

MINUTES OF THE SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of Spelthorne Borough Council
held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines-
upon-Thames on Thursday, 22 May 2025 at 7.00 pm**

Present:

Councillors:

J.T.F. Doran	J. Button	S.C. Mooney
M. Arnold	J.P. Caplin	L. E. Nichols
M.M. Attewell	D.C. Clarke	K.E. Rutherford
C. Bateson	S.M. Doran	D. Saliagopoulos
S.N. Beatty	S.A. Dunn	J.R. Sexton
M. Beecher	R.V. Geach	J.A. Turner
S. Bhadye	K.M. Grant	B. Weerasinghe
M. Bing Dong	K. Howkins	H.R.D. Williams
H.S. Boparai	N. Islam	P.N. Woodward
T. Burrell	M.J. Lee	
J.R. Boughtflower	A. Mathur	

Apologies: Councillors L.H. Brennan, R. Chandler, D.L. Geraci, A. Gale, M. Gibson and S. Gyawali

Councillor M. Buck, The Mayor, in the Chair

46/25 Election of Mayor

The retiring Mayor, Councillor M Buck welcomed all members and guests to the Annual Meeting of the Council.

The Mayor gave a thank you speech as follows:

“Fellow councillors, officers, distinguished guest and above all the incredible people of Spelthorne.

Today, I stand before you for the final time as your Mayor. I do so, not only with farewell in my heart, but with humbleness, deep gratitude and with immense pride on what we have built and achieved together.

When I began this incredible journey as your Mayor, I remembered when I first wore the chain of office, I knew I was not just accepting a role in the Council, I was embracing a very important responsibility. On that day I made a solemn promise to serve with compassion, with integrity and with a deep commitment to every resident whilst focussing on the community and our beautiful borough. Today, as I conclude this chapter, I say with all humility that I kept my promises. I have not just performed my duties, but I safeguarded the values of this Borough with the highest regard. I honoured our traditions, I upheld our civic pride and I presided with utmost fairness, with dignity and respect.

For me, being Mayor is not about status or ceremony, it's not about my personal enjoyment or taking any financial advantage. It's about service to the community. All my community engagements were visible. My words were sincere. But most importantly my intentions were pure. I remained a-political throughout. I served not for recognition or applause, but with devotion to our people. It was a profound opportunity for me to give back to the community that embraced me with open arms and trusted me with their heart.

My mayoral year has been more than a year of public service. It has been a year of purpose. A year where I stood not above the people, but with the people. I walked through every corner of Spelthorne, I shook hands not only with dignitaries, but with those who were deprived and often forgotten. I listened to the dreams, the concerns and learnt from the wisdom of our residents. From school children, our youth to our eldest citizen, some even over 103 years young, I saw in every face the beating heart of Spelthorne. Everyone holds a story, and every person deserves to be seen.

Together with the residents of Spelthorne, we celebrate our successes and achievements. This year we celebrated Spelthorne's 50th Anniversary, making half a century of unitary, resilience and community service. We honoured our past, we embraced our present but we dare to imagine our future.

My mayoral year was filled with events, activities and celebrations which I have been updating you on throughout the year and thank you for your participation. However, I would like to mention a few highlights where we revived a forgotten tradition which was once an historical and civic pride linking the city of London to Staines which was the commemoration of the London Stone which is standing at the memorial garden in Staines by the side of the river. I had the privilege of welcoming the Lord Mayor of London and his delegation, coming by the river in their wonderful fleet of flotillas rekindling an ancient bond that reminded us that Spelthorne has a rich history which we are very proud of.

Building community spirit was one of my focuses. We raised funds to support causes close to my heart, supporting not only my nominated charities but another fifteen charities, especially the quiet ones, the small ones, the unsung heroes working in silence, and transforming lives of people every day. They

reminded me that true service is not in the spotlight, but in the shadows where compassion meets action.

I also recognised nearly 20 dedicated individuals with the Spelthorne Civic Awards for their outstanding contribution to voluntary service and we also celebrated two other amazing groups recognised by the King with the Kings Aware for voluntary services. During my mayoral year, our unsung heroes were acknowledged with respect and dignity for going above and beyond serving the community as volunteers because we know they do it without any expectation, they do it just out of passion for their community.

