that the range of facilities would meet their needs.
  - (c) Of the proposed facilities mix:
    - i) 75% said they would use the 25m swimming pool and 52% would use the learner pool and the splash zone for children.
    - ii) Nearly 59% would be likely to use the health and fitness suite
    - iii) 78% would use the multi-activity studio and spin studio
    - iv) 31% would use the interactive climbing facility

- v) 52% would use the sports hall and squash courts
  - vi) 63% said they would use the café
  - vii) 48% would be interested in a roof garden
  - viii) 67% found car parking important
  - ix) 30% would be using the bike sheds
- (d) Comments regarding additional facilities that people wanted to see included:
- i) 16% of those comments related to the need for more studio space, either for them to hold more people or an additional studio, citing the fact that demand exceeds supply for the classes available at the current Leisure Centre;
  - ii) A small number of people thought the centre should contain a 50m pool, waterslides, diving boards and larger changing rooms.
- (e) Of the additional comments received from a small number of people the main themes included:
- i) Environmental issues - the need for a design which was as environmentally sustainable as possible, concerns about noise, light pollution and traffic during construction.
  - ii) Parking, bike storage area – positioning of spaces and lighting etc.

1.17 The results of the consultation process have been discussed by the Council's Leisure Centre Development Working Group (LCDWG). This comprises of the Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services, the Deputy Chief Executive, the Property Development Advisor, the Communications Manager and the Sport and Facilities Manager.

1.18 Taking into account the results of the consultation process, including the specific comments made, the LCDWG agreed that a number of minor amendments should be made to the design of the new centre to take into account some of the comments made by respondents to the questionnaire (e.g. in relation to the availability of studio space). The LCDWG also agreed that the design team should further explore any enhancements which could be made to the design to maximise its environmental credentials and minimise energy usage and associated costs.

#### **Amendments to the design**

1.19 The design team have taken on board a number of the comments received and have made a range of amendments to the design. These are outlined in **Appendix 4**.

1.20 The provision of a 50m pool was previously considered as part of the detailed feasibility analysis outlined in 1.11 and 1.12 above and was not considered viable taking into account a range of factors including the limited space available on the proposed site and the likely demand vs. build and running costs.

#### **Enhancing environmental performance**

1.21 The design team have undertaken some detailed work following the last consultation exercise to explore options for further improving the

environmental performance of the new centre. Typically, leisure centres consume significant levels of energy in order to deliver appropriate climate controlled environments for the activities which take place in them. Being mindful of these impacts on the environment and the rising costs of energy consumption, the design team have sought to actively mitigate these impacts, including exploring the possibility of meeting the Passivhaus standard.

- 1.22 The Passivhaus Institute is based in Germany and is a world leader in setting standards for mitigating the harmful environmental impacts of operating all types of buildings. Passivhaus accreditation is a voluntary standard for achieving energy efficiency which significantly reduces a building's ecological footprint and results in an ultra-low energy, thermally efficient designed building that requires minimal energy for space heating and cooling, which also helps to significantly reduce energy bills and provides higher standards of air quality and comfort for its occupiers.
- 1.23 The design team have calculated that, compared to the current design, if the Passivhaus approach was fully applied to the design of the new leisure centre this would result in:
  - (a) A reduction in energy consumption by up to 70%;
  - (b) A reduction in associated CO<sub>2</sub> of 60-70%; and
  - (c) 50% less waste.
- 1.24 The lower energy use would result in a reduction in energy costs of £37/m<sup>2</sup>, which would provide an estimated annual saving of £304,473 based on current energy cost levels. Energy costs are forecasted to increase in the medium and longer term, thereby increasing the potential annual savings. This estimated annual saving is significantly more than the additional financing cost of the additional capital expenditure required to meet the Passivhaus standard.
- 1.25 The option of pursuing a full Passivhaus design for the new centre is supported by all members of the LCDWG and, taking into account the results of the consultation exercise, this Group is of the opinion that:
  - (a) The Council should proceed with a planning application for a new leisure centre on the proposed site (as outlined in **Appendix 1**) incorporating the proposed facilities mix outlined in **Appendix 2**.
  - (b) The Council should proceed with the amendments to the design outlined in **Appendix 4**, based on the feedback from the consultation process.
  - (c) The centre should be designed to meet the full Passivhaus standard.

## 2. Options analysis and proposal

### 2.1 Option 1 (preferred option – pursue development of full Passivhaus standard leisure centre)

For Cabinet to:

- (a) Note the results of the consultation exercise on proposals for a new Spelthorne Leisure Centre undertaken in February – April 2020;

- (b) Approve amendments to the proposed design of the new leisure centre as outlined in section **Appendix 4**;
- (c) Approve modifications to the design of the new leisure centre to meet full Passivhaus standard, as outlined in section 1.21 – 1.24;
- (d) Agree to the submission of a planning application for the development of a new leisure centre on the proposed site outlined in **Appendix 1**, with the proposed facilities mix as outlined in **Appendix 2**;
- (e) To delegate the decision regarding the selection of the contractor for the construction of the new leisure centre to the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Leisure, in conjunction with the Deputy Chief Executive.
- (f) Recommend to Council a supplementary capital estimate outlined in the confidential **Appendix 5**, to cover the projected costs of developing the new centre.

This option would enable the Council to deliver a new leisure centre which will be flexible enough to meet the needs of our residents and help maintain and improve their health and wellbeing for many years to come. By fully complying with Passivhaus standards, the new centre would meet some of the strictest environmental standards currently specified for new buildings in terms of energy use, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, waste and internal air quality standards, and would make the facility the first leisure centre in the UK to fully meet these standards.

## 2.2 **Option 2 (pursue development of a leisure centre which does not meet the full Passivhaus standard)**

For Cabinet to:

- (a) Note the results of the consultation exercise on proposals for a new Spelthorne Leisure Centre undertaken in February – April 2020;
- (b) Approve amendments to the proposed design of the new leisure centre as outlined in section **Appendix 4**;
- (c) Agree to the submission of a planning application for the development of a new leisure centre on the proposed site outlined in **Appendix 1**, with the proposed facilities mix as outlined in **Appendix 2**;
- (d) To delegate the decision regarding the selection of the contractor for the construction of the new leisure centre to the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Leisure, in conjunction with the Deputy Chief Executive.
- (e) Recommend to Council a supplementary capital estimate outlined in the confidential **Appendix 5**, to cover the projected costs of developing the new centre.

This option would enable the Council to deliver a new leisure centre which will be flexible enough to meet the needs of our residents and help to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing for many years to come. However, although this option would incorporate a range of features to minimise the impact of the new centre on the environment, the centre would not meet the higher environmental standards of Option 1.



### 2.3 **Option 3 – To propose an alternative option for the development of a new leisure centre**

Any alternative options put forward would have to be based on a thorough analysis of needs, location and viability. In deciding on the proposed location the LCDWG have reviewed alternative sites and the proposed facilities mix reflects expert analysis and feedback from all consultation and stakeholder engagements undertaken.

### 2.4 **Option 4 - Not to proceed with the development of a new leisure centre**

This is not recommended as the current Spelthorne Leisure Centre will be coming towards the end of its useful life in 2021. Costs of repairs to the current centre will increase over time. It is therefore necessary to move forward with proposals to replace this facility within the next few years before it becomes unviable to keep the existing centre open. Results from the first and second consultation exercises held in 2018 and 2020 respectively, have indicated that there is public support for a new facility.

## 3. **Financial implications**

3.1 A budget of £2.984m for the design of the new leisure centre has been allocated within the current capital programme. The costs to date of design work for the new centre are £996,000. Designing the new centre to fully meet the Passivhaus standard would cost a further £320,000.

3.2 The remaining budget within the capital programme for design costs would therefore be £1.668m for a full Passivhaus standard leisure centre. For a non-Passivhaus leisure centre the remaining budget would be £1.988m (reflecting the lower design costs).

