

Scrutiny Task and Finish Panel Agenda



Services for Older People and Disabled People Task and Finish Panel Thursday, 22nd June, 2006

Place: Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 7.00 pm

**Democratic Services
Officer:** Simon Hill Ext 4249 - Senior Research and Democratic
Services Officer
Email: shill@epingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors Mrs S Perry (Chairman), Mrs J H Whitehouse (Vice-Chairman), D Bateman,
Mrs A Cooper, Mrs A Grigg, P House, D Kelly, P Turpin and K Wright

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| <p>PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS TO ATTEND</p> |
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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Head of Research and Democratic Services) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Head of Research and Democratic Services). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

4. SCOPE OF THE REVIEW (Pages 5 - 16)

Attached to this agenda is a copy of the proposal presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which led to the setting up of this Panel. However, Members now need to determine the scope of the study and produce a set of Terms of Reference, which reflect those objectives for approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. To this end a Task and Finish Planning Form is attached.

In order to help the Panel, a set of 'Notes for Guidance' for the operating of a Task and Finish Panel is also attached. This sets out how a Task and Finish Panel should ideally go about scoping its programme of work, gathering information and evidence and finally reporting back to the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the larger Council. A draft layout for a final report is also attached. *Please note that these are still in draft and may alter over the next few weeks, until endorsed by the July Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.*

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Having agreed the scope of the study and the aims and objectives that the Panel hopes to achieve, it is necessary to agree a work programme to achieve the outcomes. A draft timetable should also be agreed.

Information is currently being gathered about the services the District Council provides for older people and disabled people and will be presented to the Panel in due course. It will most likely be available towards the end of July.

At the same time there exists a Joint Management Team for Older People's Services, which comprises of representatives from Epping Forest Primary Care Trust, Essex Social Services, Epping Forest District Council and Voluntary Action Epping Forest. The team exists to co-ordinate the services available to the elderly, to identify gaps in service and explore ways to fill those gaps and to meet the requirements of the NHS National Service Framework for Old People. The Panel may wish to consider a meeting with the Joint Management Team and whether there may be benefit in co-opting a Member of that Team to join the Panel.

There are various other groups that exist locally to serve the needs of older people and or disabled people and the Panel needs to identify those organisations and how they are to be involved in the study. The Joint Management Team will be able to assist in relation to those groups serving older people.

The Panel needs to consider the most effective way in which to engage in order to get the maximum benefit out of the interaction. This could be meetings of the full Panel in some cases or appointment of a smaller group to carry out visits/interviews in others.

Outcomes and timescale:

The Panel needs to give consideration to the outcomes it would like to achieve. The study area is potentially massive and consideration must be given to the resources

available, both to take forward the study but also to secure the implementation of any recommendations. To that end the Panel should be aiming to put forward at least an interim report with recommendations by the date of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 October 2006 if it wants to make a bid to fund any recommendation in the financial year 2007/08.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs 6 and 25 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require that the permission of the Chairman be obtained, after prior notice to the Chief Executive, before urgent business not specified in the agenda (including a supplementary agenda of which the statutory period of notice has been given) may be transacted.

In accordance with Operational Standing Order 6 (non-executive bodies), any item raised by a non-member shall require the support of a member of the Committee concerned and the Chairman of that Committee. Two weeks' notice of non-urgent items is required.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To be agreed.

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OLDER AND DISABLED PEOPLE TASK AND FINISH PANEL

Proposer's Name: Janet Whitehouse
Supporting Councillors: Liberal Democrat group

Summary of issue to be scrutinised

I would like a panel to look at the services for older people and for disabled people provided by the district council and other agencies such as VAEF, and at services for the general public which elderly or disabled people have difficulty in using. Some of the VAEF services were set up by the council (e.g.: Housing Relocation) or are financially supported by the council.

The aim would be to find out what is provided and if there is difficulty accessing the services, if there are gaps, if they are being under or over used, if the criteria is consistent and if they are adequately advertised and funded. It may be decided that one leaflet publicising all the services for older people should be produced.

Public interest justification

There is a higher than average number of older people in Epping Forest. Despite a number of services being available for them many seem unaware of these. Some services cannot be accessed by older people because of the way the service is delivered.

