

SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL POSITION STATEMENT ON THE LEVEL 2 SURREY COUNTY DEAL – November 2023

Historically, Spelthorne Council has not been well served by Surrey County Council. There is a perception amongst our communities that we are a forgotten part of the County, and as a result have not received the resources, time and investment relative to our needs. The County Deal offers an opportunity to reset the relationship.

There is currently a total lack of clarity and information around what the County Deal will mean for Spelthorne. Whilst no date for implementation has been given, as a Council we need to be clear to our communities, residents and businesses what our position is.

This Position Statement therefore sets out some over-riding principles that we will apply to this Council's decision-making process on the County Deal moving forwards.

1. **Best interests** - We will always work in the best interests of our communities, residents and businesses who we understand the best. We will actively challenge Surrey on how they believe they will be better able 'to achieve the best quality of life'. They will need to demonstrate on the basis of their past successes.
2. **Local services** - Where it makes sense for a service to be delivered locally this should continue to happen, especially where we have a track record of delivering a high-quality service targeting our needs (known as subsidiarity).
3. **New services** - Where it makes sense, we will consider what options there might be for delivering some of the new areas of responsibility which have been given to County at a local level (known as double devolution)
4. **Listen, engage and consult**- Surrey needs to truly listen to and understand the needs our communities by fully engaging with Spelthorne Council, our residents and our communities on a 'level playing field'. It must be a proper meaningful two-way dialogue which is open and accountable. It must not be just be paying 'lip service'.
5. **Partnership** - Surrey need to work in true partnership with this Council to deliver what is required for the benefit of our communities, residents and businesses.
6. **Maximise benefits** - We should maximise the value of what is already in place rather than automatically move to embrace the new.
7. **Clarity** - Surrey needs to provide early clarity on what is meant by terms such as 'hosting' and 'pooling' of strategic services so this borough and its communities fully understand the implications and can plan accordingly.
8. **Evidence** - We will work to ensure that all decisions around any hosting or pooling of services are based on what the evidence shows and what this borough needs, rather than a 'one size fits all' countywide approach. Surrey will need to ensure they fully deliver their 'No-one Left Behind' programme within this borough. (Spelthorne has a number of high indices of deprivation compared to the remainder of Surrey).
9. **Resources** - We will work ensure that resources follow what the evidence and need shows for our borough. Surrey will need to ensure the resourcing and funding allocations will enable them to fully deliver their 'No-one Left Behind' programme within this borough. (Spelthorne has historically seen chronic under-investment compared to need).
10. **Local governance** - We will work to ensure that there is no duplication of existing governance structures at county level where they already exist locally (so our Healthy Spelthorne Board should be used for resource and funding decisions)