3.3 The total design fees for a completed Passivhaus scheme will be approximately £3.304m. A significant proportion of these fees will be novated over to the development contractor as part of the overall construction costs.

3.4 The projected costs of developing the new centre are outlined in the confidential **Appendix 5**.

## 4. **Other considerations**

4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed by the Council's Leisure Services team and this has been fully considered in designing the new leisure centre. Some of these issues will be the responsibility of the operator and this would be taken into account in drafting any future operator contract.

4.2 It is proposed to run the tender process for the new operator contract in parallel with the design and build process in order to bring the selected operator on-board before the construction of the centre is completed. The operator could then be involved in decisions on the final fit-out of the centre.

### **Risks**

4.3 The Design Team have designed the new centre up to Stage 3 and are now progressing into detailed design, Stage 4a. This will provide a high level of detail for contractors to price against when bidding and will therefore help in obtaining accurate pricing for our proposals.



- 4.4 Progressing the planning application remains the most elastic element of the project at this stage, as it can be difficult to determine how long this process may take. In order to mitigate this, the Council's application will provide more detail than typically required for submission purposes and engagement has already been undertaken with most key stakeholders, including two pre-application meetings with the Local Planning Authority. It is therefore hoped that most issues which can be addressed have now been dealt with, which should assist in getting any planning application determined within the statutory timescale of 13 weeks.
- 4.5 Macroeconomic issues have resulted in the wider procurement market continuing to soften. Similarly, interest rates continue to remain at historically low levels. It is therefore currently a good time to be buying and funding construction work. This situation could, however, change depending on future developments in the UK's economic climate and any changes following Brexit.
- 4.6 The current Spelthorne Leisure Centre was required to close during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown but reopened on 1 August 2020 following the Council agreeing a one-off financial support package for the existing operator, Everyone Active. There is a risk that if a second wave of the pandemic occurs the centre may be required to close again. Any prolonged closure of the leisure centre could potentially affect its customer base and lead to reduced income from any future operator contract.
- 4.7 Although the COVID-19 pandemic has affected usage of the current leisure centre, it is not anticipated that this will have any impact on the proposed facilities mix required for the new centre when it opens in 2024.

#### **Procurement process**

- 4.8 There are two main procurement routes which could be taken to deliver the new centre. Both have their advantages and disadvantages:
- (a) OJEU – restricted or open tender:
- i. Longer route to market (would take around 3 months longer than going via a compliant framework);
  - ii. Would provide access to the UK's 6-7 leading leisure centre development contractors (including BAM, ISG, Keir, Morgan Sindall, Pellikaan, Wates and Willmott Dixon). Soft market testing has established that all the key contractors would be interested in such an opportunity.
- b. OJEU compliant framework:
- i. Quicker route to market (offering a 3 month advantage over the OJEU open or restricted tender processes).
  - ii. The organisations on the framework agreement have already been through a pre-qualification stage to assess their suitability to provide the works and the terms of the contract are already set by the framework agreement.
  - iii. The downside is that no single framework offers access to all the top leisure centre development contractors, in most cases only 2-3 in any one framework.
  - iv. Single supplier OJEU compliant frameworks. These are available where the client requires the quickest route to market. These frameworks have been through an OJEU tender process to select a

single contractor. However this means working with a single supplier rather than having the benefit of any competition.

- 4.9 The OJEU restricted or open tender routes potentially offers the best route to market. Whilst, the procurement process may take 3 months longer, it offers the opportunity to develop the best detailed design solution and obtain best value for the Council; this would not limit access to any of the top tier contractors, all of which have already expressed interest in competing for this project. However, if a quicker route to market is required then framework options can be considered.

## **5. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

- 5.1 The recommended option (Option 1) would deliver the first fully Passivhaus compliant leisure centre in the UK (there are a small number of leisure centres in the UK which partly meet those standards). By delivering a centre which meets such high environmental standards the Council would demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and minimising climate change, which would act as an exemplar to other Councils and local businesses/developers.

## **6. Timetable for implementation**

- 6.1 If Cabinet approve the above recommendations and the Council approves the supplementary capital estimate, the estimated timetable for the various elements of the development programme would be as follows (assuming an OJEU open or restricted tender process is used):

(a) Planning programme:

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| i) Planning Submission  | - Late November 2020 |
| ii) Planning Permission | - March 2021         |

(b) Procurement programme:

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| i) Open Day For Interested Bidders           | - Late October 2020 |
| ii) OJEU notice issued                       | - End November 2020 |
| iii) Submission tenders following SQ and ITT | - End February 2021 |
| iv) Contract awarded to Contractor On PCSA   | - Early May 2021    |
| v) Main Contract for works                   | - November 2021     |

NB. It is proposed to run the procurement process in parallel with the planning process to increase time efficiency and limit lead in times to starting on site. This is an indicative timeframe and may be subject to variance depending on the conclusion of design information and the grant of planning permission.

(c) Construction programme

- |                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| i) Start on Site         | - Mid January 2022  |
| ii) Practical Completion | - Mid February 2024 |

6.2 If a procurement from a Framework is used, elements 6.1 (b) and (c) above could be delivered approximately 3 months sooner.

**Background papers:**

[Link to previous Cabinet report – 29 January 2020](#)

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## APPENDIX 1 – Proposed site for new Spelthorne Leisure Centre (west of Spelthorne’s Knowle Green Council Offices)

Site X – Proposed new leisure centre building

Site Y – Proposed car parking for new leisure centre

### PROPOSED SITE PLAN



2 • SPELTHORNE LEISURE CENTRE





## **APPENDIX 2 – Proposed revised facilities mix**

### **Core facilities mix to be included**

<b>Main Pool:</b>	25m length, 8 lanes with 250 spectator seats, timing office, judging room & first aid
<b>Learner Pool:</b>	20 x 10m learner pool with moveable floor
<b>Splash Pad</b>	
<b>Sauna, Steam Room &amp; Spa</b>	
<b>Sports Hall:</b>	6 courts with spectator seating.
<b>Squash Courts:</b>	3 courts. Changeable to flexible studio space or 2 badminton courts.
<b>Health &amp; Fitness:</b>	200 station fitness suite
<b>Studios:</b>	2 x multi activity studios
<b>Spin Studio:</b>	1 x spin studio
<b>Multi-Purpose Room:</b>	1 x multi-purpose room for 20 people + Youth
<b>Zone/Bar/Lounge</b>	
<b>Soft Play</b>	
<b>Physio Rooms</b>	2 x physio rooms
<b>Reception With Retail Area</b>	
<b>Café:</b>	100 seats with poolside viewing
<b>3G Pitches:</b>	4 x small sided pitches
<b>Roof Garden:</b>	Over fitness suite
<b>Clip'n Climb</b>	
<b>Parking</b>	300 spaces

### **Potential Additional Facilities**

<b>Outdoor Gym:</b>	Over fitness suite
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# Spelthorne Leisure Centre Consultation Report

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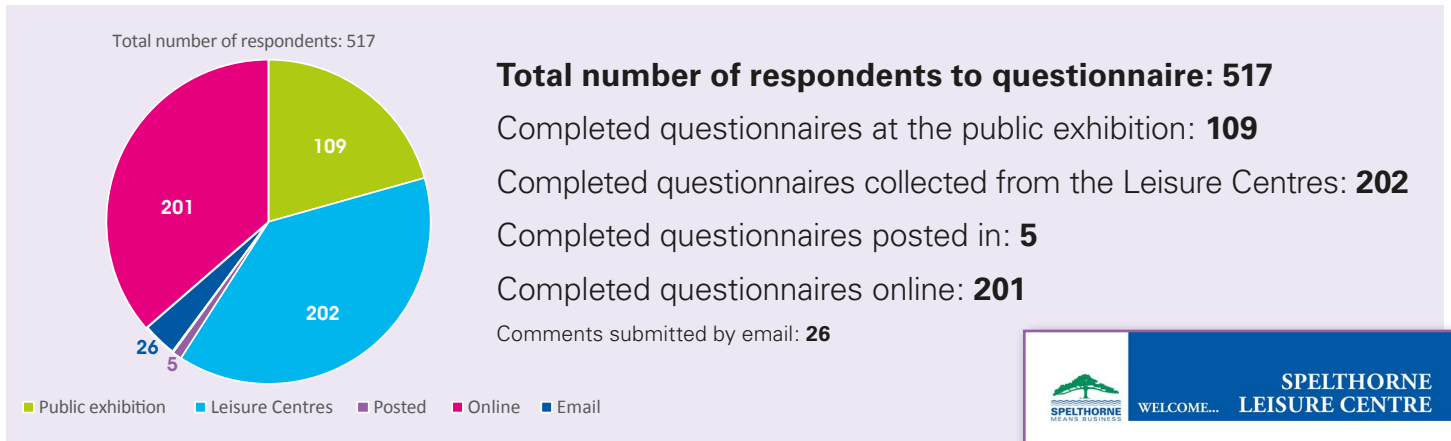
 @spelthorneboroughcouncil

