

## **Economic Development Team**

This document is intended to give an insight into the workings of the Economic Development Team (EDT) so that the Committee has a better understanding of the activities the Team is engaged with to help promote the economic vitality of the Borough.

The EDT is one of the teams that comes under Heather Morgan who is the Group Head of Regeneration and Growth.



### **Keith McGroary – Economic Development Manager**

Keith joined Spelthorne Council in 2008 with an initial focus on Community Safety having had a background as a Chief Inspector in Hampshire Police, but with part of the role linked to supporting the local economy. Keith has a B.A (hons) in Education, a MSc in Community Safety and went on to pass a Post Graduate Certificate in Local and Regional Economic Development in 2011 to help better understand how to successfully apply economic interventions to support a local economy. He was the author of the 2017 – 2022 Economic Strategy and has previously recruited an apprentice to his team who went on to successfully obtain a post as Economic Development Officer at Heathrow and then at Hammersmith & Fulham.

Keith was seconded to BP for a period of 6 months for one day a week to help them develop better and more effective relationships with the public sector; he has a passion for supporting small businesses and helping his team to become the best they can.

### **Tracey Carter – Senior Economic Development Officer**

Tracey has been with Spelthorne Council since October 2015. Previously her role was as Head of Operations for Surrey Chambers of Commerce and currently holds the position of Chairman of Spelthorne Business Forum. For three years Tracey split her working week with Parliament and ran Kwasi Kwarteng's constituency office until October 2020. She now works full time in her Economic Development role.



Tracey's responsibilities in the Economic Development Team are Key Account Management of the largest of the businesses, Inward Investment to attract businesses to the borough and keep them here as well as project lead on some of the Economic development projects.

Currently studying NVQ level 5 in Operations and Project Management.



### **David Gold – Economic Development Officer**

David joined the council in August 2020 and is the Economic Development Officer. David has a retail background and has worked for a number of major retail companies as well as working with independent retailers to help them grow their sales, profit and ensuring that they have a sustainable business for the future.

David's role is to help develop Spelthorne so that it is a more attractive place to live, visit, work and start or relocate a business.

Currently David is working on a number of projects including updating the Local Economic Assessment which was last written in 2016 and our Start Your Own Business book, running the Capture Spelthorne 2021 photographic competition, chair of the Tourism Forum group, managing the redecoration of the Business Incubator and involved in the organisation and promotion of the Spelthorne Business awards and the content of our Inward Investment website. David also supports the SBF with its website content. Post June 21<sup>st</sup> (lockdown rules permitting) David will become more involved with local businesses and business groups and organisations.

### **Andy Willmott – Town Centre Manager (Ashford, Sunbury & Shepperton)**

Andy Willmott to the Economic Development Team. Andy is the new Town Centre Manager for Ashford, Shepperton and Sunbury, working with local businesses and partner agencies to encourage growth and recovery in the Borough.

With a background working at Surrey Chambers of Commerce, running a Business Improvement District in Surrey and as a small business owner himself, Andy brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to Spelthorne.



### **Town Centre Manager**

To assist the promotion and economic well-being of the borough's secondary towns - Ashford, Shepperton and Sunbury, Andy Willmott joined the ED team as town centre manager for these three towns in Oct 2020.

With the challenges posed by the Covid pandemic and the ongoing pressures of online retailing, Andy will work with businesses to ensure our towns are vibrant centres at the heart of their communities.



Current activities include - engaging with businesses to understand their needs as we come out of lockdown - building a database of contacts to ensure effective and consistent communication - launching regular meet & greet sessions so businesses can be heard - planning programme of activities to showcase our town centres.



Engaged and active business groups in all towns - programme of activities and events - enhanced look and feel of town centres

### **Popup Shop**

The ED team are investigating the opportunity for short-term activities that will both help to fill any void units within the towns/shopping centres whilst also offering local start-up companies the chance to test their ideas and products in a cost effective way with a view to helping them grow.

Our main potential site - the old Mothercare unit in the Elmsleigh Centre - is currently under interest from a potential tenant so this unit is not available. The Leisure Services Team are working on a project with Rotary Club Staines to deliver a community project within a void unit and the ED Team will assist and work with them to deliver the project.