The businesses in the Borough have been the lifeblood of our high streets and the future of our economy. I had the honour of meeting many of you, opening a dozen of new businesses, celebrating excellence through our Business Awards, and planting the seeds of tomorrow's entrepreneurs through our business plan competition. Your residence is an inspiration and I am eager to do more to champion our business community.

I also took great pride in reviving a relationship that was at risk of fading, the cherished friendships with our twinning towns. Over the years and after Brexit those bonds weakened but I put a lot of time and efforts to reignite that friendship with new energy and purpose. Last month we held a civic ceremony to celebrate 35 years of twinning with Melun and 15 years with Grand Port.

Today, we have moved beyond the symbolic friendship to a meaningful cooperation. We have been talking about business partnerships, cultural exchange, educational and sporting opportunities and more. Our twinning with our French and Mauritian partners is now stronger than ever and more exciting too. Tomorrow morning the Mayor who is to be elected tonight will be going to Melun for a weekend of friendships and celebrations with the French and their wider European twinning family. This is what we call unity and friendship reborn and I am proud of reviving this connection.

This year there were many events bringing people together in the Borough. We raised awareness on several health and environmental issues, we celebrated VE day, Staines-upon-Thames Day, Festival of Light and many more; we accomplished a lot for the community.

I will not measure my achievements by numbers or how much money we have raised. I will measure it by something deeper, how many hearts I touched, how many lives I uplifted, how many moments we created that reminded people they are not forgotten, that their life matters and that they are loved.

I leave this role knowing one eternal truth, nothing lasts forever. Yesterday, another Mayor sat in this chair, tomorrow another will take the chain. Every journey has a beginning and a destination. My journey as your mayor was never about where it will end. It was about service and the legacy we leave behind. Today I leave knowing that I served tirelessly, not for recognition but

because it felt it was the right thing to do. This was not just a year of service, it was my mission, my sacred duty. I am honoured beyond words to have fulfilled this.

And whilst my time as mayor concludes, my mission continues. I will not step away, I will step forward. I will continue to listen, to advocate, to fight for what is just and I will continue to stand with the people of Spelthorne in unity, with respect and in hope.

To the people of Spelthorne, you are the soul of this Borough. Thank you for opening up your homes, your shops, your offices, your events and your hearts to me.

To all my fellow councillors and leaders of all political or independent groups, Councillors Sexton, Button, Boughtflower, Beecher and Nichols and to Councillor Bateson I want to thank you for your collaboration and support, I hope we had a great time together.

To our hard working officers, Daniel and his team, Lee, Terry and in particular to the Council's Monitoring Officer, Linda Heron, Karen and her team and all officers and staff of the Council, I thank you for your unwavering support during my mayoral year.

To everyone who has walked this journey with me, my charity committee, my PA, council colleagues, deputy mayor, past mayors, volunteers, residents, community champions and all the distinguished guests in the gallery, thank you for supporting me throughout my mayoral year.

Finally, to my wife, Madhuri, thank you for being by my side throughout this journey and for supporting me every step of the way.

To conclude, during my mayoral year, I worked with humility to promote the greater good of our community whilst staying true to the principles of righteousness and service.

- I have not just marked time – I have made a difference
- I have not just celebrated – I have built something lasting
- And I have not just served – I have fulfilled a successful mission

May the spirit of unity, compassion and hope continue to guide Spelthorne's future.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you.

May God bless you all and may God bless Spelthorne".

It was moved by Councillor Button and seconded by Councillor Beecher that Councillor J Doran be appointed Mayor for the Municipal Year 2025-26

It was moved by Councillor Clarke and seconded by Councillor Boughtflower that Councillor Woodward be appointed Mayor for the Municipal Year 2025-26

In favour of Councillor J Doran - 19 votes

In favour of Councillor Woodward - 14 votes

Council **resolved** that Councillor J Doran be appointed Mayor for the Municipal Year 2025-26.

A short adjournment took place to hand over the robes and Badge of Office to the new Mayor.

Councillor J Doran made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Mayor of the Borough of Spelthorne and took the Chair. He presented Councillor Buck with his past Mayor's Badge.

(Councillor J Doran, The Mayor, in the Chair)

The Mayor invited the retiring Mayor's Consort, Mrs M Buck, to present his Consort with the Mayor's Consort Badge. The Mayor then invited his Consort, Mrs S Doran, to present Mrs M Buck with the past Mayor's Consort Badge.