 [www.spelthorne.gov.uk](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk)

# The Consultation

The consultation on the Council's revised plans for a new Spelthorne Leisure Centre was originally scheduled to run from Friday 28 February to Friday 27 March 2020. However, in view of the developing Covid-19 crisis it was decided to extend the consultation by a further two weeks until Friday 10 April, to give people more time to respond.

The overwhelming majority of respondents to the consultation either submitted their responses via the interactive website or by filling in the questionnaire at the existing Spelthorne Leisure Centre. Only a small handful of residents posted in their responses to the Council. Residents could also email comments to a dedicated email address.



A public exhibition was held in the Leisure Centre on 28 and 29 February, which was easily accessible and would encourage responses from a range of groups. The exhibition consisted of a number of posters explaining the rationale for replacement and the work that had gone in to ensure the planned Leisure Centre had all the facilities residents wanted. A copy of the material used can be found on the Council's website via the following link:

[www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation)

The exhibitions were staffed by Council Officers and representatives from the design team to answer questions and encourage those attending to give their views.

Packs for residents outlining the plans with (questionnaires) were made available in the Council Offices and distributed around the Borough to various libraries and at both leisure centres to give as many people a chance to respond as possible. The locations were chosen as there would be a high footfall and would reach a large number of people.

**WELCOME... LEISURE CENTRE**

Welcome to our public consultation event that showcases our emerging plans for a new leisure centre to be developed by Spelthorne Borough Council.

Please get involved and share your thoughts with us on the latest proposals as we work towards preparing and submitting a planning application later this year.

Your views are important to us! Please take time to review the proposals which show how the new building may look and speak to a member of the team if you have any questions. We would be grateful if you would fill in one of our feedback forms and let us have your views.

The new proposed site is on the site of the existing leisure centre including the adjacent field at Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames, Staines, TW18 1AJ.

**Project Background and Process**

2017

- An updated needs assessment was undertaken to establish the requirements of the community.
- Leisure centre proposals were developed and consulted on.
- Proposals were refined based on feedback received.
- Final proposals were submitted to the Council for approval.

**Aims and Objectives**

Sports and fitness activities play a fundamental role in the health and wellbeing of our community. Spelthorne Borough Council is determined to play its part in supporting a healthier and more active community, which is better for individuals and for their families as well as for society as a whole. Spelthorne Borough Council's strategy aims to improve wellbeing through increased participation in sport and physical activity.

Spelthorne Borough Council has worked closely with the project design team and operator using feedback from the first public consultation event to inform the brief and prioritise the key objectives for this project.

The project aims to create a community destination which visibly commits to the park setting and enhances the local area.

**You Spoke, We Listened...**

- Location:** There was concern about the parkland location. It is now proposed to build the leisure centre to the north of the park boundary. Staines Park would remain unlandscaped.
- Artificial Grass Sports Pitches:** There was concern about the location of pitches and flooding. A small artificial grass sports pitches footprint of the building.
- Facility Mix:** Pool facilities were a priority during the last consultation. Enhanced facilities such as a 25m x 10m pool, summer pool, splash area, open air pool and sauna are proposed.
- Access:** There was concern about access routes. The new leisure centre is proposed adjacent to the existing facility therefore access routes will remain with better visual connections to the existing Staines Park.

(Online questionnaire available from 12 noon on Friday 27 March)

[www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation)

[leisurecentre@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:leisurecentre@spelthorne.gov.uk)

Spelthorne Borough Council, Knowle Green, TW18 1AJ

Information documents and the questionnaire can be accessed at the Council Offices, all libraries in the Borough and at the old Sunbury Leisure Centre. For more information or to request a copy of the questionnaire to be sent to you, please call 01892 43432 or email your postal address to [leisurecentre@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:leisurecentre@spelthorne.gov.uk)

**Spelthorne Leisure Centre Questionnaire**

**Introduction**

Spelthorne Borough Council is proposing to develop a new Leisure Centre for the Borough. The new facility will be fully inclusive with a mix of facilities that will meet a broad range of needs and age groups. Sports and Fitness activities play a fundamental role in the health and wellbeing of our community and Spelthorne Borough Council are determined to play its part in supporting a healthier and more active community.

The existing Spelthorne Leisure Centre in Staines-upon-Thames has been well used for many years but maintenance costs are rising and customers' leisure requirements have changed significantly since the original Leisure Centre was built. The existing centre cannot incorporate the wide range of facilities required by today's health-conscious society and refurbishment of the current centre is not considered a feasible option. A condition survey indicated that a considerable amount of investment would be needed to extend its life much beyond 2021, which is not cost effective and would cause major disruption to current users. A refurbished centre would also have a more limited lifespan (approx. 15-20 years), be less energy efficient and not offer the same range of facilities as a purpose built new-build centre which can deliver the required facilities mix and be built to the highest energy standards.

[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/spelthornebc)  
[Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/spelthornebc)  
[TikTok](https://www.tiktok.com/@spelthornebc)  
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[www.spelthorne.gov.uk](https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk)

