

URGENT – Threat to local democracy remains

You may have heard that the Government have scuppered Surrey County Council's bid for a "Single Unitary Surrey". However, Surrey CC Leader Tim Oliver has made it clear that they will continue to work towards this. Let's be clear this would mean dissolving all Boroughs and Districts (including Spelthorne) and combining them into ONE Surrey Council, of 1.2m residents likely run from Reigate. Hardly local to us!

Most local Councillors would go and you could find yourself represented by Councillors living elsewhere in Surrey. Our assets which currently bring enormous benefits to Spelthorne, protecting us from cuts and bringing in more than our Council Tax (over £10million a year) would simply be absorbed into a greater Surrey and most likely the benefit lost to Spelthorne. They may even be sold off. Surrey hardly have a good reputation for financial prudence.

Particularly distasteful is that this was done at the height of the COVID-19 crisis and during lockdown in May/June when Spelthorne Council was doing all it could to help and protect residents; much of this work was actually Surrey's responsibility. Surrey County Council were busy formulating their takeover plans, which were initially submitted to Government in early July! It has been reported that they spent £250,000 of Council Tax Payers money on this failed endeavour. Doubtless much more will follow.

Be clear. Such a takeover would not advantage Spelthorne, we would lose local democracy and focus, we would lose our investment assets and their income, and services would likely again be in peril.

If you oppose this visit the RASSU (Residents Against Single Surrey Unitary) and sign the petition. Local democracy is in great danger. We will be keeping a close watch on this.