We will be reviewing what options there are to take forward any other units both in terms of the size of any available units and what type of activities could take place within.



### **Opening High street Fund**

In 2020, the Government allocated an amount of money to all councils to help open up their high streets safely after the first lockdown - the RHSS Fund.

Spelthorne were awarded £88,000. This fund was allocated to the Neighbourhood Services team to manage and distribute.

In 2021, an additional sum of £88,000 was awarded under the Welcome Back Fund, which is an extension of the RHSS Fund.

The criteria of how the Welcome Back fund, and any monies remaining from the original RHSS Fund, can be spent has been widened. As such, this is much more relevant to the economic well-being of our communities, so the ED team are working with Neighbourhood Services to identify how best this funding is utilised.

A plan of activities will be submitted by end of May, with funding to be spent by March 2022.

## **Photography Competition**

The Capture Spelthorne (CS) photographic competition started in 2018.

The purpose of Capture Spelthorne is twofold, to get photos of Spelthorne that could be used in promoting Spelthorne as a location to live, visit and locate your business and to encourage local residents to look at the borough in a way they might not have done so in the past and by doing so appreciate more what Spelthorne has to offer.



Capture Spelthorne 2021 is currently open for entries until August 31<sup>st</sup> and as of May 4th, there were 81 photos from 34 residents (in 2020 83 residents took part).

The categories are: - Nature in Spelthorne, Business in Action, Sporting Spelthorne, Community in Spelthorne and an Under 16 category.



Capture Spelthorne is being promoted via social media, SBC website, articles in various publications, contacting schools and also highlighted on the Elmsleigh Centre screen and Brooklands radio. To see the SBC website page, go to [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/capture](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/capture)

The objective this year is to have more entries than 2020 and to enhance our library of photos that will help promote the borough. Until the entry closure date the marketing campaign will continue with category entries reviewed to see what further actions need to be taken to increase the numbers.

The awards night is taking place at Shepperton Studios on November 18th, at this all of the finalists are invited to attend where the winners of each category and the overall winner is announced. Following on from this there will be social media and a press release highlighting the winners. We are also looking into the photos being displayed at the Walled Garden in Sunbury on Thames which has been the case for the last two years



## **Spelthorne Business Awards**

The Spelthorne Business Awards (SBA) started in 2018 with the purpose to highlight the diverse and excellent businesses in the borough and to bring together the business community.

We have had over 30 entries to date this year.

The deadline for entries is 31st July. We are promoting this via social media, press releases, communications to SBF members, interviews on Brooklands radio, SBC eNewsletter, link for the competition added to the team's signature and leaflets being produced for the town centre manager to hand out.





There will also be an article going into the next bulletin.

Link to a video of the 2019 competition - <https://youtu.be/ZLgOJ-GzXxl?t=2>

The awards ceremony will be taking place at the Holiday Inn Shepperton on October 14<sup>th</sup> with a gala dinner and entertainment (covid allowing).

Post event will be a social media campaign and a press release to highlighting the finalists and winners.

## **Economic Assessment**

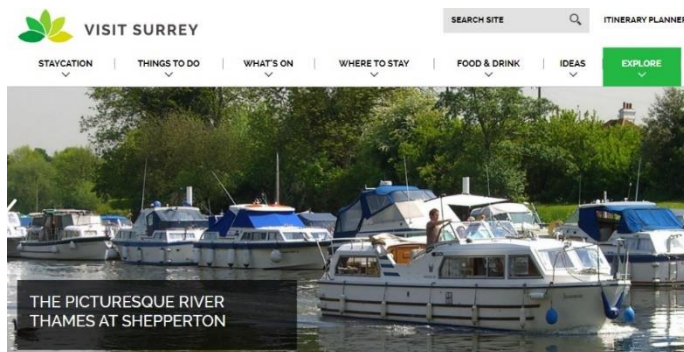
The Economic Assessment (EA) is a comprehensive snapshot of the economic position of the borough.

A wide range of subjects are included and where possible compared with the other boroughs in Surrey as well as adjoining boroughs. The report is updated every five years with the last report published in 2016.

The LEA is currently being updated and will be available early 2022.

It has been unprecedented times with the Covid epidemic and the UK leaving the EEC which will be reflected within the report.