47/25 Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 April 2025 and the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 06 May 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

48/25 Disclosures of Interest

Councillors Attewell, Boparai, Mooney, Sexton and Weerasinghe advised they were also Surrey County Councillors.

49/25 Election of Deputy Mayor

It was moved by Councillor Nichols and seconded by Councillor S Doran that Councillor Dunn be appointed Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2025-26.

Council **resolved** that Councillor Dunn be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2025-26.

Councillor Dunn made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Spelthorne and announced that her husband, Mr Richard Dunn, would be the Deputy Mayor's Consort. The Mayor presented Councillor Dunn with the Deputy Mayor's Badge.

The Mayor's Consort presented the Deputy Mayor's Consort Badge to the Deputy Mayor's Consort.

50/25 Announcements from the Mayor

The Mayor made the following announcements:

Evening all

I would like to say thank you for electing me as Mayor – I feel honoured with your trust in me.

I shall endeavour to uphold the best traditions for Spelthorne, working hand in hand with the Deputy Mayor Cllr, Sandra Dunn and with these unsettled times around Local Government Reorganisation I expect this to be a busy year for us all.

On a separate note, I would like to mention my four charities for my mayoral year:

1. Surrey care Trust - Based at the Lord Knyvett Hall and the Stanwell Community Allotment, the Stanwell Community Group is a powerhouse community programme led by Surrey Care Trust volunteers.

together, they support the Stanwell community to:

- Encourage pride in the neighbourhood
- Represent the diverse community
- Support residents to get involved through events, regular activities, and celebrations
- Encourage good physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Reduce social isolation and increase social connections

Over the past year, over 1,500 adults, children, and families took part in activities ranging from a Lantern Parade, celebrating Diwali, Family Fundays and of course, activities delivered from the award-winning Stanwell Community Allotments.

2. 1st Stanwell Air Scout Group

They provide Scouting to boys and girls aged 6 to 14 in Stanwell, Surrey, in the Beaver, Cub and Scout sections.

Scouting offers challenge and adventure to 400,000 young people aged 6-25 across the UK. They believe in helping their members fulfil their potential by working in teams, learning by doing and thinking for themselves. They are working to make Scouting available to all and are passionate about what they do.

The sort of adventure Scouting offers is the chance to experience something different and the opportunity to challenge yourself. When a Beaver Scout wakes up the morning after a sleepover, or a Cub Scout has just got over her fear of heights by completing her first abseil – that's adventure.

3. Families Thriving Together

They offer free accessible and inclusive parenting support for everyone, breaking down barriers and reducing stigma. At Families Thriving Together, they encourage communities to come together with the common issue of parenting, normalise parenting support and reduce the stigmas attached to attending parenting programmes.

4. Spelthorne Museum

Spelthorne Museum has a range of exhibits and displays, using many finds from local archaeological excavations, to tell the story of Spelthorne from the last Ice Age to modern times:

- the London Stone, a 1738 Fire Engine, a Victorian kitchen
- special exhibitions that change during the year
- local interest features as the 'Window on Spelthorne'

The museum is entirely set up and run by volunteers and has an interesting history itself.

Last but not least, I would like to mention a few events for my mayoral year.

1. Afternoon Tea - I will look at doing this twice, as it's a good fundraiser for charity.
2. Kempton races is always a winner with the councillors and again a good fundraiser.
3. Quiz night at the Magpie.
4. Summer evening garden party.
5. The Mayors Ball – the biggest fundraiser for the year.

Please support me in my mayoral year and let's raise as much as we can for these four worthy local charities.

Thank You”.

51/25 Election of Leader of the Council

It was moved by Councillor Bateson and seconded by Councillor Williams that Councillor Sexton be appointed Leader of the Council for the Municipal Year 2025-26.

Councillor Boughtflower requested a record vote.

For	Councillors J Doran, Dunn, Arnold, Bateson, Beatty, Beecher, Boparai, Buck, Burrell, Button, Caplin, S Doran, Geach, Grant, Nichols, Rutherford, Sexton, Turner, Williams – 19 Votes
Against	0
Abstain	Councillors Attewell, Bhadye, Bing Dong, Boughtflower, Clarke, Howkins, Islam, Lee, Mathur, Mooney, Saliagopoulos, Weerasinghe, Woodward – 13 Votes

Council **resolved** that Councillor Sexton be appointed as Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council for the Municipal Year 2025-26.

