

## Dear residents,

I write to you at a time of exceptional change and anxiety because of the doubtful times ahead.

However not all the news is bad or worrying – on the contrary some of the messages coming from the Coalition government signal some positive changes. They are about restoring power to where it belongs, to local people in local communities. The services that are provided for you are too important to be lost in over regulation and centralisation with decisions made by people who don't know anything about local issues.

It appears that ineffective and excessively bureaucratic rules are disappearing daily – this can only help us to be more flexible about how we do things and do them better and more economically. It also means that local people will be in charge of their lives once more and councillors can take the important decisions.

It looks as if, in the future, homes will be built without unnecessary strangulating targets and regional 'spatial' strategies. Councils will be able to make their own decisions on planning so there will be some direct economic benefits for localities.

We look forward to hearing more detail, but this fundamental shift, together with the independence to decide where, how and on what, to spend money, is crucial. It will make it much easier to concentrate scarce resources where they matter most.

I hope that this increased accountability and openness will mean that you will be able to have a much freer and franker relationship with us, your local councillors, and tell us what is important to you. I am determined that not only do you have a voice but I hope you will get involved in your local community and encourage others to take responsibility for it too.

While we anticipate that October's Spending Review will be very tough, we are confident that in this authority we have made the necessary moves at an early stage, to ensure that we are better placed to weather the storms ahead than many others.

We face the future with confidence, working together to achieve what is needed in Spelthorne.



Cllr John Packman, Council Leader

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For a list of all the Council meetings for 2010, please visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/calendar\\_2010.doc](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/calendar_2010.doc) or call **01784 451499**.

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