

## **Scrutiny Task and Finish Panel Agenda**



### **Services for Older People and Disabled People Task and Finish Panel Thursday, 2nd November, 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](mailto:shill@epingforestdc.gov.uk)

**Members:**

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

**MEMBERS ARE REMINDED TO BRING TO THE MEETING THEIR PACK ON THE  
LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT**

**A PRE – MEETING OF THE PANEL WILL BE HELD AT 7.00 PM**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 5 SEPTEMBER 2006 (Pages 3 - 6)**

To agree the notes of the last meeting (attached).

**3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

**4. 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.

**5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**6. SOCIAL CLUBS FOR OLDER PEOPLE (Pages 7 - 12)**

(R Wilson – Housing Services) To consider the attached report requested at the last meeting.

**7. REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S HANDY PERSON SCHEME (Pages 13 - 16)**

To consider the attached report.

**8. COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO DISABILITY EQUALITY DUTY (Pages 17 - 54)**

(Lead Officer – J Scott) To consider the attached report.

**9. CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL (Pages 55 - 56)**

(Head of Finance) To consider the attached report.

**10. CONCLUSIONS AND REPORT (Pages 57 - 72)**

(Lead officer – J Scott/Chairman of Panel) The Panel has given consideration to all elements of its work programme. Members are reminded of the agreed process which is attached within the guidance notes. Members need to identify against their Aims and Objectives those things from evidence they have gathered they wish to propose in a structured way back to the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members should also give consideration to who should be asked to prepare elements (or the entire) report.

For members information we have included within the pack all the previous notes of meetings.

**11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To be agreed if considered necessary.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**NOTES OF A MEETING OF SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND DISABLED PEOPLE**  
**TASK AND FINISH PANEL**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2006**  
**IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING**  
**AT 7.00 - 9.40 PM**

**Members Present:** Mrs S Perry (Chairman), Mrs J H Whitehouse (Vice-Chairman), Mrs A Cooper, Mrs A Grigg (Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder), D Kelly, P Turpin and K Wright

**Other members present:**

**Apologies for Absence:** D Bateman, Ellis and P House

**Officers Present** J Scott (Joint Chief Executive), R Wilson (Assistant Head of Housing Services (Operations)), L Swan (Environmental Services) and S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

**1. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 20 JULY 2006**

Notes agreed as a correct record.

**2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

No substitutes advised.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations made.

**4. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Terms of reference agreed subject to:

- (i) Item (4) to refer to 'charges' not 'changes';
- (ii) Item (7) to refer to 'equality' not 'quality'; and
- (iii) Additional aim of reviewing the handyperson scheme (requested by Councillor Stallan);

Revision attached to these minutes for submission to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 October 2006.

**5. FEEDBACK**

Members made the following reports of recent visits:

**Sheltered Housing Forum:**

Attendees: Councillors Cooper, Grigg and J H Whitehouse

Noted the wide representation at the meeting with the opportunity to ask questions and discuss matters of concern. The meeting had two main subjects Choice Based Lettings and Grounds Maintenance.

### **Parsonage Court Day Club**

Attendees: Councillors Perry, House and Wright.

Attendance at the day had dropped from 20 to 10 because of the cost of Community Transport which was costing in the region of £150 p.c.m. The transport scheme was run by VAEF. Members noted the transport funding difficulties. Additionally it was thought that the minibus drivers test was difficult to pass.

Members requested a further report on the history of the day clubs to the next meeting.

A request had been made at the day club for a suitable venue for meetings of the University of the Third Age. Councillor Wright undertook to research this aspect and report back.

A report by Councillor Perry is also attached to these notes.

### **Older Peoples Advisory Group**

Attendees: Councillors Grigg, Kelly and Wright

Meeting held at Frank Bretton House and although not well advertised it had been well attended by approximately 40 people. Officers from EFDC, ECC, Voluntary Sector and Social Services had attended. It had been a good meeting and had discussed pavements (uneven surfaces), Pedestrian crossings, access by phone to medical practices and appointment systems, transport and local shopping. Attendees had been responsive and it was a constructive meeting. It was important that the District members that had attended should follow up on some of the issues raised by those attending. Agreed that information on forthcoming meetings be published in the Forrester magazine to encourage attendance.

Noted that the next OPAG meeting was on 11 October 2006 (venue to be advised).

### **Robert Daniels Court**

Attendee: Councillor Perry

Councillor Perry's report is attached to these notes. Noted that the average resident age was early to mid 70's.

### **Other Visits**

Attendee: Councillor Cooper

Councillor Cooper reported that she had visited a number of the sheltered schemes. Residents had raised a number issues with her which would require reference to the appropriate council officer for response. Issues included: scooter facilities, window condensation problems, provision of incontinence pads, Yale key access, fencing of

sites (Parsonage Court), movement of bus stops, poor pavements in Epping (Leonard Davis House), issues with vandals (Hyde Mead House).

Councillor Cooper reported that residents had raised issues about feelings of isolation, lack of transport. Councillor Cooper also suggested that staff support and training/communication could also be looked at and cited an example of a recent Arts project "A sense of place" aimed at the elderly which wardens did not seem aware of.

Members of the Panel were requested to ensure that reports of future visits were made in writing to provide an evidential base to the achievement of the Panels Aims and Objectives.

## **6. REVIEW OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Members received reports on services provided the District Council as follows.

- (1) Environmental Services
- (2) Financial Services
- (3) Housing Services
- (4) Leisure Services
- (5) Supporting People (Briefing Note)

A revised sheet on some services provided by Environmental Services is attached to these notes for information.

Agreed that having received services details it was important at future meeting to identify any gaps in provision.

## **7. REVIEW OF SERVICES**

Review of services provided by voluntary action Epping Forest and other previous suppliers via the council's grant aid scheme noted.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

J Scott undertook to provide Councillor Cooper with details of the Waltham Abbey Day Centre.

## **9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Next meeting 2 November 2006 at 7.00 p.m. in Committee Room 2.

