

Appendix 1: Introduction and overview of Spelthorne

As outlined in our Housing Strategy, we believe Spelthorne is a successful borough that offers suitably accessible transport links, great employment opportunities and plenty of green open spaces. The Housing Strategy recognises that access to a range of appropriate, affordable housing options is vitally important to ensure that we can build on Spelthorne's success. Furthermore, access to affordable housing options is one method of tackling homelessness and preventing rough sleeping in the borough.

Spelthorne is located on the south-west edge of London and in the north-west of Surrey, neighbouring the boroughs of Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead, Runnymede, Elmbridge, and the London Boroughs of Richmond upon Thames, Hounslow and Hillingdon. The north of the borough borders London Heathrow airport. Spelthorne is densely populated and has five main urban areas: Ashford, Shepperton, Staines-upon-Thames, Stanwell and Sunbury. Outside these urban areas:

- 65% is green belt,
- 30% of the total area is either flood plain or reservoir,
- 17% of the borough is water, and
- We have 12 miles of River Thames frontage.

Almost half of Surrey's 20 most deprived super output areas are in Spelthorne. Three are in the ward of Stanwell North, two in Ashford North and Stanwell South and one in each of Ashford East and Sunbury Common. Spelthorne has the highest number of lone parent families and the highest level of child poverty in Surrey; it also has the highest under-18 conception rate in the county. That said, residents are largely healthy, with life expectancy for both males and females slightly above the national average.

Whilst house prices remain well above the national average, most residents are owner-occupiers (73%), followed by private rented (13%) and social rented (12%).

Spelthorne has a slightly lower population of under-30s (34%) compared to the rest of the country (37%), and a slightly higher population of 30-69 year olds (42%) compared with the UK average of (40%), The number of 70+ is 23%, which is broadly in line with the rest of the UK (24%).

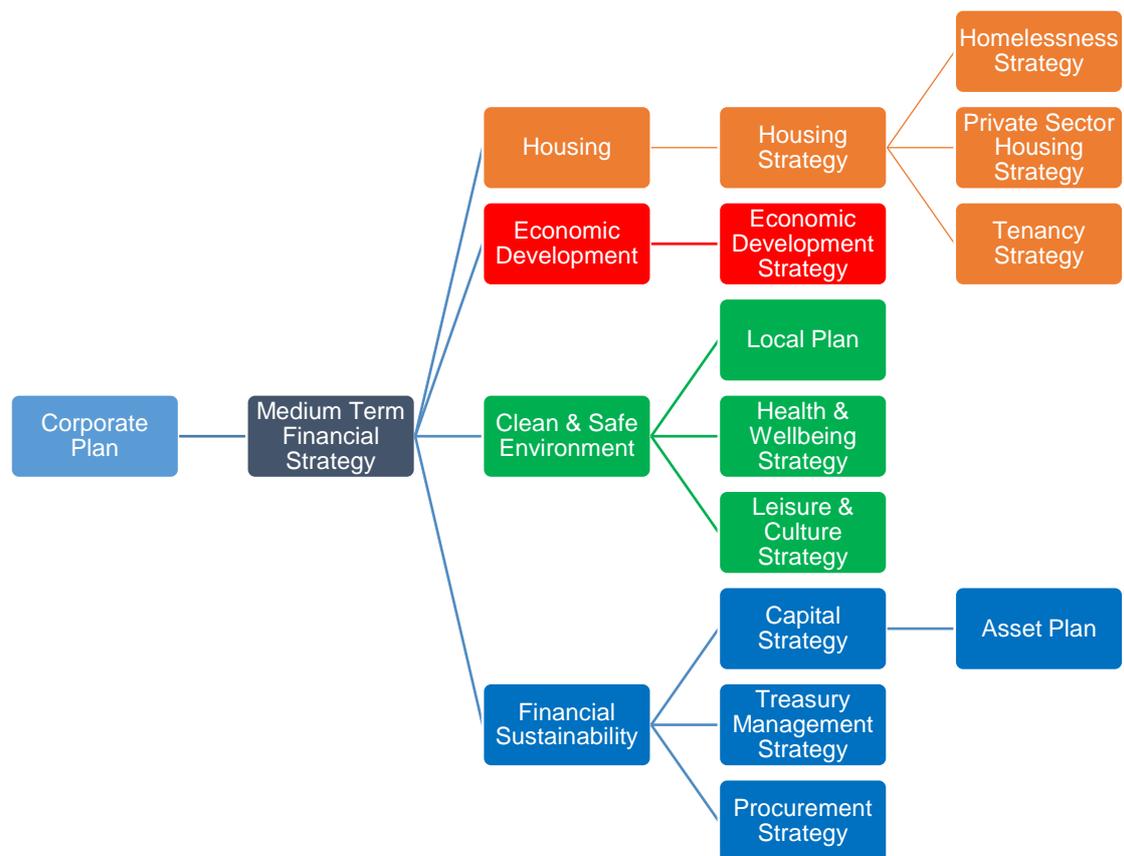
Although the number of VAT and/or PAYE-registered business has fallen slightly over the past four years, Spelthorne has a low rate of unemployment: 1.4% of those economically active aged 16 to 64, compared to the South East (2.2%) and UK as a whole (3.5%). Heathrow Airport is a significant local employer, with 8.3% of Spelthorne's working population employed there. Significantly, 21.5% of those in work in Stanwell North are in low level employment compared to an average of 11.6% in Surrey. Average wages are slightly above regional averages at £630 per week for full-time employees.

How the Homelessness Strategy links in with the Council's wider work

Housing is one of the Council's four corporate priorities, and our Housing Strategy is the foundation for our approach to meeting our corporate aim:

"To strive towards meeting the housing needs of our residents, providing working families and others in housing need within the Borough with suitable accommodation."

Both our Housing and Homelessness Strategy interlink with each other. Our Housing Strategy has to consider the housing needs of our residents that may be at risk or threatened with homelessness in order to tackle it.



**Note that links above between priorities / strategies do not accurately represent the relationships between the different documents as many strategies interlink with multiple areas of the Council's work.*

Branching from the Housing Strategy, we have developed our Homelessness Strategy which sets out our aims and objectives for preventing and tackling homelessness in Spelthorne borough for the next five years. It sets out a strategy that ensures households who are threatened or who are faced with homelessness have sufficient support and means of accessing suitable accommodation. This strategy ensures that we develop effective partnerships with various organisations to meet the support needs of our clientele.

How the Homelessness Strategy was developed

The Housing Strategy and Policy team at the Council conducted a Homelessness Review to identify homelessness patterns and trends from the last five years. A summary of these findings were presented at two stakeholder events held at Spelthorne Borough Council which saw the presence of over 100 attendees across 40 organisations. These stakeholder events were workshop based to provide an opportunity for other agencies to offer feedback on our services and suggestions on how we can work together in our future homelessness strategy.

This strategy is based on the results of the Homelessness Review and was developed by a working group of relevant council officers and the housing portfolio holder, who jointly considered the findings. Corporate and partnership involvement in formulating the strategy has established well supported strategic priorities from the relevant parties working to prevent and tackle homelessness. We want to ensure our strategy is effective so we have assured it is consistent with other local plans and strategies.