**SPELTHORNE MEANS BUSINESS**

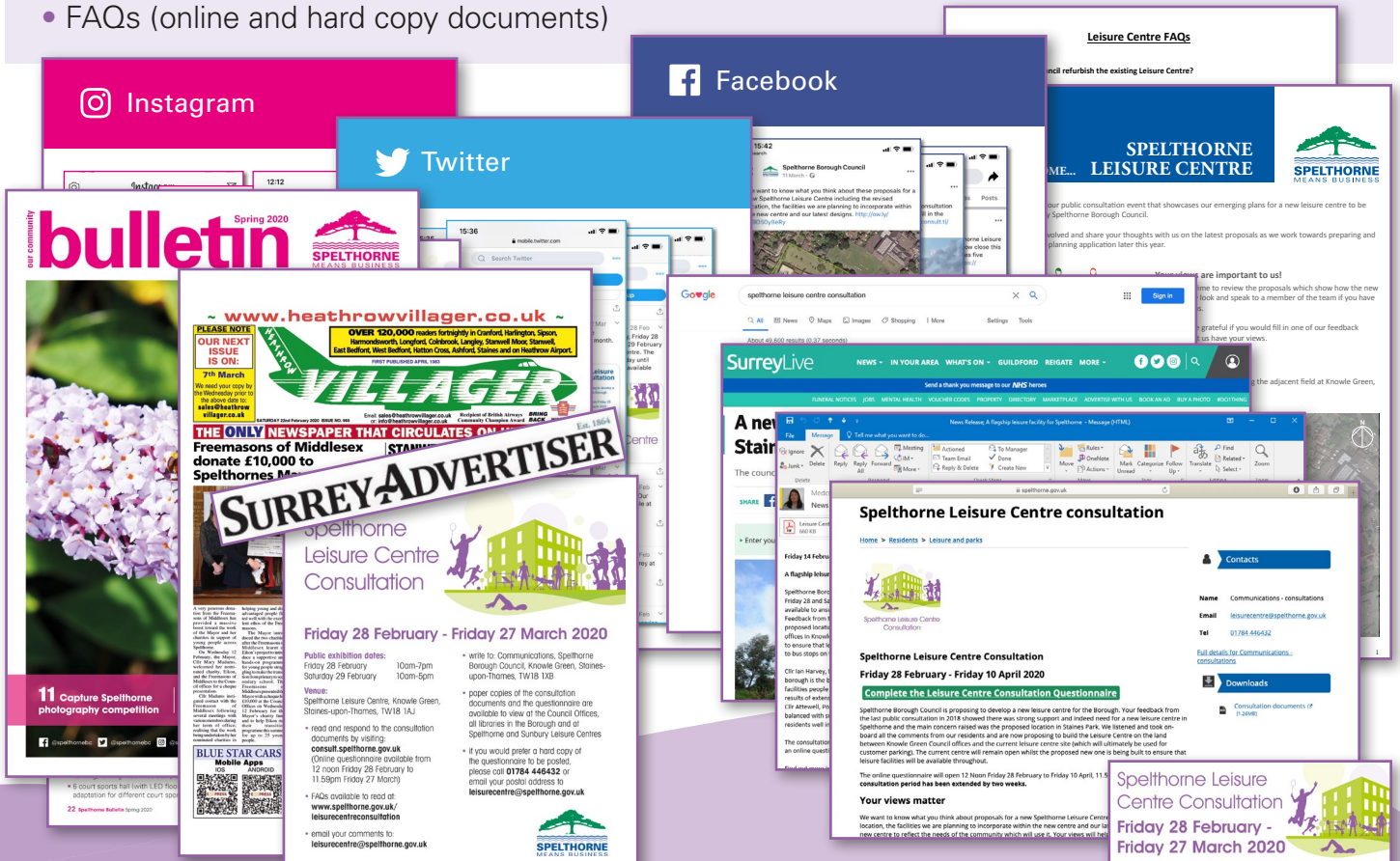
# Engagement

The Leisure Centre consultation was communicated in a manner of ways before and during the consultation period. The consultation process was advertised by:

- posters on community noticeboards, at car parks, and in the Two Rivers and Elmsleigh Centre shopping areas
- a targeted letter drop to residents in the area around the proposed location of the new centre two weeks prior to the launch of the consultation period (over 2000 addresses)
- letters to Residents' Associations
- press releases
- articles in the Bulletin, E-News and My Alerts
- dedicated web page **[www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation)**
- use of social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Facebook)
- the use of an email footer on Council staff communications
- prominent branding on the front page of Council's website
- web advertising (geo-targeting on Facebook and Google)

Information on the Council's proposals was made available by the use of:

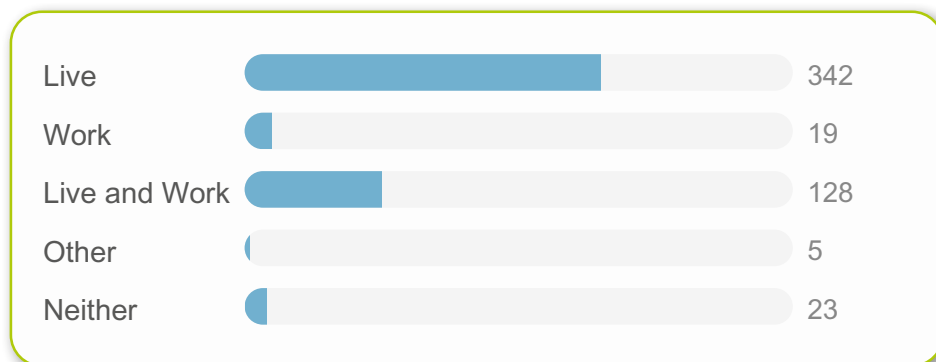
- dedicated email and web pages on the Council's website
- social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram)
- social listening tools and Google analytics for tracking and responding
- FAQs (online and hard copy documents)
- hard copy consultation documents, available at the Council offices, libraries and leisure centres
- briefings to Borough Councillors and Residents Association representatives before consultation opened



# Summary of Responses

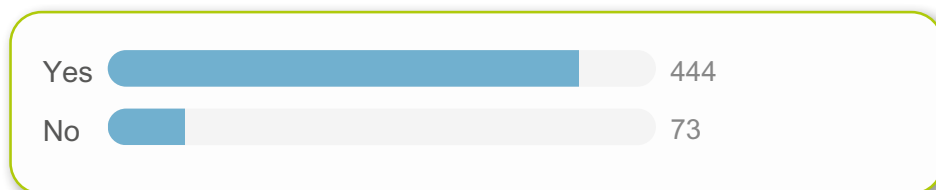
## 1. Do you live/work in Spelthorne?

91% of respondents said they were Spelthorne residents and 28% said they worked in the Borough. Just 5% of respondents were from outside the Borough.



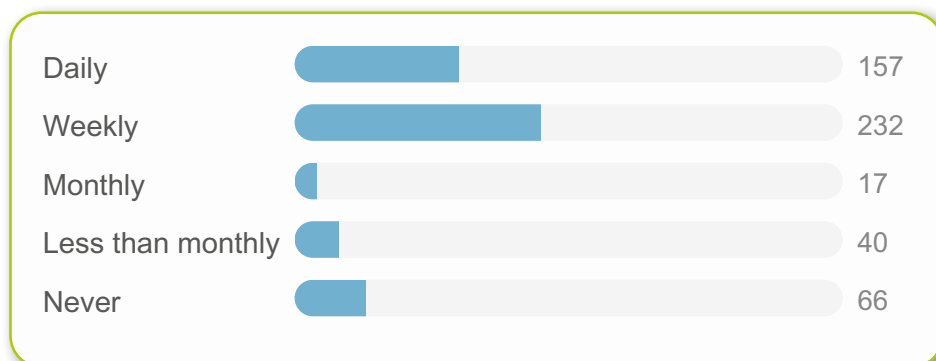
## 2. Do you use the current Spelthorne Leisure Centre?

88% of those who responded said they used the current Spelthorne Leisure Centre.



## 3. How often do you use the current Spelthorne Leisure Centre?

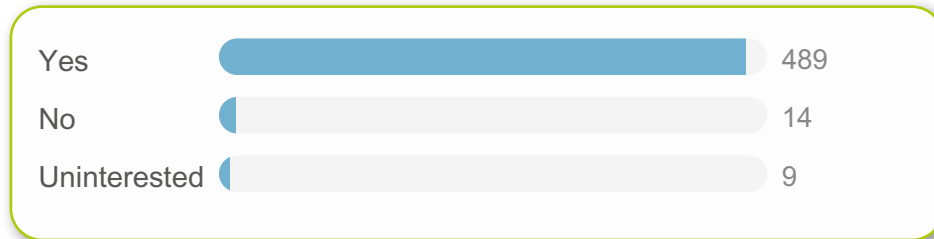
31% said they were daily users of the Leisure Centre, while a further 45% said they used it on a weekly basis; many of them noting they went multiple times a week on the written submissions.



# Summary of Responses

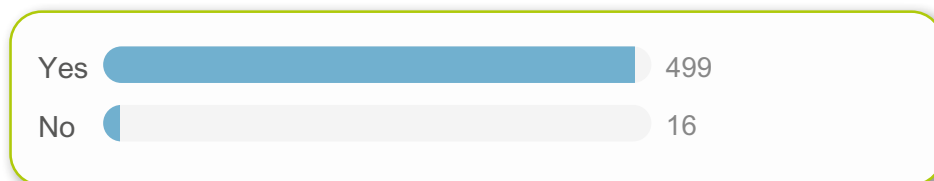
## 4. Would you like to see a new Leisure Centre with enhanced facilities?

Responses to this were overwhelmingly positive with 96% of people saying yes. 3% said no while the remaining responders were uninterested.