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## **Services for Older People Task and Finish Panel**

**Thursday 2 November 2006**

### **Briefing Paper – Day Clubs for Older People**

#### **Background**

1. In 1984, a former employee of Essex County Council's Social Care, set up a Day Club for older people in partnership with Housing Services, at the Council's sheltered housing scheme at Buckhurst Court, Buckhurst Hill.
2. Following the success of this Day Club, it was agreed that the Council would promote the setting up of further Clubs' in its other sheltered housing schemes. This would further ensure that maximum use was being made of the communal lounge and kitchen facilities.
3. Day Clubs are a discretionary service and are run by hard working volunteer organisers and helpers. They are not Day Centres, have no professional carers in attendance and are an opportunity for older people to interact with others and enjoy social activities. Members are assessed in advance by the volunteers and include either tenants or private sector occupiers living locally who are generally housebound and would benefit from a day out. They receive lunch, local transport and refreshments at a nominal charge of between £2.50 & £4 per visit.
4. It is important to note that the Day Clubs were only set up, and can only continue, with the agreement of the majority of the sheltered housing scheme's residents.

#### **Current Situation**

5. In 1995, two volunteers from each of the Clubs set up the Epping Forest Day Club Committee, which is a valuable forum where ideas and common problems can be discussed. The Committee meets on a six-monthly basis and is supported by Council officers.
6. The table attached as an appendix to this briefing paper sets out the Social Clubs currently in operation. As can be seen, membership of the Clubs is reducing with only 12 referrals being made to all Clubs during 2005/2006 which is the lowest ever, this is possibly due to older people having more options for socialising. The table also explains the problems being experienced within each of the Clubs in terms of recruiting volunteers and access to transport.

## **Difficulties with Recruiting Volunteers**

7. Although the Task and Finish Panel requested a report on the difficulties being experienced with transporting members to the Day Clubs, the first problem to address is the recruitment of volunteer organisers and helpers without whom the Clubs would not be able to continue. Any new volunteers who come forward are endorsed by VAEF who take up references. As can be seen from the attached table, most of the Clubs appear to have sufficient volunteers at the moment, but, there are concerns that some volunteers are themselves getting older and may not want to continue for very much longer. When they decide to give up their role, new volunteers will be difficult to find and the Clubs may not be able to continue. Indeed, the Day Club at Jubilee Court, Waltham Abbey closed in 2004 due to the lack of volunteers.

8. The Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services), in liaison with the Day Club Committee, has taken action to attempt to recruit new volunteers, including:

- Placing posters in public places
- Advertisements in the Forester magazine
- Articles in the tenants magazine Housing News
- Working with Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF)
- Seeking assistance at the Joint Management Team
- Press releases

9. Experience has shown that potential volunteers are discouraged by increasing demands of Day Club members who, in a minority of cases are not grateful for the work they do. In addition, recent legal requirements such as, health and safety, CRB checks and ethnicity monitoring has placed an un-welcomed burden on volunteers and has resulted in the role becoming a major commitment, often needing a number of hours outside of the Club itself. Volunteers explain that they are also incurring costs due to telephone charges, using their own cars to assist with transport problems (including concerns about insurance for business use) and are needing to undertake time-consuming assessments. It is a reality that those who may have volunteered in the past, now have more opportunities themselves to pursue so many other interests.

## **Transport**

10. As can be seen from the table attached as an appendix to the briefing paper, the Clubs have experienced difficulties with transport. In 1996, the Day Club Committee secured a lottery grant to purchase their own mini-bus. The balance of the grant was used to service the mini-bus and to provide additional funding for taxis. The mini-bus was only used by two of the Clubs due to problems finding volunteer drivers at that time. The Day Club Committee has around £800 of the grant remaining.

11. Any potential volunteer drivers would now be required to pass the "MIDAS" driving test which is very extensive and costs around £30 per test.



12. There appear to be the following options in attempting to solve the problems being experienced with transport:

### **Option One – Community Transport Scheme**

13. Each of the Clubs would need to join the scheme at a cost of £10 each year. They are then charged 70p per mile for the vehicle. The Buckhurst Court Day Club use the scheme at a cost of around £140 per month. The problems with the scheme is that is not affordable and the Community Transport Scheme has too many members with minimal drivers available, which can lead to last minute cancellations.

### **Hiring of a Mini-bus**

14. The cost of hiring a mini-bus privately is around £65 per day plus fuel. This does not include a driver. Therefore, it appears that due to the excessive cost, this is not an option.

### **Funding for Taxis & Volunteer Expenses**

15. Day Club organisers estimate that they would need around £250 per month to fund a sufficient number of taxis for their members. This could be an option but it would need to be funded. Consideration could be given to increasing the charge made to members for attending the Day Clubs, or applying for appropriate grant funding.

### **Consultation**

16. The Day Club Committee has been consulted on this briefing paper. Their comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.

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**Services for Older People Task and Finish Panel**

**Social Clubs for Older People**

<b>Social Club</b>	<b>Day of Club</b>	<b>Number of Members</b>	<b>Number of Volunteers and Potential for Recruitment</b>	<b>Transport Arrangements</b>
Buckhurst Court, Buckhurst Hill	Thursday	14	7 Volunteers. No potential for recruitment. VAEF have not put forward anyone and existing volunteers not aware of any interest.	Community Transport Scheme at a cost of £140 per month
Frank Bretton House, Ongar	Tuesday	10	6 Volunteers with 2 on stand-by	Taxis used with members and the Club paying half
Hyde Mead House, Nazeing	Thursday	12	8 Volunteers with 2 on standby	Taxis used and the Community Transport Scheme. Members relatives assist
Parsonage Court, Loughton	Wednesday	12	4 Volunteers. No potential for recruitment. VAEF have not put forward anyone and existing volunteers not aware of any interest	Taxis paid for by Club, volunteers also use their own vehicles
Robert Daniels Court Theydon Bois (Transferred to Warden Housing Association but still a member of the Day Club Committee)	Wednesday	13	6 Volunteers. Some potential for recruitment	Pool of drivers using their own vehicles



## ***Report to the Services for Older People and Disabled People Task and Finish Panel***



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

***Date of meeting: 2 November 2006***

**Subject: Review of Council's Handyperson Scheme**

**Officer contact for further information: J Scott (joint Chief Executive)**

**Committee Secretary: S G Hill**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

1. To review the operation and funding of the Handyperson Scheme.
2. To consider whether the current level of funding is sufficient to meet the objectives of the scheme.
3. To advise the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and via them the Cabinet accordingly.