In December 2006 a section of the Disabled Discrimination Act comes into force that says that public bodies must anticipate problems and encourage the involvement of disabled people in public life. Some organisations have a specific duty to produce a Disability Equality Scheme. To do this the organisation has to gather information, involve disabled people and promote equality. The deaf/blind charity Sense is organising workshops to teach people how to lobby their councillor about this.

Impact on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area

This is difficult to assess until the services are investigated but I would hope that it would enhance the lives of many older and/or disabled residents.

Council Performance

Unknown. I have not had time to search for any relevant PIs.

Keep in Context

DDA relevance is stated above.

27 February 2006

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TASK AND FINISH PANEL PLANNING FORM: OLDER & DISABLED PERSONS

Term of Reference:

Aims and Objectives of Review:

TASK AND FINISH PANEL PLANNING FORM: OLDER & DISABLED PERSONS

Key Issues:

| TIMESCALE | ESTIMATED | ACTUAL |
|------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Commencement | | |
| Finish | | |
| Report. | | |

TASK AND FINISH PANELS GUIDANCE NOTES

Introduction

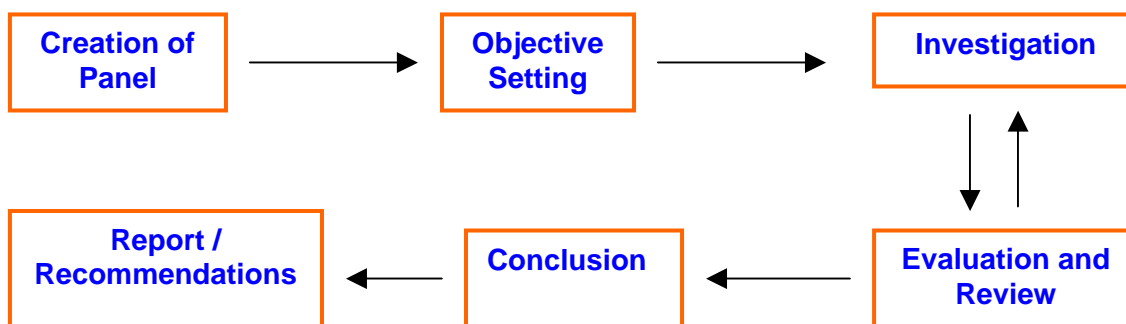
1. Task and Finish Scrutiny Panels are established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to deal with ad hoc projects or reviews included in the annual work programme for Overview and Scrutiny.
2. Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel status will be restricted to those activities which are issue-based, time limited and non-cyclical in character and have clearly defined objectives.
3. Task and Finish Panels as with all Overview and Scrutiny must be member led. The members should control the agenda and have ownership of the work programme.

Scoping Phase

4. **(Pre Scoping)** Before their first meeting with the Chairman, the Lead Officer should hold an informal meeting with any officers may be connected to the topic to be reviewed to try and establish any and all issues related to the topic, so that that the Lead Officer on meeting with the Chairman, has some background information to put to them.
5. **(Scoping)** At the start of a Task and Finish Panel the Lead Officer will draft the Terms of Reference in conjunction with the Chairman of the Panel. The Panel will then meet to discuss the Terms of References and decide how they are to achieve their goals. An emphasis must be put on clear and realistic objectives, which are timely and time limited.
6. Terms of Reference and objectives should, if at all possible, be defined using the **SMART** objective framework:

Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Time Limited

7. The life cycle of a Task and Finish Panel will look like this:



Investigation Phase

8. Before any conclusions can be drawn, evidence must first be gathered. All available sources must be tapped, making the most of the expertise within the Council, any outside organisations and public opinion if applicable.
9. The investigation phase can be handled as a full group review or as a 'delegated tasks' approach, with individual members or small sub groups, gathering evidence to bring back to the full Panel.
10. Any reports by officers to a Task and Finish panel should provide relevant evidence and background but should not make any recommendations. They should be done in an informal style, and not mirror the house Cabinet, Portfolio Holder style of reports.
11. If thought necessary outside bodies should be involved in the evidence gathering phase, either by inviting that organisation to give a one off presentation or by co-opting an outside member onto the Panel as an adviser for the duration of the Panel's life.
12. Creativity and imagination should be used in gathering evidence. Ways can and should be found of getting the views of groups who may be overlooked. Perhaps the review should be publicised and contributions invited, the use of community venues encouraged and feedback provided to participants.