The main objective is to have a comprehensive report that will give councillors, SBC employees and residents an understanding on the economic standing in the borough and this will help the council's decision making for short and long term actions.



from hospitality, leisure and entertainment.

The Tourism Forum hold meetings every six weeks with the aim of bringing in two or three other companies to further strengthen the groups knowledge, opportunities and reach.

Currently the group is looking at cross company promotions which would increase the visitor spend in the borough and increase the visitor numbers to the borough.

The group are looking at opportunities to attract a new audience like transit travellers flying out of Heathrow. We want to encourage travellers to stay in one of our establishments the night/nights before their flight or come and spend their free time here before their afternoon/evening flight.

## **Tourism Forum**

The Tourism Forum (TF) was formed in 2019 with the aim to attract more people to the borough and by doing so boost the local economy.

David Gold has recently taken over the chair of the Tourism Forum alongside the business panel ranging

## **Spelthorne Business Hub – Business Incubator**

The business Incubator was an ambition set out in the 2017 - 2022 Economic Strategy. Page 22 of the strategy's Action Plan stated – We will undertake a detailed analysis of the possibility of introducing an incubator within the Borough which will provide space and resources to promote and support the creation and sustainability of new businesses.

The Incubator will also complement the high volume of entrepreneurs within the borough. Open an incubator within the Borough subject to the business case. Over the years there have been a number of close calls where premises have been identified as suitable for the incubator to set up, but on each of the 7 previous occasions the location was withdrawn.



In 2020 Spelthorne Council purchased the Summit Centre building in Sunbury and the go-ahead was given for the incubator to be set up within the building.

The Incubator will be run by CoTribe CIC Ltd will provide a

coworking environment for new start-ups and early-stage businesses as well as be a base for all small businesses in Spelthorne to access training, support and mentoring to help businesses recover from the pandemic and grow.

This new facility will offer a choice of hot desks, permanent desks and serviced office facilities. Various packages will be available with prices starting from as little as £99 per month.

Being a hub member will include a range of benefits including: Free broadband up to 1GB Access to a meeting room and plenty of room for more informal one to ones Tea and coffee for you, your team and guests included Network with like-minded people Free Start Your Own Business book Free workshops and seminars Access to mentors Free membership to the Spelthorne Business Forum Free parking The Incubator will provide a base for entrepreneurs to develop their ideas and grow their businesses and to turn an innovative spark into a strong commercial enterprise. The incubator was formally opened on 11th June by The Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP

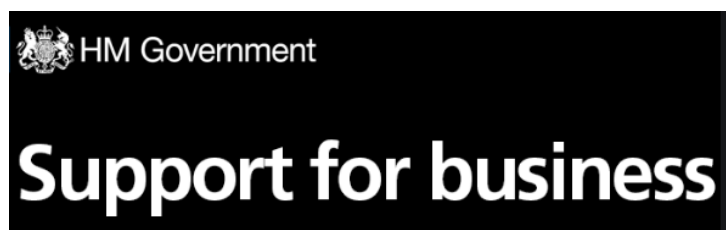
### **Additional Restrictions Grant**

In April 2020 the government made available grants to support businesses throughout the pandemic.

This was paid to businesses through local authorities.

The bulk of these grants targeted businesses that received a bill to pay

businesses rates. Over £50m has been paid out to Spelthorne businesses through a combination of grants and business rates relief.



A separate grant was also made available to support those businesses that did not pay business rates, but may have paid rent and subject to a number of other fixed costs; this group were the smaller business and sole traders. This grant was called the Additional Restrictions Grant, otherwise known as the Discretionary Grant.

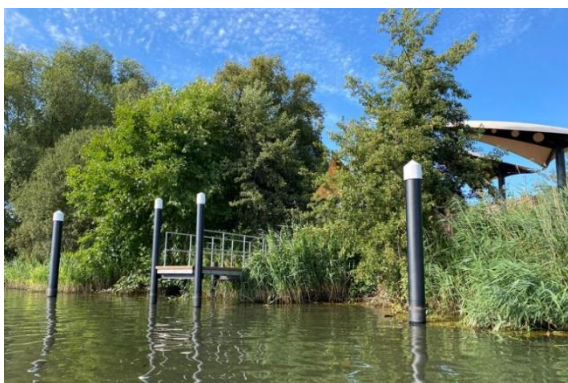
Each local authority was awarded a sum of money based upon their business population and was tasked to implement a scheme that was a best fit for their own area. Spelthorne were awarded 3 grants which totalled around £2.7m. To date 3 windows have been opened to invite businesses to apply for a grant which ranged from £1k to £10k. So far almost 350 grants have been paid out into the bank accounts of these small businesses, the majority of which are sole traders. A further scheme which combines grants and business support was launched in early June 2021.