### **Progress within the Council**

On 20 July 2006, the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Stallan, asked the Panel to carry out a review of the handy Persons Scheme, which he said remained on his work programme from the previous Council year.

The request originates from a question to the Housing Portfolio Holder (Councillor Heavens) at Council on 21 February 2006 by Councillor Mrs Whitehouse. The question and answers are shown on the annex hereto.

The Handyperson Scheme is an offshoot of CARE (Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest) which is that part of Environmental Services, which provides the Council's Home Improvement Service. The purpose of the scheme was to provide retired homeowners and private tenants in the Epping Forest District with reputable contractors to carry out minor works.

Typical handyperson jobs are small repairs: to leaking taps and gutters for instance, and work to prevent falls in the home, like fitting grab rails and hand rails.

The Service is free to people who are over 60, retired and on a means tested benefit (such as Council Tax Benefit and Pension Guarantee Credit) for work costing up to a maximum of £150. Minor repairs costing more than this can be carried out but the homeowner has to pay the difference. Works can also be arranged for the same client group but who are not in receipt of a means-tested benefit but only if they agree to meet the costs in full.

It seems that the concerns behind the question put by Mrs Whitehouse were finance related in that the budget for the Handyperson Scheme had not been increased since the Scheme was first set up in 1999. To some extent this concern was addressed by the allocation of an additional £3000 via the DDF in the financial year 2006/07, making a total sum available of £13,250.

In 2005/06, the Scheme undertook 93 jobs at a total cost of £9,827 from a budget of £10,000.

So far this year a total of 52 jobs have been arranged at a total cost of £5868. Since demand rises in the winter months, it seems likely the total budget of £13,250 will be spent.

The additional sum of £3000 made available via the DDF in 2006/07 was a one-year only commitment. To date there has been no request for a similar sum in the new budget round. CARE staff believe that a similar provision would adequately fund the Scheme for the time being.

(iii) any implications for the maintenance of car parks and the Council's aim of providing safer and more secure car parks by upgrading a car park each year; and

(iv) implications for the parking control contract".

## 78. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

### (a) Handypersons' Scheme

**By Councillor Mrs J H Whitehouse to Councillor M Heavens, Portfolio Holder for Housing**

"As the funding for the Handypersons' Scheme, which assists older people with minor repairs and falls prevention works, has not been increased since it was started in 1999, would the Portfolio Holder agree to review the funding of this scheme with a view to increasing the money available for the project and for staffing?"

**Response by Councillor M Heavens, Portfolio Holder for Housing**

"The Handypersons' Scheme is a very successful and important component of the Council's "Care and Repair" service. As the question states it provides a very necessary service to the vulnerable elderly in the District.

In general terms the demand for the service outstrips the resources available and this is managed by restricting individual requests for assistance and the level of financial support. This is therefore an appropriate time to review the service and its funding and I am happy to ask the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider placing this matter on the work programme for the Standing Scrutiny Panel on Housing".

By leave of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Housing added the following supplement to his answer:

"Although the budget for 2006/07 includes a DDF (one-off) increase of £3,000, I am of the view that more funds are needed".

### (b) Waste Management Literature

**By Councillor Mrs J H Whitehouse to Councillor D Jacobs, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Protection**

"Are you aware of the literature which is being delivered in many parts of the District which says that you, as the Portfolio Holder, have "forced through proposals to impose £1,000 fines on householders who persistently leave additional black sacks as well as full wheelie bins" and will you clarify the situation as it seems that your report to Cabinet on 14 November 2005 has been misrepresented?"

**Response by Councillor D Jacobs, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Protection**

"I am grateful to the Councillor for raising this matter. I think it important for all members to understand the law and how it functions in this regard.

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## ***Report to the Services for Older People and Disabled People Task and Finish Panel***



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

***Date of meeting: 2 November 2006***

**Subject: The Disability Equality Duty**

**Officer contact for further information: J Scott (Joint Chief Executive)**

**Committee Secretary: S Hill**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

#### **Report:**

The terms of reference of the Task and Finish Panel include a requirement to consider the implications of the Disability Equality Duty for the District Council and the Council's proposed response.

The Disability Rights Commission has produced an overview document entitled "Doing the Duty" a copy of which is attached hereto for Members' information. An outline of the duty is set out on Pages 5 to 8 of the document.

#### **Progress within the Council**

In 2004 the Council developed a Race Equality Scheme (RES) as required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Our approach in developing this was that we would not look at a range of equality issues beyond race, i.e. gender and disability discrimination issues, so the RES effectively became the first stage of a corporate equality scheme.

Following the adoption of the RES by Cabinet, a number of pilot impact assessments (IAs) were carried out in late 2005. However, it was not possible to complete them internally due to pressure of work. It was therefore agreed that an independent equalities consultant be brought in to complete these in consultation with Heads of Service and managers. This exercise was completed in January 2006, and Management Board considered a comprehensive report which made general recommendations for the development of a full equalities scheme and associated action plan. It was agreed to prioritise those actions which had an impact on our future CPA assessment. The IAs identified a number of issues which would impact on disabled service users, but no full analysis has been carried out yet.

Unfortunately, it has not been possible to progress matters due to lack of resources within the authority. We are seeking to rectify this through recruitment to vacant posts.

In addition, we are re-engaging the independent equalities consultant to draw up a Disability Equality Scheme in November 2006. This will involve analysing the results of the Impact Assessments and consulting the community to ensure that our services are responsive to the needs of disabled service users.

