



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

Deborah McLaughlin  
Commissioner  
Spelthorne Borough Council  
*By email*

James Blythe  
*Deputy Director, Local Government  
Stewardship and Interventions*

**Ministry of Housing,  
Communities and Local  
Government**  
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8 May 2025

Dear Deborah,

I am writing to let you know that the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has nominated you as Commissioner for the purpose of the Directions made today under section 15(5) and (6) for the Local Government Act 1999 in relation to Spelthorne Borough Council. I enclose the formal nomination document.

You are nominated as Commissioner for the period from 8 May 2025 to 31 January 2026. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has today also nominated Lesley Seary as Lead Commissioner and Peter Robinson and Mervyn Greer as Commissioners. Given that councils in the Surrey area have been invited to submit proposals for unitary local government, the Secretary of State will keep the Directions and the Commissioners' roles and powers under review. It remains for the Secretary of State to decide if changes are necessary to ensure that Spelthorne has the support required to accelerate recovery and protect the public purse.

As Commissioner you will have the roles and responsibilities set out in the Directions, a copy of which I enclose, along with a copy of an explanatory memorandum. Alongside this, as Commissioner, you will work in close partnership with the Council during the consultation on proposals for unitary local government and the implementation of any such proposals later agreed upon. Spelthorne's financial challenges require a measured approach to achieving value for money for residents, and I trust you to use your judgment and expertise to oversee and deliver a robust plan of improvement. Under the Directions, Commissioners will act jointly or severally and are accountable to the Secretary of State in that you have been nominated by them and can have your nomination withdrawn by them.

You will be entitled to a fee for each day you act as Commissioner. You will also be entitled to reasonable expenses. Under the terms of the Directions, it is the Council's responsibility to meet these costs, and the Secretary of State has set these fees for you at £1,100 per day up to a maximum of 150 days per annum. These should not be exceeded without prior approval of the Secretary of State. As to reasonable expenses,

we would expect these to be in accordance with the rules for senior officers set out in the Council's staff handbook.

In your role as public appointee, it may be necessary to disclose information on your remuneration as part of annual accounts and you will be required to consent to the disclosure of this information. By accepting this appointment you will be indicating consent to this.

You will wish to note that the Secretary of State has asked that you and your fellow Commissioners provide regular progress reports after an initial period of six months and thereafter at six-month intervals – or any other time deemed necessary by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State also expects you to take an interest in matters across the Council, beyond those functions you are exercising, given the importance of ensuring that the Council is delivering best value in all that it does.

You are required to exercise care in the use of information that you acquire in the course of your duties and to protect information that is held in confidence. You must declare any personal or business interests which may, or may be perceived to, influence your judgements in performing your functions. These interests include (without limitation), personal direct and indirect pecuniary interests, and any such interest of your close family members and/or of people living in the same household as you or as your close family members. You are expected to ensure that acceptance of gifts and hospitality can stand up to public scrutiny. Similarly, care should be taken that no extravagance is involved with working lunches and other social occasions.

In your role as a public appointee, you must act appropriately and in accordance with the required standards. You are required to uphold the standards of conduct set out in the *Seven Principles of Public Life* (as amended from time to time). You will be required to demonstrate your commitment to the principles and values of public service throughout your appointment.

Your appointment has the status of an office holder and not of an employee. Nothing in this letter shall be construed as, or taken to create a contract of service or contract for services between yourself and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Crown or Spelthorne Borough Council.

Should you have any queries or issues either now or during the Direction period, please contact me in the first instance.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for assisting in this intervention, and for your prior work on the Best Value Inspection. We are very grateful for your commitment to taking up this challenge to improve the performance of the Council so that it effectively serves and protects the people of Spelthorne.

Yours sincerely,

**James Blythe**  
**Deputy Director, Local Government Stewardship and Interventions**

**NOMINATION UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1999 (DIRECTIONS UNDER SECTION 15(5) AND (6) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1999 TO SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL, 2025)**

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in exercise of powers under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999 and in accordance with the Directions to Spelthorne Borough Council dated 8 May 2025 nominates Deborah McLaughlin as Commissioner for the period beginning on 8 May 2025 and ending on 31 January 2026 or such time as the Secretary of State determines.