Witnesses and Questioning

13. When questioning witnesses, questions should be kept brief, clear and to the point. Start with broad questions first and then narrow down the focus. Remember to use 'follow ups' to obtain a clearer explanation. The use of pre-meetings could be used to organise the Panels approach to the questioning of 'witnesses' and to get the most out of the session.
14. Remember the panel is not there to trip people up, "grill" them, apportion blame or to make their life difficult. Rather it is to understand the issues affecting the topic under review and how it affects the District Council and its residents.

Gathering Evidence

15. Methods of evidence gathering should be systematic and objective as possible, not just anecdotal. Use a variety of approaches and not just rely on a single source. Some different ways that evidence could be gathered are:

- Statistical Surveys;
- Focus Groups and Workshops;
- Public Meetings;
- Self-advocacy groups;
- Street surveys;
- Site visits;
- Mystery Shopping.

Panel members should carry out these tasks, design the survey forms or prepare the questionnaires themselves. Officers are to be used in an advisory capacity only.

Report and Follow-up

16. The concluding report will need to be clear, concise, evidence based with illustrative anecdotes. All the evidence gathered should be listed and if thought appropriate summarised. There will need to be clear, realistic and specific recommendations formulated so that progress can be measured and followed up. The report should (wherever practicable) ask for responses to its' recommendations within a realistic time period. (A draft format of a Task and Finish report is attached.)

17. The report should, if thought appropriate, be promoted to the public, e.g. through a press release and/or publicised via our website.

18. A mini-review of outcomes should be carried out after an appropriate period (not later than six months (if appropriate) after the end of the review). The results of this review should be reported back to the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It should be noted, that the entire Panel should not be involved in this follow-up review. The Chairman on his/her own or a small sub-group of two or three members would be enough. They can provide the full panel with a short written report on their findings if necessary; otherwise a verbal report would suffice.

Democratic Services
June 2006

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SCRUTINY



Epping Forest District Council

REPORT OF THE TRAVELLERS TASK AND FINISH PANEL

JULY 2006

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- Make the contents table lines invisible
- Each section to start on its own page
- The addition of photographs always make a report more reader friendly and a document more professional looking.
- It may be argued that the introduction and context section could be put under one heading. Splitting up these headings helps to keep the report in small chunks, making it easily readable and more accessible.
- The same applies for keeping the recommendations separate from the main body of the report.
- If needed more section headings can be added.

1. Chairman's Forward

Setting out briefly what the panel was tasked to look at, and how the panel went about it.

The Chairman can use this section to give any personal thanks to the people and organisations consulted.

This should take up about one side of A4.

2. Introduction or Overview

This section sets out the formal terms of reference for the panel, who they consulted and how they went about gathering the evidence (i.e. by interview, site visits, questions to organisations, questionnaires etc.). This will be a more detailed explanation that's in the Chairman's forward.

If pertinent it should set out why the Panel did not look at some aspect of the topic they were charged to look at.

3. Context

Background to the topic under review – how Government Policy fits in, any relevant legal considerations any laws (European or domestic).

How the Council's policies are affected (if at all) or how EFDCs geographical area fits in (local context) and any other local considerations that were taken into account.

4. Summary of Recommendations

The Panels recommendations should be listed out here. If there are enough recommendations it could be divided into sections, each relating to different section of the report.

Recommendations should begin: **"The Panel recommends that...."**

5. Report

This section will detail the evidence gathered and the conclusions reached. This should be related to the recommendations made in the summary of recommendations.

Start with a general introduction (if thought useful) and then repeat each recommendation adding an explanation as to why that recommendation was made, citing any evidence gathered and the conclusions drawn. In order to meet legal requirements, if the recommendations are to go on to Cabinet or Council for action, the report should indicated any options that were considered and rejected and reasons why.

6. Conclusion

Very short version of report for lazy people – maybe with an eye for putting this bit out as a press release.

7. Acknowledgements

To give formal acknowledgement to any sources used e.g:

Organisations;

People;

Officers;

Experts;

Websites;

Laws;

Locations visited;

Council policies etc.

8. Appendices

If needed to add background information, tables, graphs etc.