It was not possible to bring forward this work to an earlier date due to the non-availability of the external consultant. It seems unlikely that the 4 December 2006 date will be hit.

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# Doing the duty

An overview of the Disability  
Equality Duty for the public sector



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# **We all**

**want to live in communities where we can participate fully and equally.**

**We all want our children to do well at school; we all want to be able to use services like hospitals and libraries and not be excluded.**

**Many indicators show us that for disabled people this hasn't yet happened and there remains considerable work to be done to get to this point.**

**To ensure this happens a DISABILITY EQUALITY DUTY is being introduced for the public sector.**

**This new legal duty will mean that any public body will need to actively look at ways of ensuring that disabled people are treated equally. A similar duty was introduced on race equality a couple of years ago.**

**This new law requires organisations across the public sector (including hospitals, local and central government, schools and colleges) to be proactive in ensuring that disabled people are treated fairly.**

However, this duty is not necessarily about changes to buildings or adjustments for individuals, it's all about including equality for disabled people into the culture of public authorities in practical and demonstrated ways. This means including disabled people and disability equality into everything from the outset, rather than focusing on individualised responses to specific disabled people.

**“The Disability Equality Duty is a new way for public authorities to tackle disability discrimination in a practical way by introducing policies that actively promote opportunities and so prevent discrimination taking place.**

**By taking an organisation-wide approach you can achieve tangible outcomes and improvements for disabled people.**

**It will need the personal commitment from the top of your organisation and will make a real, positive change to your employees and service users.”**

**Bert Massie  
CHAIRMAN**



# December 06

you need to be ready.



# An outline of the duty

There is a general duty which applies to all public authorities, plus additional specific duties to support the majority of public authorities in achieving the outcomes required by the general duty.

The basic requirement for a public authority when carrying out their functions is to have due regard to do the following:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

**‘Due regard’ means that authorities should give due weight to the need to promote disability equality in proportion to its relevance.**

### **Key dates**

**The general duty will come into force on 4 December 2006 and all public authorities should be prepared by then.**

**Those public authorities who are subject to the specific duties, apart from a couple of exceptions set out below, must publish their Disability Equality Schemes by 4 December 2006.**

**(Primary schools in England have until 3 December 2007 to publish their Disability Equality Scheme and all schools in Wales must publish their schemes no later than 1 April 2007.)**

**The duty applies in England, Scotland and Wales. The duty in England and Wales is in all key respects the same as the duty which applies in Scotland, except there are different arrangements in relation to education due to differences in other legislation. There is a Statutory Code of Practice for England and Wales and a separate one for Scotland.**

## **Organisations covered by the duty**

The general duty applies to all public authorities (apart from a small handful which have specific exemptions). It includes government departments, executive agencies and ministers, local authorities, governing bodies of colleges and universities, governing bodies of schools, NHS trusts and boards, police and fire authorities, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Crown Office, inspection and audit bodies and certain publicly funded museums.

It also includes any organisation which exercises some functions of a public nature.

Many, in fact most, public authorities will also have a set of specific duties which will help them to meet their overall general duty. A list of these public authorities is contained in the regulations, which set out the duties, and can be found at the back of the DRC Statutory Codes. These specific duties centre on the framework of the production of a Disability Equality Scheme.

# **It's really very**

## **Where to start**

**At first glance the duty can appear quite complex. However, if public authorities focus on what outcomes they want to achieve with this duty and break this down into manageable stages, then it's actually very straightforward. An authority needs to consider what success will look like in relation to this duty, their particular responsibilities and how they will know they're making progress. They should consider setting appropriate performance targets and will need to consider training needs and allocate appropriate budgets for training, research and involvement.**

# straightforward...

Anybody involved in implementing this duty at a policy, planning or strategic level should obtain a copy of the relevant DRC Statutory Code, which explains key concepts, such as disability equality, and offers practical guidance on all aspects of the duty. If an authority is one of the minority of public authorities who are covered by the general duty but not subject to the specific duties, for example, a parish, town or community council, they do not have to produce a Disability Equality Scheme but they may still find the key actions within this provide a useful framework.

# Involving disabled people

At the heart of the Disability Equality Duty is the requirement to involve disabled people in producing the Disability Equality Scheme including the action plan. This has to happen at the very outset and many public authorities will have little experience of involving disabled people so this is the place to start.

## Why?

Involving disabled people is not only a requirement of the duty but it should bring tremendous benefit in terms of expertise to the organisation. However, in many cases, it can be a challenge both for the public body and for disabled people to ensure the involvement is straightforward and effective.

Involvement should not be confused with consultation. This duty requires a much more active engagement of disabled stakeholders at all stages. Budgets for engaging with disabled people must take realistic account of the costs associated with ongoing communication and collaboration.

## **How?**

**The important thing is to identify the most effective ways of involving disabled people in the development of the Disability Equality Scheme and action plan and to take this involvement forward in a planned and efficient way. This involvement would include areas such as identifying the barriers faced by disabled people and unsatisfactory outcomes, setting priorities for action plans and assisting in planning activity.**

**It would be easy to have superficial involvement which has no effect or, at the other extreme, overloads both disabled people and the public authority by constantly requiring involvement and duplicating effort. In order to make sure that the involvement of disabled people is really effective and to avoid involvement fatigue, public authorities should ensure that the involvement is focused and efficient, influential and transparent. Those people who have been involved and others who are interested need to know what effect the involvement had but also areas where it was less influential, and why.**



**The specific duties require authorities to involve disabled people who appear to them to have an interest in the way they carry out their functions in developing the scheme. This may include former, current and potential service users, staff and the wider community. It is important to consider the full diversity of disabled people – in terms of the type of impairment and barriers people experience, as well as other equality issues such as ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation and religion or belief.**

**There will be a wide variety of ways of involving disabled people. These could include through:**

- local organisation/s of disabled people**
- existing forums, such as disabled staff networks**
- setting up specialist forums of disabled people (where none exist at present)**
- workplace trade unions**
- segmenting and developing existing consultation mechanisms or utilising existing networks.**

# Mapping

It is essential for a public authority to have some idea of how they are currently performing on disability equality to inform their Disability Equality Scheme. Mapping current performance areas for improvement can help identify further actions.