### **Economic Strategy 22 – 27**

The current Economic Strategy runs from 2017 - 2022; this strategy has been refreshed on 2 occasions since 2017 and is due to be completely replaced in 2022.

Work is ongoing at present to carry out a detailed economic assessment which will inform the future strategy. Some of the key achievements from the original strategy include the introduction of a business incubator, introduction of a town centre manager for Ashford, Shepperton and Sunbury, digital skills training for retailers, introduction of the annual Spelthorne Business Awards competition, introduction of a Spelthorne branded 'How to start your own Business' book, annual Jobs & Skills Fairs at Kempton Park (superseded by on-line Jobs & skills fair during the pandemic), instigation of a Visitor Economy Group with local businesses, introduction of gigabit speed broadband capacity in the borough and more.

The first draft of the new strategy for 2022 - 27 will be available around November for the Committee to comment and contribute to; ongoing contact will be held with the Chair and Vice Chair of the group as the draft strategy is pulled together.



### **Staines Jetty**

The new jetty was an idea that came out of the River Thames Task Group Chaired by Cllr Leighton and was project managed by Keith McGroary.

The idea was that it would relieve pressure on the mooring outside the old Town Hall and provided a dedicated landing area for river

boats so they could pick up and drop off passengers in Staines.

This would add to the attraction of Staines as a destination as it would attract additional footfall into the town through a regular service with times and dates of sailing published on a timetable. The jetty was officially opened by Cllr Leighton on 4th June 2021.

### **Staines Business Improvement District**

The Staines Business Improvement District (BID) was voted in by the town with a huge majority and became a legally recognised group in April 2017.

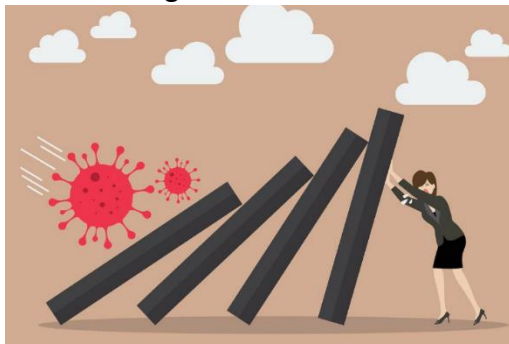
The BID collects a levy from its members which totals in excess of £300k a year. This is then used to deliver the BID's actions within the proposal document and is managed by a BID Board.

Terry Collier and Keith McGroary represent SBC on this Board. A BID has a lifespan of 5 years when a new vote must be held to decide whether or not the BID should continue. The next vote will be held around February 2022 and if successful will continue for a further 5 years.



### **Recovery Plan**

In September 2020 a standalone economic recovery plan was implemented. This was intended to give a focus on some of the key activities that needed to be delivered or led by the Council in order to support a recovery from the pandemic in the borough.



We have been successful in obtaining a grant which match funded the cost of £82k worth of new equipment in the borough to help with the effect of the pandemic; this includes 9 new cycle racks, a new digital screen in the Elmsleigh centre to remind people about their responsibilities to stay safe as

well as advertise events and offers, 34 new ramps were issued to every shop in the BID area that did not have disabled access, so has helped make the town more accessible and 2 digital screens in the Two Rivers to help customers and shoppers alike in the same way as the Elmsleigh Centre.

We have a bid in to DWP under the government's Kickstart Scheme which is for in excess of £110k to introduce a Youth Hub which will provide on-going support for young people to get into employment.

A group has been set up with BUPA to utilise unused apprenticeship levies so that this can be awarded to companies that do not pay the levy to help upskill existing staff as well as provide training for new employees / apprentices.