## 5. Do you support the new location proposed for Spelthorne Leisure Centre?

The location proposal is to build it between the Council offices in Knowle Green and the current centre site, which will ultimately be used for customer parking. In response to the question, 97% of respondents said they were in favour of this as a location for the new leisure centre.



Comments in relation to this question included:

- *“It is a convenient location for rail journeys and there are other public buildings in the vicinity eg council offices, health centre, which could be useful to visitors.”*
- *“The land between the council offices and the existing leisure centre have been unused for a long time. This is the best use of the land and is the best option to keep the existing facility open whilst the new one is built. It worked well for Egham Orbit.”*
- *“Existing transport links are good to this location also, walking distance from the mainline station as well.”*
- *“Yes 100% - it is the perfect solution and actually be more suitable in enabling the centre to have a bigger carpark which at peak times will be really useful as the existing facilities are somewhat restricted. The current location is far enough away from the town centre which means if there is a bigger uptake in usage of the centre it should not have an adverse affect.”*

A handful of residents expressed conditional support, with their concerns centered on the loss of green space between the Council Offices and the existing Leisure Centre site as exhibited by the comment below:

- *“As long as the relevant environmental/wildlife surveys are carried out and there is no loss of wildlife habitat. Also the new build should be built as environmentally friendly as possible e.g reclaimed/recycled materials, run on solar panels/other renewable sources, blends in with local area, uses grey water, recycling etc.”*

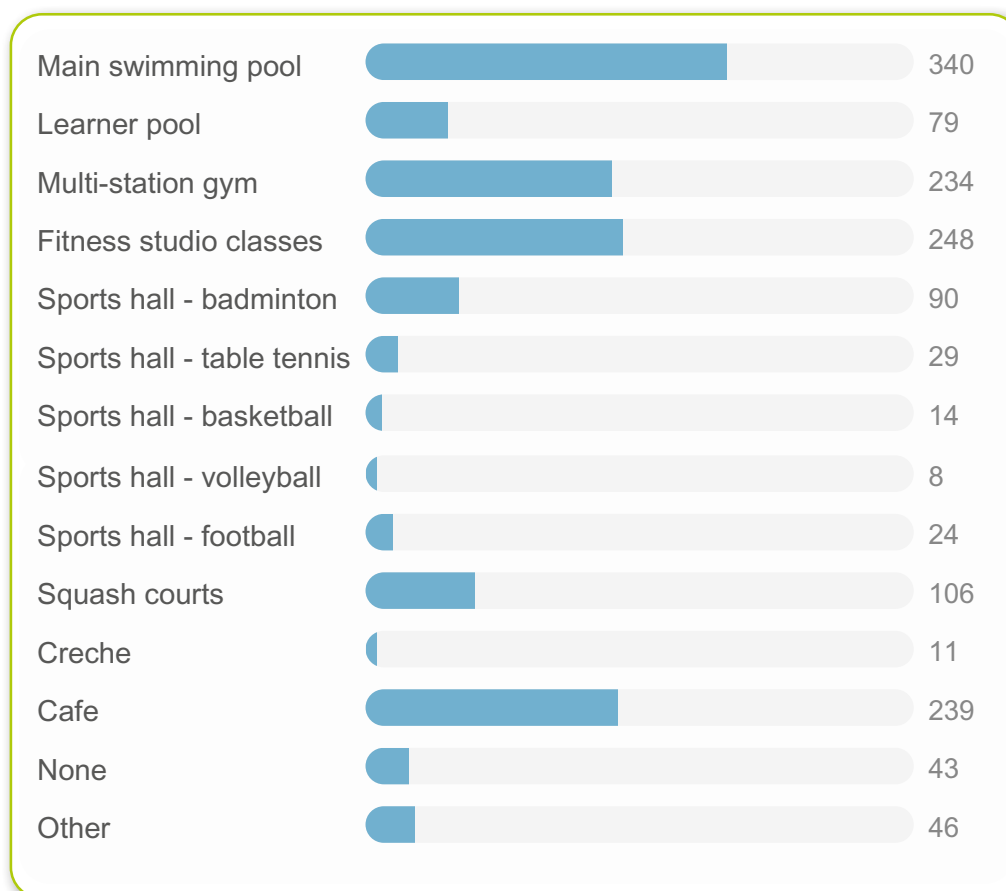
# Summary of Responses

Other comments regarding the proposed location include:

- *“I would support the newly extended leisure centre if it also presents a solid case as an environmentally friendly facility. I would like to see more trees around and a roof garden there, just producing less carbon footprint and generating green energy is not enough, we need to encourage wildlife.”*
- *“I am strongly objecting to the suggested new location. This green area is of extremely high value to me and I do NOT want it destroyed by being built on. Too much of Spelthorne, Staines in particular, is being destroyed by over-development. The new leisure centre should be built on brownfield land. Best of all, the old centre should be refurbished, as was done about 30 years ago.”*

## 6. Which facilities do you or your family currently use?

The main swimming pool was the most popular response with 66% of those using the facilities going for a swim in the main pool, while 15% used the learner pool. The fitness studio classes, which would include yoga, pilates and spin, were the next most popular with 48% of respondents saying they used those facilities. 45% of those who answered the questionnaire said they used the multi-station gym, slightly more than those who said they used the cafe. The sports hall was used by approximately 32% of users with the majority of those being for badminton and a handful of people using it for table tennis, basketball, volleyball and football. 21% of the responders used the squash courts available at the Leisure Centre. A number of respondents commented that they also used the sauna facilities in the Leisure Centre.



# Summary of Responses

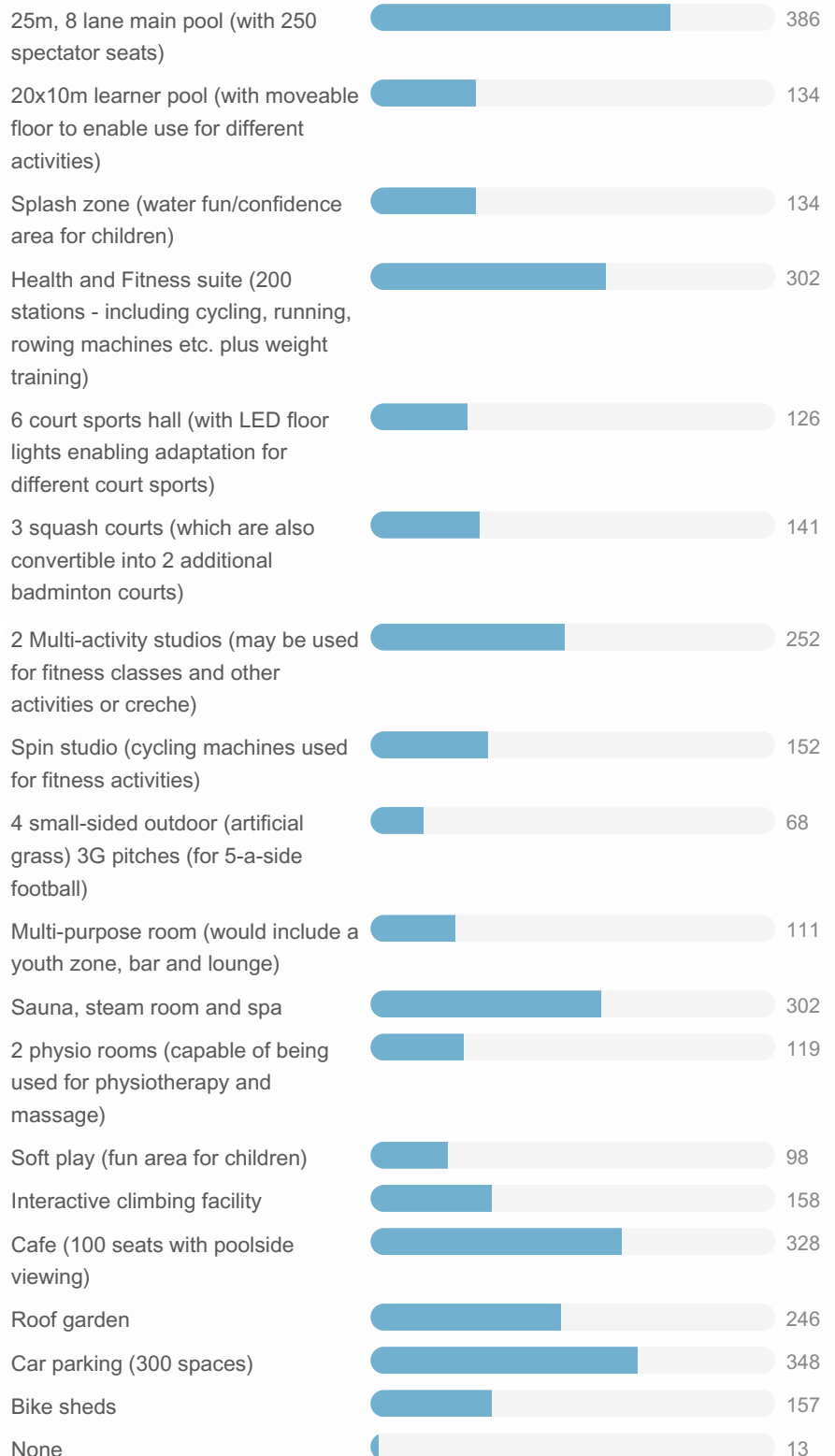
## 7. Which of the proposed facilities for the new Leisure Centre are you or your family most likely to use?