## Why?

This mapping is not an end in itself, but is merely there to help the authority make decisions about what actions would best improve disability equality. The information will help the authority assess their



own performance; identify areas where they are doing well on promoting disability equality and areas where their performance is not so good. It needs to be detailed enough to enable the authority to measure their delivery on disability equality and to assess their performance and priorities.

Often information will show up a particular pattern, trend or experience and this should act as a trigger to investigate further.

Many public authorities will have very limited information in relation to disability. An initial action may be to put in place additional mechanisms for gathering evidence on the authority's performance in relation to disability equality.

However, implementing new mechanisms for gathering evidence can take a long time. It is important that authorities do not wait for this additional information to be available before making plans to improve their performance. In some cases, qualitative research (including research from other relevant sources), and involvement of disabled people will be sufficient

**to initially identify key areas where action is needed to deliver improved outcomes for disabled people. With this, authorities can move ahead and build in actions to gradually increase their knowledge-base and measurement of progress.**

**Gathering information is an ongoing process and only having a limited amount of information is not an excuse for inaction.**

### **How?**

**All authorities subject to the specific duties must set out in its disability scheme its arrangements for gathering information in relation to recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees; and it must put these arrangements into practice.**

**Also, authorities must look at the extent to which the services they provide and the other functions take account of the needs of disabled people. For example, when fire officers assess the safety of a public building, are they trained to take into account whether the means of escape is adequate for disabled users of the building without producing unnecessary exclusions?**

**Educational bodies need in particular to consider the effect of their policies and practices on the educational opportunities and achievements of disabled learners. They are also likely to want to gather evidence about the extent to which their services more generally meet the needs of disabled people.**

**Authorities may well have to set up specific mechanisms for identifying their performance on disability equality but they may also utilise the range of existing mechanisms to collect information**



(from examination results in educational bodies, homelessness statistics in local authorities or PSA targets in central government or just customer or staff surveys). Much of this information may already be easily broken down to identify the experience of disabled people, or if it isn't disaggregated then straightforward systems can be set up to ensure this happens and to ensure good representation of disabled people on things like citizen's panels or focus groups.

Anyone designing a system within an authority to gather information should be considering whether the authority is going to make use of the information, particularly when monitoring according to impairment type. There is no point collecting information if you have no intention of making use of it.

For this reason within the Disability Equality Scheme an authority must set out their arrangements for making use of the information obtained, in particular, for reviewing on a regular basis the effectiveness of the action plan and for preparing subsequent Disability Equality Schemes.

## Stage 3

# The Disability Equality Scheme and action plan

The essential elements that the Disability Equality Scheme must include are:

- a statement of how disabled people have been involved in developing the scheme
- the action plan
- arrangements for gathering information about performance of the public body on disability equality
- arrangements for assessing the impact of the activities of the authority on disability equality and improving these when necessary
- details of how the authority is going to use the information gathered, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of its action plan and preparing subsequent schemes.

## **Preparing the Disability Equality Scheme**

It is important to ensure that the Disability Equality Scheme demonstrates commitment at the very highest level of authority. The DRC strongly recommends that the introduction should have the endorsement of and be signed by the Chief Executive, the Chair or their equivalent.

In addition, it would be valuable for a senior officer to take responsibility for the implementation of the duty and the scheme. Having someone with disability expertise to advise and co-ordinate would also be beneficial.

The scheme must be published and authorities will need to ensure that this is accessible to the whole community. It may be set out with within the published document, such as an annual report, but to ensure transparency it would generally be appropriate to publish a scheme as a whole so that stakeholders can view its different elements and objectives together.



## **The action plan**

The action plan is basically the steps that a public authority is going to take to meet the general duty. It will set out the key actions that the authority will take to promote disability equality over the period of the Disability Equality Scheme. It should address all areas of the duty, including elements like eliminating harassment and encouraging participation of disabled people in public life within the context of promoting disability equality.

In a highly effective Disability Equality Scheme the action plan will reflect a number of things. This would include the priorities of disabled people (and this is the information which would come from involving disabled people), the strategic priorities of the authority (including things like major forthcoming programmes and business milestones), evidence of where the issues and priorities lie and, very importantly, the specific outcomes which the authority wishes to achieve set against a realistic timetable.

**It will also include measurable indicators of progress towards outcomes and lines of accountability and ownership of specific actions.**

**The action plan should be aimed at making practical improvements to equality for disabled people and that is why the specific outcomes must be clearly identified.**

**Where an authority has within it distinct units with discrete areas of activity, it will be appropriate for those units to have separate action plans within the generic Disability Equality Scheme for that authority.**

## **External contractors**

**Sometimes services will be being delivered for the public authority by an external contractor. If this contractor is not itself a public body then the contracting public authority, and in particular those procuring or commissioning a service, need to build relevant disability considerations into that process to ensure that the authority is meeting the duty, even when the service is being carried out by an external contractor.**



## **Equality schemes**

**Some authorities have produced combined equality schemes and there is nothing within the legislation to prevent this. However, the Disability Equality Scheme must be clearly identifiable and presented in such a way as to enable all interested stakeholders to readily access it.**

**The most effective combined schemes are likely to be those where an overall approach is outlined, the different mechanisms for achieving improvements are identified but the various equality areas are then clearly presented and specific actions and outcomes identified. From the point of view of disability equality, the duty is unlikely to be effectively met if clear outcomes relating to the promotion of disability equality are not clearly forthcoming from a combined scheme.**

# An impact

**assessment is not  
an end in itself.**

## Stage 4

# Assessing the impact of policies and activities

One of the key ways of embedding disability equality into the policies and activities of a public authority is to systematically undertake disability equality impact assessments. Public authorities have to set out how they will do this within the Disability Equality Scheme.