A Jobs & Recovery Group has been set up including DWP, SBC, Brooklands College, A2D, Runnymede & Elmbridge Council ED Officers to work collectively to establish areas of collaboration and making the best use of shared resources as well as sharing real-time intelligence and information regarding the impact of the epidemic.

### **Youth Hub**

An application has been submitted to the DWP for funds to set up a Youth Hub in Spelthorne.

This will be to help 16- to 24-year-old NEET (not in education or training) young people into work or education.





The project team is made up of Spelthorne Council, A2 Dominion, Brooklands College, Gary Hudson (Click 26) and Nick Charalambous and has committed to helping 189 young people back into work or education by the end of the 12 month funding period.

Pending application. Expecting to have a final answer in May / June



### **Apprentice Levy**

A apprentice Levy gifting scheme has been created with a group of partners to gather spare Apprentice Levy funds by means of pledges by local companies which will be distributed to local small companies to help upskill staff and take on new staff. Partners - BUPA, Association of Learning Providers Surrey,

FSB, Weir Training and Carol Greaves. Linking the project with Youth Hub.

Heathrow have pledged £100k for Spelthorne and we have asked Spelthorne Council HR to pledge their surplus levy. We are aiming to launch the scheme Summer 2021

### **Corporate Social Responsibility**

The ED Team have been working to link Local business with local causes and social enterprise to ensure CSR spend by local companies benefits the residents of Spelthorne .

We log the outcomes via a Spreadsheet which has been created to capture CSR gifting outcomes.

A few examples: Holiday Inn gifted furniture to local youth centres, charity and small start-up restaurant and McDonalds are building a new Kitchen in the Ashford Youth Centre. Primark and BA donated bedding and blankets to the Spelthorne foodbank and a local furniture supplier donated thousands of pounds worth of showroom furniture to Spelthorne for the stepdown homes.



### **Inward Investment**

The Inward Investment role is to attract businesses to the borough, encourage businesses to stay in the borough and create a marketing plan to promote Spelthorne as the place for businesses to move to.

We are building an Inward Investment website and promotional brochure to send to estate agents to promote Spelthorne to potential tenants.

We are also developing a coordinated suite of marketing materials to use alongside the website.

### **Key Account Management**

We are delivering a Key Account Management role which builds close working relationship with the top 20 businesses in the borough and supporting large businesses with any queries they may have.

Top 20 companies have been identified and businesses that have international ownership. Regular communication has

been interrupted by Covid 19 however communications via SBF have continued to maintain visibility.



We aim to have a CRM system that helps record company interactions and support the KAM process within the next couple of months. We will also reengage with all large companies as they start coming back to work after Covid 19 restrictions lift.



### **Bounceback Street**

This Initiative led by a Tech Entrepreneur to help the low skilled, low paid, unemployed workers that have been

made redundant due to Covid find new work opportunities by delivering a programme that builds their confidence and helps with CV and interview skills then matches with suitable employers.

We have set up a working group with Click 26, BUPA and Spelthorne Council to build the scheme bringing together delivery partners.

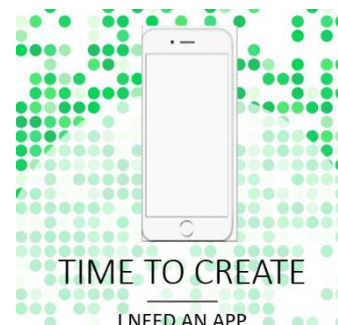
Scheme to be ready to launch Q3 2021

### **Youth APP (I need)**

We are working with a partnership with Tech Entrepreneur and Brooklands College students to build an app that will create work opportunities for young people in Spelthorne.

The App is in development stage with Click 26, Brooklands College and then will be trailed by the youth Hub team.

App ready to trial Q3 2021





### **Spelthorne Business Forum**

Spelthorne Business Forum CIC is a partnership between local Council and local businesses to support the business economy of Spelthorne through mentoring, support, networking and

B2B connections.

Tracey has taken Chair role in October 2021 and written a Strategy and built an executive board of business leaders from across different business sectors in Spelthorne

Grow membership to 1000+ members. Develop the website to include channels for business sectors. Develop the Business directory to drive the "Buy Local" agenda.