The 25m, eight lane main pool was the most popular choice with 75% of residents saying they would be wanting to use it. 52% of respondents would use the learner pool and the splash zone for children. Nearly 59% of those responded said they would likely use the health and fitness suite with 78% saying they would use the multi-activity studio and the spin studio.

The interactive climbing facility was a popular choice with 31% of people expressing an interest and the sports hall and squash courts would be used by over half (52%) of the respondents.

Away from the activities, 63% said they would use the café and 48% would be interested in a roof garden.

As far as arriving at the leisure centre, 67% found car parking important, while 30% would be using the bike sheds.



# Summary of Responses

## 8. Does this range of facilities meet your needs?

For 92% of respondents, the range of facility does meet their needs.



## 9. Is there anything else you think should be included?

208 responses were received to this question. 16% of comments received related to the need for more studio space, either for them to hold more people or an additional studio, citing the fact that demand exceeds supply for the classes available at the current Leisure Centre.

- *“An extra multi activity studio. I am only a member as I attend yoga, Pilates, body balance. The yoga classes in particular are now virtually impossible to book due to increased demand. Too many members for too few classes. There is a definite trend for well being classes such as yoga. More classes in this area should be provided to meet demand. Would love to see ‘hot yoga’ added to the mix like they offer at The Thames Club.”*
- *“Make sure the spinning classes have a 40 (at least 30) person capacity and machines to accommodate.”*
- *“Need the spin studio to have a minimum of 30 bikes. Yoga and pilates are always oversubscribed. Need enough room for 40 members.”*

The swimming pool also had a small number of comments encouraging the building of a 50m pool with the idea to be able to hold galas and trials. Other comments included installing additional features such as waterslides and diving boards.

- *“There should be a 50M pool. We have a lack of 50M pools in the South yet long distance swimming (outdoor and triathlon) is one of the fastest growing sports in the UK right now.”*
- *“There should be sufficient periods for general swims in pool since nothing worse than it being booked out for most of the day to groups and schools etc.”*

Squash courts were also popular with residents with a handful commenting about the need to have further squash courts.

- *“I think there needs to be dedicated squash courts with coaching sessions available.”*

Other respondents requested facilities that included netball, indoor bowls, facilities for cross fit and a skate park.



# Summary of Responses

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## 10. Do you have any comments on the proposed design of the Leisure Centre?

231 of those who took part in the questionnaire responded to this question. Comments ranged on a variety of issues but there were some common themes.

Residents were particularly interested in arriving at the Leisure Centre, notably the bike storage area, requesting that it be well lit and not positioned in the far corner of the car park.

- *“Parking is a significant distance from the main entrance. Could the route from the car park to the main entrance be weather protected in some way or more provision made for drop off and pick up at the entrance.”*

The environment was another concern from residents with one of them noting concerns about noise and light pollution from the football pitches as well as the traffic during the construction period.

- *“The roof top pitches are a brilliant idea. Will lighting be considered and will there be a time limit to their use at night to prevent disturbance to local residents. The car park lights in the law courts/probation office are a nuisance so with the height of the new complex, this needs to be considered carefully.”*

Some respondents also wanted to share their concerns about the impact of the leisure centre on local wildlife.

- *“I would support the newly extended leisure centre if it also presents a solid case as an environmentally friendly facility. I would like to see more trees around and a roof garden there, just producing less carbon footprint and generating green energy is not enough, we need to encourage wildlife.”*

Changing areas were another aspect respondents were particularly keen on with the view of those expressed suggesting the rooms should be made larger.

- *“Looks promising, the only comment is that the changing room area looks quite small.”*
- *“Much larger wet changing area - currently do not have enough to meet the demand and cannot keep the area clean due to high foot fall. Spelthorne Leisure Centre has 36 changing rooms - you are proposing near 60 and larger pool. More storage areas for equipment please and better office space.”*
- *“Separate changing and washrooms for men, women, and additional single spaces for gender neutral/binary.”*

The squash players are also keen to see the movable walls to incorporate doubles squash and are keen for glass floors to be considered in order to provide easy conversion.

- *“Very serious consideration should be given to having the new ASB glass floors. They would make the area so much more flexible. Using the sliding walls with the floors and LED lighting we could have single/double squash courts and easy conversion into badminton courts.”*

# Summary of Responses

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Enhanced swimming options was another key area that respondents focused on with a particular wish to ensure that the facilities are more widely available in the evenings.

- *“I use the pool regularly every morning for swimming 5 times a week but I currently have to swim in the morning only because the evening time table is taken up heavily by the swim club. It would be good to have more evening availability for swimming in the new centre. Appreciate the club need to swim somewhere but they could split their time between other pools - Sunbury/Egham etc.”*
- *“More adult swim time myself and a friend have to swim at 9pm which is quite late or very early morning due to the swim club. Sometimes go to Sunbury pool but this is also late evening due to club - could they not swim earlier.”*

## 11. Do you have any other comments on this proposal?

There were 190 comments from respondents on this question. Bicycle parking facilities were touched upon and the entrance/exit access to the car park.

- *“Access to the car park off Knowle Green is two way and there appear to be no pedestrian routes within the car park, other than the crossings marked adjacent to the side ‘entrance’. This means that there is potentially pedestrian conflict with cars. This is particularly of concern to me when considering access to the Centre from disabled parking places. Visually impaired people would particularly be at risk. I suggest separate access and exit routes would reduce the hazard.”*
- *“The drop-off point, if in front of an entrance, will be of positive benefit if this removes pressure on the disabled parking places, a very common abuse at the current centre.”*
- *“A segregated cycle way/footpath runs along Knowle Green adjacent to the Centre. Pedestrian access to and from the car park from Knowle Green means passing the bicycle storage and this increases the potential of conflict with cyclists. I suggest bike storage is placed further into the car park with cyclists using the one way entrance proposed above.”*

There were certain concerns from residents who lived close to the current Leisure Centre and they were keen to ensure minimum disruption.

- *“Concerned about parking proposals for 300 vehicle spaces. Consider one way in, another way out. I’m already suffering the convoy of headlights beaming into my house in the early hours (day and night) and the five security lights. Parking area needs to be screened by a high as possible close-board fencing and ground level lighting.”*
- *“Leisure Centre will be open? You may be interested to know that commuters take advantage of the present leisure centre car park so they will have a field day with the new proposal.”*
- *“The congestion down this road is very high (I use the nursery) people drive very dangerously, and I think with the increase of work vehicles etc. in this area during construction phase we should be putting in place some provisions.”*

# Summary of Responses

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- *“The roundabout at the end of the road, drivers don’t stop to let you out even with your right of way when exiting to Kingston Road especially when heading to Ashford....A filter light to support comings and goings of the increased traffic at this pain point would be very beneficial.”*

Comments were made about installing electric charge points in the car park with some residents also suggesting the car park be multi-storey to allow for additional cars.