## Why?

The purpose of these impact assessments is to ensure that an authority's activities do not disadvantage disabled people in any way (either intentionally or not), and also, crucially, to identify where they can best promote equality of opportunity. Where the assessment identifies an adverse impact or missed opportunity to achieve a more positive impact, then the authority should look at what it can do to remedy this and to take up this missed opportunity.

Gaps, adverse impacts and missed opportunities in relation to disability equality can be identified by looking over things carefully and using criteria developed with disabled people.

**Identifying these should be seen as positive and if an authority can't identify something to improve in a policy or practice they probably aren't looking hard enough!**

**An impact assessment is not an end in itself but is merely the process which an authority will go through in order to identify and then act on the need to modify and change policies and practices to better promote disability equality. It's something an authority does to decide on actions and improvements. If they only do the identification of issues and don't make the improvements and do the improvements and the necessary follow through then it's a pretty fruitless task.**

## How?

Approaches to impact assessments are likely to vary depending upon the nature of the public body and the degree of relevance of the function for disabled people. Where the relevance of function is high, this indicates a need for a very thorough impact assessment. Where it is clear that relevance is low, authorities may wish to have a system for identifying this and recording what actions they have taken if they don't do a full impact assessment. Criteria will need to be developed to help these decisions.

As well as new policies and activities which should be impact assessed as they are developed, authorities will have a significant 'back catalogue' of existing policies and activities that will need to be assessed. A timetable for doing this over the period of the Disability Equality Scheme and prioritisation system is essential.



**There are a range of actions which a full impact assessment is likely to involve. These would include consideration of the available information, assessment of the effect the policy or decision would have on disabled people, or for existing programmes and policies, an assessment of any detrimental impact on, or shortfall in take up by, disabled people.**

**Additionally, consideration of the measures which may mitigate any adverse impact and alternative approaches which may better achieve promotion of equality for disabled people are essential. It's also important to build in arrangements for monitoring for future adverse impact.**

# The scheme

can last for up to  
three years.

## Getting on with it

Once the scheme is written and approved it will need to be published, but that is only the beginning. The core of the work is taking forward the actions, improving the performance of the authority through the outcomes of impact assessments, building up the information base about performance on disability equality and actually improving and changing things for disabled people.

The scheme can last for up to three years and it should be regularly reviewed and information gathered to review the effectiveness of the action plan will help prepare subsequent schemes. Public authorities should report annually on progress and be aware that organisations like inspection bodies will be looking at progress, as will disabled people.

The DRC will be providing a wide range of information for public authorities. But we also play a key role in enforcing the duty. The general duty can be enforced via a judicial review (which anyone with a legal basis can take via the High Court and Court of Session) but the specific duties are enforced through a compliance notice issued by the DRC.

## **National leadership by Secretaries of State**

**Certain Secretaries of State, the National Assembly for Wales and Scottish Ministers will have to publish a report every three years that gives an overview of the progress made by public authorities in their policy sector in relation to disability equality. They must also set out proposals for co-ordination of action by those public authorities in that policy sector, or remit area, to bring about further progress on disability equality.**

**The first set of these reports is due in December 2008. This duty allows for a greater degree of strategic co-ordination across government.**

**This guidance should be read in conjunction with the DRC Statutory Codes of Practice which give full details of the duty and the legal obligations. These can be viewed on the DRC website section on the DED [www.dotheduty.org](http://www.dotheduty.org) or obtained from The Stationery Office.**

**Every effort has been made to make sure that the information in this booklet is correct. However, it is not intended to be an authoritative statement of the law, and the DRC cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability.**

**For more information and  
practical advice on the  
Disability Equality Duty visit:**

**[www.dotheduty.org](http://www.dotheduty.org)**



**Report to Older People and Disabled  
People Task and Finish Panel  
Date of meeting: 2 November 2006**

**Portfolio: Community Wellbeing**

**Subject: Concessionary Travel**

**Officer contact for further information: Bob Palmer**

**Committee Secretary: Simon Hill**

SCRUTINY

 Epping Forest District Council

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**Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

There are no recommendations or decisions required. The report is to inform the Panel about the Concessionary Travel services provided by the Council, specifically to update on recent and future changes to the concessionary schemes.

**Report:**

1. The Council has a concessionary fare scheme running in conjunction with Transport for London (TfL). This scheme is unique amongst district councils as no other districts have schemes that involve bus travel so far beyond their boundaries. An agreement was entered into with TfL for the 3.5 years to 1 April 2004; this has subsequently been extended on an annual basis.
2. Under the terms of the TfL scheme pass holders have been able to travel free on busses within the scheme boundaries since 1 April 2005. The area in which the pass can be used includes Edmonton, Tottenham and Enfield in the West to Romford and Ilford in the East and extending as far South as Stratford. A charge of £30, or £10 to those in receipt of benefit, is made for the passes, this is necessary as TfL charge the Council £180 per pass. There are currently approximately 400 passes in issue.
3. The Council also works with Essex County Council and the other Essex districts to provide a county wide concessionary travel scheme. Working together in this way allows the participating authorities to provide a scheme that exceeds the statutory minimum requirements, which are that each district need only provide a scheme that operates within their own boundaries.
4. No charge is made for the countywide scheme passes and from 1 April 2006 these passes have allowed holders to travel free within the scheme boundaries. Prior to 1 April 2006 pass holders were entitled to half fare travel. This change in benefit has proved very popular and pass numbers have increased from around 6,500 at 31 March 2006 to nearly 9,000 now.
5. A significant change was made to the issuing of passes for both schemes from 1 April 2006. The previous system had generated a number of complaints, as individuals wanting passes were required to attend in person. Passes are now issued by post from the Civic Offices.
6. A fundamental change will be taking place from 1 April 2008. As mentioned above, the current countywide scheme already exceeds the statutory minimum scheme, by allowing travel not just within a given district but also across the whole county. The new scheme will allow pass holders to travel anywhere on local bus services, effectively removing all boundaries. This is a significant change as currently one of our pass holders would not be able to use their pass in say Torquay or Blackpool.