52/25 Announcements from the Leader

The Leader made the following announcements:

“On 9 May, Surrey’s district and borough councils, including Spelthorne, submitted proposals to government on the future of local government. Nine of us back three unitary authorities. Others, including the county council, prefer two. We firmly believe local councils should stay local. Bigger, centralised structures risk losing touch with the people they serve. Now, we await the government’s decision this autumn.

Earlier this month, Commissioners were appointed following the 2024 best value inspection. I welcome them and am determined to restore Spelthorne’s financial health. We’ll work together to deliver real, lasting improvements.

We have approved our new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy - a five-year plan to make sure every resident has a safe, affordable place to call home and early support if they are at risk of losing it.

On top of that, our new Leisure and Culture Strategy is in place. While leisure is often seen as optional, we know it’s essential for health, happiness, and a connected community.

We have also introduced a new Public Space Protection Order to tackle antisocial behaviour including misuse of bikes, e-scooters, catapults and face coverings. It's not a silver bullet, but it's one more way we're keeping Spelthorne safe. Signs will go up around the borough from 4th June.

And finally, Spelthorne in Bloom is now open! If you're proud of your garden or allotment, get your entry in by 20 June. It's a brilliant celebration of community spirit".

53/25 Election of Deputy Leader

It was moved by Councillor Nichols and seconded by Councillor Beecher that Councillor Bateson be appointed Deputy Leader of the Council for the Municipal Year 2025-26

Council **resolved** that Councillor Bateson be appointed Deputy Leader of the Council for the Municipal Year 2025-26.

The meeting adjourned at 20.20
The meeting reconvened at 20.34

54/25 Announcements from the Chief Executive

The Mayor invited the Chief Executive to speak to the Chamber.

The Chief Executive made the following announcements:

"Thank you, Mister Mayor. May I take this opportunity to extend a heartiest congratulations to yourself and Madame Deputy Mayor on your respective elections. May I also take this opportunity to join the Leader in extending a very warm welcome to Ministry colleagues and to Commissioners to Spelthorne. We look forward to working in close collaboration with them through the journey of Local Government Reorganisation, and in achieving Best Value. Thank you."

55/25 Establishment of Committees and Sub-Committee 2025/26

56/25 Allocation of Seats on Committees and Sub-Committees

Council **resolved** to agree the allocations of seats to each political party as outline in the Supplementary Agenda and to increase the number of seats on the following Committees by one to ensure that each group received its full allocation of seats:

Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

Commercial Assets Sub-Committee.

57/25 Appointment of members to Committees and Sub-Committees

Council **resolved** to agree the appointments of members to the Committees as outlined in the Supplementary Agenda.

58/25 Appointment of Chairs and Vice Chairs to Committees

Council **resolved** to agree the appointment of Chairs and Vice-chairs to the Committees as outlined in the Supplementary Agenda.

59/25 Appointment of Named Substitutes to Committees

Council **resolved** to agree the nominations for Substitutes for Committees as outlined in the Supplementary Agenda.

60/25 Nomination to Outside Bodies

South West Middlesex Crematorium Board

It was proposed by Councillor Nichols and seconded by Councillor Bateson that Councillor Dunn serve as the Council's representative on the South West Middlesex Crematorium Board.

Council **resolved** that Councillor Dunn serve as the Council's representative on the South West Middlesex Crematorium Board.

No nominations were received for the appointment of a deputy to the Council's representative on the South West Middlesex Crematorium Board for 2025/26.

Surrey Police and Crime Panel

It was proposed by Councillor Button and seconded by Councillor Beatty that Councillor Burrell serve as the Council's representative on the Surrey Police and Crime Panel.

It was proposed by Councillor Boughtflower and seconded by Councillor Lee that Councillor Clarke serve as the Council's representative on the Surrey Police and Crime Panel.

Councillor Burrell – 17
Councillor Clarke – 13

Council **resolved** that Councillor Burrell serve as the Council's representative on the Surrey Police and Crime Panel.

61/25 Nomination to Outside Bodies - Surrey Leaders' Group

It was proposed by Councillor Sexton and seconded by Councillor Bateson and **resolved** that Councillor Buck's nomination to sit on the Adult and Health Select Committee be submitted to the Surrey Leaders' Group.

Councillor Saliagopoulos asked that it be put on the minutes that she did not agree with this resolution.

The meeting ended at 20.55