- *“Would like to see electric charge points in the car park”*
- *“2 storey car park rather than just a ground level facility which appears to be the current plan. The roof could be used for additional facilities i.e. indoor bowls, ice rink etc.”*

Ensuring that the Leisure Centre is accessible for all to allow residents with health conditions to use all of the facilities.

- *“Need to ensure it is fully inclusive - Changing places changing/toilets, pool access, lifts, signage etc and look into shapemaster / power assisted equipment to enable greater access for residents with disabilities / health conditions.”*
- *“Please make sure there are some separate changing / toilet facilities for women. Must have adequate lifts / disabled access to all floors: (not marked on display drawings)”*

Residents, whilst they welcomed the new Leisure Centre proposals as outlined in their responses to previous questions, are hopeful that their costs are not drastically increased.

- *“Everyone Active is a good operator in my opinion. The costs to members needs to remain largely the same in line with it being a community leisure centre.”*
- *“I realise this will be an expensive investment but don’t price the community out of it by making it expensive like private gyms locally.”*
- *“For the end cost for attending swimming, gym etc to be a reasonable price still. The current prices are reasonable.”*
- *“I buy 12 sessions for the price of 10 for both classes and gym, and I hope this will continue.”*

Residents want an improved range of refreshments available to them with a mixture of healthy food as well as beer for the post exercise pint.

- *“Good beer and food in cafe/bar not burger and chips only”*
- *“Healthy fresh snacks”*

# Summary of Responses

The relationship with the nursery is something residents want to see considered, for instance installing a buggy park and allowing the nursery parking facilities to be expanded.

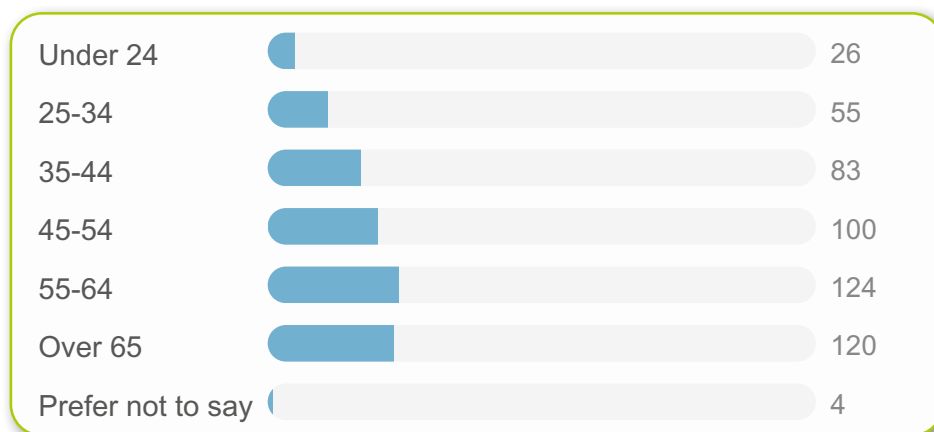
- *“A fit for purpose for Buggy Park to make use of crèche/learner pool and splash activities. The current one doesn’t support the local residents and therefore more drive/park. I would walk to/from if there was a buggy park.”*

Members are also concerned about access to the Leisure Centre, even if they just want to go to the roof garden.

- *“What will happen about access to the leisure centre? At the moment I can use a card to gain access if I have booked a class, or gym session, but it doesn’t work reliably.”*
- *“But what if I just want to go up to the roof garden?”*

## 12. Age

48% of residents who responded were either in the 55-64 bracket or over 65. 20% of those who responded were aged between 45 and 54. At the other end of the scale, 5 percent of those who replied were under the age of 24.



## 13. Postcode

The questionnaire was of most interest to those in the Staines-upon-Thames postal district with 56% of those responding coming within that boundary. Just over a quarter of respondents came from the Ashford postal area. A further 5% each came from the Sunbury, Shepperton, Stanwell and Egham postal areas. This is to be expected given the proposed location of the Leisure Centre.

## The End

A full list of FAQs and design documents for the proposed leisure centre can be found on our website at [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation)

Thank you for being part of our consultation.

Respondent numbers may vary slightly due to some answers left blank on the hard-copy returned questionnaires.

#### **APPENDIX 4 – Proposed modifications to the design of the new leisure centre based on feedback from the second consultation process**

A number of adjustments have been made to the design of the proposed centre based on feedback from the second consultation process. These are as follows:

- (a) Concerns over studio capacity/size.
  - i) Studio 01 increased from 154m<sup>2</sup> to 205m<sup>2</sup> to cater for 40+ person occupancy;
  - ii) Dedicated spin studio created with increased capacity (size increased from 75m<sup>2</sup> to 90m<sup>2</sup>).
- (b) Wet change facilities – some respondents noted a preference for the provision of separate male and female changing zones, whilst operator preference is to maintain a wet change village.
  - i) The layout of the wet change village has however been modified to provide the potential to be divided into equal male and female changing zones if required with access to group rooms and WC facilities.
- (c) Roof pitches – some residents expressed concerns about noise and light pollution from the roof pitches.
  - i) A 1.2m high parapet wall would be provided around the perimeter of the building to the north, west and east face;
  - ii) A 2.5m transparent acoustic screen would be provided on the east elevation (a noise assessment has been undertaken which has indicated that predicted noise levels from these pitches would be lower than the existing measured ambient level and future post-COVID ambient levels);
  - iii) The impact of flood lighting would be mitigated by:
    - Use of latest LED technology and directional forward through optics which would focus light over the playing area and reduce any light spillage beyond the pitches and no direct upward lighting distribution;
    - A range of other measures would be implemented including use of shorter lighting columns, lower wattage LED lights, time clock and photocell lighting controls and a solid, low level parapet around the perimeter of the building.
- (d) Parking – concerns were raised by a number of residents over aspects of the parking provision:
  - i) Disabled parking spaces have now been repositioned to be within closer proximity to the main entrance;
  - ii) Benching has been provided along the key pedestrian route to ensure there are adequate rest stops;

- iii) An additional vehicle drop-off point has been provided to the south-west of the building which connects directly to the main entrance plaza;
  - iv) Parent toddler parking spaces and EV charging points have been integrated into the scheme and access control to the main vehicular entrance will be provide to help prevent unauthorised parking and to close off the car park at night;
  - v) Cycle shelters have been relocated to the east of the site (12 no. cycle hoops) and to the south side, near to climbing wall area (13 no. cycle hoops).
- (e) Landscaping – Perimeter trees have been maintained where possible and a soft landscaping strategy will be undertaken.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## **Report from the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet**

This is my report as the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet. It is an overview of the main business considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 23 September 2020. Two further items considered at this meeting on the replacement of Spelthorne Leisure Centre and Victory Place, Ashford included recommendations to Council and have been dealt with earlier on this agenda.

### **1. Recommendations from Committees**

- 1.1 We considered recommendations from the Audit Committee concerning the Corporate Risk Register and the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy. It was agreed to approve the Corporate Risk Register and recommend to Council the adoption of the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy.
- 1.2 We considered and approved a recommendation from the Local Plan Task Group to publish the Local Plan Consultation Report Document.
- 1.3 We considered a report from the Property and Investment Committee to approve the acquisition of Property 'AA' for strategic regeneration within the Borough and agreed to:
  1. Approve the acquisition of the site (property 'AA') a key retail unit in the High Street, Staines for strategic regeneration within the Borough;
  2. Agree the offer submitted for the acquisition, and authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Finance to undertake any necessary subsequent negotiations (including a further bid if required) and complete the acquisition of the asset;
  3. Authorise the Chief Finance Officer to decide (i) the most financially advantageous funding arrangements for the purchase, (ii) the most tax efficient method of holding the asset, and overall to ensure the acquisition is prudentially affordable; and
  4. Authorise the Group Head of Corporate Governance to enter into any legal documentation necessary to acquire the asset.