7. However, it is important to stress that this applies to local bus services and not national coaches. In theory pass holders would be able to travel long distances using their passes but they would need to change local services a number of times en-route. Central Government announced this change in March earlier this year, but to date have provided little by way of detail on how the scheme will be meant to operate. So far indications are that the Government will require districts to keep managing schemes locally rather than the Government operating one centralised scheme for the whole country.

**Reason for decision:**

No decision is required.

**Options considered and rejected:**

No options have been put forward.

**Consultation undertaken:**

The Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder has been consulted and agrees that the report provides an accurate outline of service provision and current issues.

**Resource implications:**

Budget provision: The 2006/07 budget contains an amount of £923,000 for Concessionary Fares. This consists of £843,000 for the countywide scheme and £80,000 for the TfL scheme.

Personnel: Currently no additional staffing requirement.

Land: N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference: The 2006/07 BVPP included the aim "To implement a system for issuing bus passes by post in order to reduce inconvenience to users of the countywide concessionary fare scheme."

Relevant statutory powers: Transport Act 2000

Background papers:

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None

Key Decision reference: (if required) N/A





## TASK AND FINISH PANELS GUIDANCE NOTES

### Introduction

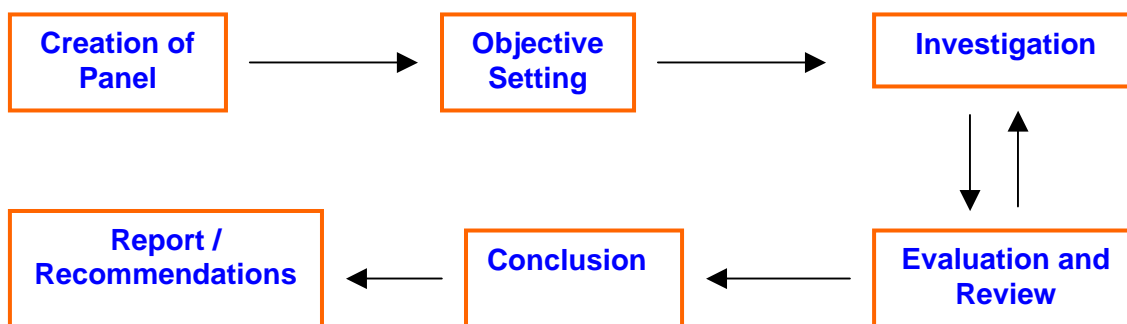
1. Task and Finish Scrutiny Panels are established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to deal with ad hoc projects or reviews included in the annual work programme for Overview and Scrutiny.
2. Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel status will be restricted to those activities which are issue-based, 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 that may be connected to the topic to be reviewed to try and establish any and all issues related to the subject, so that that the Lead Officer on meeting with the Chairman, has some background information to submit.
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 for the duration of the Panel's life in a non-voting capacity.
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 as 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 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. 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 could provide the full panel with a short written report on their findings if necessary; otherwise a verbal report would suffice.

**Democratic Services**  
**July 2006**

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# SCRUTINY



Epping Forest District Council

## **REPORT OF THE TRAVELLERS TASK AND FINISH PANEL**

**JULY 2006**

Contact for enquiries:  
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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 Foreward**

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 busy 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.



**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**NOTES OF A MEETING OF SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND DISABLED PEOPLE**  
**TASK AND FINISH PANEL**  
**HELD ON THURSDAY, 22 JUNE 2006**  
**IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING**  
**AT 7.00 - 8.00 PM**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Mrs S Perry (Chairman), Mrs J H Whitehouse (Vice-Chairman), Mrs A Cooper, P House, D Kelly and P Turpin
<b>Other members present:</b>	(none)
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>	D Bateman and K Wright
<b>Officers Present</b>	J Scott (Joint Chief Executive), D Macnab (Head of Leisure Services), R Wilson (Assistant Head of Housing Services (Operations)) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)
<b>Also in attendance:</b>	(none)

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**1. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

Noted that there were no substitute members.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor D Kelly declared a personal interest by virtue of being the Chairman of the Epping Forest Older People Advisory Group. He declared that his interest was not prejudicial and he would remain in the meeting.

Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor Mrs Whitehouse declared a personal interest by virtue of being a member of the Epping Forest Older People Advisory Group. She declared that her interest was not prejudicial and she would remain in the meeting.

**3. SCOPE OF THE REVIEW**

The Chairman declared that if they wanted to meet the deadline for the budget fixing round for next year, the Task and Finish Panel should make any recommendations that identified a need for extra spending, by 18 September 2006.

The meeting wanted to:

- Identify gaps in the system;
- Be made aware of the people not in the system;
- Find a way to get messages through to people who do not know about the services on offer;
- Find out about the specialist transport on offer;
- Find out what services the Council provides; and
- What services VAEF provided.

With the impending Disabled Discrimination Act coming into being – does EFDC have to do anything in preparation?

The Task and Finish Panel would also like to meet with the Joint Management Team for Older People's Services and the Older People Advisory Group.

Housing and Leisure officers have a lot of input into Older and Disabled Persons services and should be included with the meeting with the Joint Management Team.

The Panel should consider co-opting Kay Ellis, Chairman of the Joint Management Team, onto this T&F panel.

Another problem identified was the need to find replacements for the volunteers who presently help out/run the day centres etc. as they too are aging.

Councillor Mrs Cooper would like to look at the Taxi Card System operated elsewhere.

Councillor Mrs Whitehouse would like panel members to visit older peoples clubs etc. within their wards to talk to and question them about their needs. She thought that a standard set of questions/ topics might prove useful.

The panel decided that when looking at people with disabilities that they would not limit themselves to just older people with disabilities but consider the whole age spectrum.

The Assistant Head of Housing informed the Panel:

- That they had contact with a Sheltered Housing Forum that would provide interesting input to the Panel and he would arrange a meeting with them;
- There is also a Supporting People group that could provide interesting input to the Panel;
- That they were setting up a project team to look at the future of Sheltered Housing;
- A Housing review of care-line services was also in progress; also
- There was a new issue about 'Tele-Care' equipment that can be added to existing alarm systems.

