EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF ICT AND E-GOVERNMENT SCRUTINY STANDING PANEL
HELD ON MONDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2005
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2
AT 7.30 - 9.00 PM

Members Present:	M Cohen (Vice-Chairman), Mrs D Borton, M Colling, Mrs D Collins, P McMillan, Mrs P K Rush, Mrs M Sartin and J M Whitehouse
Other members present:	S Metcalfe
Apologies for Absence:	F Maclaine
Officers Present	A Scott (Head of Information, Communications and Technology), V Evans (Customer Services Manager, ICT) and S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer)
Also in attendance:	(none)

21. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

No substitutes had been appointed.

22. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made.

23. NOTES OF THE LAST PANEL MEETING

Agreed subject to the inclusion of Councillor McMillan's apologies for absence.

24. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME

Noted that it was unsure whether the deadline for reporting on the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations. Officers were currently seeking advice from Essex County Council, as it was not known how these would be implemented at District Level.

Agreed that a progress report on the Corporate Contact Centre be made to each meeting.

25. ICT STRATEGY - REVIEW 2005

Noted that the Strategy pulled together all the ICT related strategies being pursued. Additionally it was clear that Central Government was expecting a wholesale change in the way Public Sector services were delivered by exploiting the transformational nature of ICT. The Panel also noted the new 'Government Connect' and 'DirectGov' projects that underpinned the 'transformational government' objectives. It was noted that the Council currently had no information strategy and this would need to be addressed.

The Panel discussed the strategy in detail and endorsed its content.

26.   **MEMBER CONNECTIVITY SCHEME - PROGRESS REPORT**

Committee Management System

It was noted that the Committee Management System (CoMs) implementation was complete. Two additional tasks remained to be completed:

(i)   Back scanning of selected agenda; and

(ii)   Integration of the Forward Plan.

Members Connectivity

Members had received presentation in September which had been well received. Member training needs were being assessed and two types of training were being organised:

(i)   Gold Member training – IT refresher training; and

(ii)   Platinum Member training – connectivity only.

Dates of training would be organised between January and March 2006 and again following the elections in May 2006.

The 'Token' system had been tested and member contract had been developed and circulated to members. A further 'road show' would be held before the December Council meeting.

27.   **WEBCASTING**

It was noted that a further Web casting project was planned. This was shown within the ICT Strategy. It was hoped that a trial of the system would begin next year.

28.   **ELECTORAL PILOTS**

It was noted that the Returning Officer was considering applying to the Government to participate in an electoral pilot again in May 2006.

Schemes being considered included:

(i)   Electronic counting and mobile polling stations;

(ii)   Pre Election publicity; and

(iii)   Postal voting anti fraud initiatives.

The Council would need to apply to Government by 1 December 2005 and would hear the result of the application by 15 December 2005.

29.   **REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

(i)   ICT Strategy

30.   FUTURE MEETINGS

Agreed that S Hill agree a programme of meetings with the Chairman of the Panel.