### **2. Affordable Housing at the former Brooklands College site, Ashford**

- 2.1 We considered a report seeking approval for the payment of a grant to A2Dominion to support the provision of 26 homes for affordable rent on the former Brooklands College site in Ashford.
- 2.2 We agreed to approve the payment of the grant subject to the completion of a legal agreement which allows the Council to reclaim the grant should Brooklands Helix successfully challenge the Council's decision in relation to the CIL demand.

### **3. Annual Asset Investment Report**

- 3.1 We considered the Annual Asset Investment Report which set out the performance at the end of the financial year March 2020 of the investment and regeneration portfolio.
- 3.2 We approved the report to ensure there is full transparency of the portfolio and its performance.

### **4. Asset Management Plan**

- 4.1 We considered the Asset Management Plan which sets out how the Council will support delivery of its Capital Strategy.
- 4.2 The Asset Management Plan will minimise long term risk, help sustain the local economy and ensure continued and effective delivery of Council services. We agreed to:
  - 1. Approve the Asset Management Plan (AMP) for the period 2020 to 2025; and
  - 2. Delegate authority for any annual updates which may be required (excluding any substantive changes in approach) to the Group Head for Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Deputy Leader who has responsibility for Asset Management.

### **5. Community Asset Policy**

- 5.1 We considered the report on the Community Asset Policy which set out the proposed application and assessment process to be followed in future for the use of the Council's community assets by various organisations and community groups.
- 5.2 The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee attended the meeting to put forward that Committee's recommendations as discussed and agreed at their meeting the previous evening.
- 5.3 The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were welcomed and it was considered that the policy could be further refined to take account of the recommendations put forward.
- 5.4 It was agreed that any decision should be deferred to the next Cabinet meeting on 4 November to allow further changes to be made to the policy and a complete list of community assets to be appended to the policy.

### **9. White House Hostel and Harper House Managed Services**

- 9.1 Cabinet considered an exempt report on the tenders for the managed service provider for the White House Hostel and Harper House.

9.2 Cllr Bateson, as Ward Councillor, spoke of residents' concern about the management of the White House Hostel and sought assurance that the preferred bid would meet the Council's need and the monitoring of performance of the provider. Officers advised that the preferred bidder met or exceeded the requirements of the specification document. There were robust Key Performance Indicators within the contract and mechanisms to monitor performance.

9.3 It was agreed to:

1. Award the tender for the Managed Service Provider at White House and Harper House to the provider named in this report;
2. Authorise the Group Head of Corporate Governance to enter into any legal documentation necessary to formalise the appointment; and
3. Note the financial implications of the award of the tender, which will be addressed as part of annual budget setting for the 2021/22 financial years

**Councillor John Boughtflower**  
*Leader of the Council*

**22 October 2020**

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## **Report of the Chairman on the work of the Licensing Committee**

There have been four Licensing Sub-Committee meetings since the last report, and I set out the main items of business considered at those meetings.

### **Licensing Sub-Committee – 11 August 2020**

The Sub-Committee considered an application for a Premises Licence at the Co-op, Unit 1, 126 High Street, Staines upon Thames, following representations to the Licensing Authority from local residents. This was the first hearing to be held remotely with residents participating. The Sub-Committee agreed to grant the licence, subject to conditions, as set out in the decision notice.

### **Licensing Sub-Committee – 19 August 2020**

The Sub-Committee considered two Temporary Event Notice (TENs) applications for proposed events at Signature Van Hire, 273-275 London Road, Staines upon Thames following objections from Environmental Health and the Police. The Sub-Committee sat all day to hear the evidence from all parties and deliberate. It resolved to reject the TENs applications.

### **Licensing Sub-Committee - 3 September 2020**

A Sub-Committee met on 3 September to consider a further TENs application for an event to be held at Signature Van Hire, 273-275 London Road, Staines upon Thames. The applicant's agent advised at the beginning of the meeting that they wished to withdraw their application. All parties agreed they had no objection to the withdrawal.

### **Licensing Sub-Committee - 23 September 2020**

The Sub-Committee considered an application for a Premises Licence at Burger Plus, Church Street, Staines upon Thames, following representations to the Licensing Authority from local residents. No residents attended the hearing and the Sub-Committee agreed to grant the licence, subject to conditions, as set out in the decision notice.

Councillor R.W. Sider BEM  
*Chairman of Licensing Committee*

22 October 2020

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## **Report of the Chairman on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

There has been one extraordinary meeting of the Committee held on 22 September and one ordinary meeting held on 29 September 2020. This report gives an overview of the main issues considered at those meetings.

### **Extraordinary meeting – 22 September 2020**

This meeting was held to enable the Committee to pre-scrutinise a report on a Community Asset Policy which was due to be considered by the Cabinet the following day.

The Committee welcomed the principle of the Policy and the need for a proper assessment of potential applicants to ensure best use of the Council's assets and resources. However, it was concerned that the points-based system of evaluating applications was weighted towards established organisations and that small or new organisations, such as those that emerged during the pandemic, with much to offer to local communities would not fare so well.

The Committee agreed that the Council should encourage and support applications from new, or small local organisations and community groups. The Committee invited Cabinet to reconsider the policy taking into account Overview & Scrutiny Members' views and come back with a revised report and score card, to better reflect supporting organisations, including small and young organisations of value to the community, and giving Overview & Scrutiny members 10 days to make submissions.

The Committee also recommended that a complete list of the Council's assets to which the Policy relates, be appended to the Policy so that it was clear which buildings and pieces of land were covered by the Policy.

### **Meeting held on 29 September 2020**

#### **1. Affordable Housing at the former Brooklands College site, Ashford**

- 1.1 Following a request by some members of the Committee to call-in this item, considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 23 September 2020, I requested that it was added to the Committee agenda as a late briefing item in order to provide further explanation and clarify the background and rationale of this very complex matter.
- 1.2 The Committee received a detailed presentation to address the issues raised in the requests for call-in, and sought further explanation from officers. There was a further window of 24 hours available for call-in, if members still felt that was appropriate.

#### **2. Asset Management Plan**

- 2.1 The Committee received a report on the Asset Management Plan and noted that this is a key delivery vehicle for the Council's Capital Strategy.
- 2.2 The Committee requested an opportunity to scrutinise the performance and development monitoring and resourcing requirements for asset management which I

agreed to discuss with officers as to the most appropriate time to include this on the work programme.

### **3. Annual Asset Investment Report**

- 3.1 The Committee received a report on the Council's investment and regeneration portfolios for the period ending March 2020. In response to questions from members, further information on the outlook for commercial and retail rents and values was provided in private session.

### **4. Overview and Scrutiny Statutory Guidance**

- 4.1 The Committee reviewed a report on the Guidance that was introduced in May 2019 and previously received by the Committee in January 2020.
- 4.2 The Committee noted the clear message from the Guidance that Overview and Scrutiny should be allowed to flourish within Local Authorities and that Scrutiny members had enhanced powers to access relevant and timely information in order to carry out their duties effectively.

### **5. Financial Reports**

- 5.1 The Committee noted the capital and revenue spend for the period ending July 2020 and received responses from officers to detailed questions on expenditure and variances.

### **6. Corporate Project Management**

- 6.1 The Committee deferred consideration of the report on the progress of projects across the Council, as it required sight of the detailed confidential information relating to assets projects in advance of its meeting.

### **7. Exempt Item – Investment sinking fund scenario planning**

- 7.1 The Committee noted an exempt report explaining the methodology for monitoring and protecting rental income from shortfalls via a sinking fund.

**Councillor Vivienne Leighton**

*Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

**22 October 2020**