The Head of Leisure Services commented that they provide a range of services with the PCT, work with people with dispraxia and provide specialist sessions in the Leisure Centres/Swimming Pools. They also go to schools, do arts development work, and access to museums. The Panel should go and see these things in person, talk to the parents and meet the children.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To make any initial recommendations that may have an impact on the Council budget, by 18 September 2006, in time to be considered for the next financial year.
2. To consider disabled people of all ages and not just the older age range.

3. To arrange a meeting with the Joint Management Team for Older People Services at the next scheduled meeting of this Panel.
4. To receive a list of services provided by the Council for Older People.
5. To invite Kay Ellis to become a co-opted member of this Panel.
6. To gather as much information as possible by:
  - speaking to older people at their clubs and other venues within each panel members wards;
  - Councillor Whitehouse to draw up a draft set of questions to be used as a basic framework for use at each interview;
  - To arrange a meeting with members of the Older People Advisory Group (Councillor Kelly to arrange);
  - setting up meetings with the Sheltered Housing Forum, Careline, the Supporting People Group, and the various Leisure Service's disabled provisions and schemes;
  - speaking with officers of the Council with relevant experience such as Lindsay Swan, the Private Sector Housing officer and CARE manager.
7. To investigate the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act and its relevance to EFDC.
8. To find out about the facilities for disabled people at the Council Offices.
9. To find out more about bus passes for older people, as presently they do not seem to work on the busses that are used/needed by the pass holders.
10. To investigate the Taxi Card System that is operated by other Authorities.

#### **4. WORK PROGRAMME**

1. Any recommendations to do with budgets to be finalised by 18 September 2006.
2. To arrange a meeting with the Joint Management Team for Older People Services to be arranged for the 20<sup>th</sup> July meeting.
3. A more detailed Work Programme is to be worked out as more information is gathered and timescales can be better approximated by the size of the workload anticipated.

#### **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

#### **6. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next meeting was agreed to be held on Thursday 20 July 2006 at 7pm. It was hoped that visits to the Sheltered Housing Forum, Careline and the Parsonage Court

Day Club, and some of the Leisure Services venues could be arranged to take place before 20 July.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND DISABLED PEOPLE  
TASK AND FINISH PANEL  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 20 JULY 2006  
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING  
AT 7.00 - 8.50 PM**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Mrs S Perry (Chairman), Mrs J H Whitehouse (Vice-Chairman), Mrs A Cooper, Mrs A Grigg, P House, D Kelly and K Wright
<b>Other members present:</b>	D Stallan
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>	D Bateman and P Turpin
<b>Officers Present</b>	J Scott (Joint Chief Executive) and S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer)
<b>Also in attendance:</b>	Christime Coates (JMT for Older People), Kay Ellis (JMT for Older People), Jenny Mihane (JMT for Older People), D Pegler (JMT for Older People) and Sally Yeoman (LMT for Older People)

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**7. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2006 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**8. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

Noted that there were no substitute members.

**9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declaration of interest were made pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

**10. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Noted that the Terms of Reference had already been agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**11. PCT - LIAISON WITH JOINT MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The Chairman welcomed members of the Joint Management Team for Older People. The team had been created some time ago following an older peoples summit. Its membership included:

- Adult Social Care
- District Council ( Housing)
- Voluntary Action Epping Forest
- Primary Care Trust

- Champion/User
- Consultant Geriatrician
- Mental Health Trust

The Team aims and objectives were:

- (i) Consult with users to improve services for older people in Epping Forest;
- (ii) Achieve better coordination through joint working;
- (iii) Maximise resources through joint working (given limited resources);
- (iv) Share good practice;
- (v) Monitor the National Service Framework for Older People.

Members noted the changing nature of society with greater numbers of people in the 65-75 age bracket and noted some of the projects undertaken by the Team including the Tent card project and 'Message in a Bottle' which had been widely distributed to vulnerable groups. As there was no direct funding for the team, such projects were subject to grant funding or funding from the individual team partner organisations.

The team had also undertaken Scrutiny of the aged based policies of the PCT, had introduced a 'falls team' – an integrated team of staff working on fall prevention – which had been achieved by integrated working. A 'tilt table had been purchased and this was being used locally by the falls clinic consultants, avoiding the need for patients travel.

The team had also secured funding from the Performance Fund for a full time member of staff to provide a advocacy service locally.

The team had further projects currently ongoing:

- (i) Update Services Directory;
- (ii) Seek the introduction of a One stop shop possibly linked to the Council's Careline Service;
- (iii) Funding for nurse led clinic in sheltered housing (following recent pilot);
- (iv) Secure funding for research (to support consultations);
- (v) The implementation of telecare (one off funding now secured/ECC) – examples included links into the dispersed alarm system, fall detectors and bogus caller buttons;
- (iv) to fund further BME research;
- (v) Secure Funding for another Summit; and
- (vi) To seek to "Float" the OPAG as self managed group without losing momentum.

The Panel agreed that a lot of good work had been undertaken by the JMT since the initial summit in 1999. They considered that it was important to maintain links and to that end agreed that Kay Ellis should co-opted onto the group.

The Chairman thanked the member of the JMT for attending the meeting.

**12. QUESTIONNAIRE AND VISITS**

It was agreed that Councillor Mrs Whitehouse would co-ordinate comments on the proposed Older Peoples Club questionnaire.

Agreed that members would attend visits as follows:

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Sheltered forum – 2/8/6         | Councillors Grigg and Whitehouse         |
| OPAG - 30/8/6                   | Councillor Wright, Whitehouse and Perry. |
| Careline visit/day club – 9/8/6 | All members invited.                     |

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(a) Disability Equality Duty

Councillor Whitehouse reported that she had discovered that the reference to disability should refer to 'Disability Equality Duty' rather than the act.

(b) Handy Person Scheme

Councillor Stallan requested that the Panel consider the review of the Handy Person Scheme.

**14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Noted that the next meeting would be held on 5 September 2006.

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