

## Scrutiny Task and Finish Panel Agenda



### ***Pitt Review on Flooding Task and Finish Panel Tuesday, 22nd September, 2009***

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

**Time:** 7.30 pm

**Democratic Services Officer:** Adrian Hendry, Office of the Chief Executive  
Email: ahendry@eppingforestdc.gov.uk Tele: 01992 564246

**Members:**

Councillors Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), K Angold-Stephens (Vice-Chairman), G Pritchard, B Rolfe and Mrs E Webster

---

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(Assistant to the Chief Executive). 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. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 14)**

To note the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2009.

**5. TERMS OF REFERENCE (Pages 15 - 24)**

**Recommendation:**

- 1. That the Terms of Reference for this Task and Finish Panel be reviewed; and**
- 2. That the Panel agrees a preferred starting time for the Panel meetings.**

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. The note also suggests how final reporting back to the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the larger Council is undertaken. A draft layout for a Final Report is also attached as a useful practical example of what the Panel are required to produce.

**6. PRESENTATION ON THE PITT REVIEW**

To receive a presentation on the background and future work needed for the Pitt Review.

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**8. FUTURE MEETING**

To agree a date and time for the next meeting of this Panel.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF PITT REVIEW ON FLOODING TASK AND FINISH PANEL  
HELD ON MONDAY, 20 JULY 2009  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING  
AT 7.00 - 8.50 PM**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Mrs A Grigg (Vice Chairman of Council) (Chairman), K Angold-Stephens (Vice-Chairman), G Pritchard
<b>Other members present:</b>	Mrs M Sartin
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>	Mrs E Webster
<b>Officers Present</b>	K Durrani (Assistant Director Technical Services), S Stranders (Principal Team Leader), M Tipping (Assistant Director of CSS - Facilities Management and Emergency Planning) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)

## 1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

### RESOLVED:

The Terms of Reference were noted and agreed, they will now go to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 September 2009 for their endorsement.

## 2. RESPONSE FROM EFDC TO THE DRAFT FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT BILL

Officers tabled a glossary of terms and abbreviations and acronyms to the Panel for their information this is also attached to these minutes for information.

The Panel went through the draft answers considering in detail only the questions that the officers considered to be sensitive or controversial.

**Q 12:** Noted that officers would add “experienced” to ‘able and competent’ in their answer; and that “then” should replace ‘than’ to read “...considered practicable then stronger legally...”

**Q27:** Officers to add that they would consult the public through larger groups and on –line.

**Q30:** The Panel noted that a report on an annual basis would be burdensome, but would not express how long a period there should be between reports; officers were to remove their suggestion of 2 to 3 years. The District should feed into the County’s report. It was agreed that there should be a report but not done to the time period suggested.

**Q31:** The Panel noted it was unclear what the role of Overview and Scrutiny would be.

**Q33:** There was a need for peer review, but who would foot the costs?

**Q35:** Officers thought powers should remain with the District. However, members were confused with their answer. There was a need to get agreement with County about who was responsible for what.

**Q38:** This was something that the District should deal with.

**Q39:** Noted that the abbreviation EFDC should be set out in full. Member also noted that officers were currently working on a Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; doing this in-house, without going to consultants, added value. Members would also like to add to the answer that there an issue with the nature of the district, it was spread out as opposed to say Harlow or Chelmsford.

**Q49:** Noted that this council was very good at introducing Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) from as far back as 2001. The drainage teams look at all planning applications for flood risk; this was something that the Council has been championing. If a SUDS Approving Body (SAB) was to sit with a Tier1 authority, then there would be a problem with for the Tier 2 authority. This would need to be clarified.

**Q50:** Answer was agreed

**Q52:** To make the point that there was an ongoing maintenance issue with SUDS.

**Q56:** Noted that under the proposed structure all the funding would go to the Environment Agency.

**Q61:** To add to the answer the words “the consultation document” after ‘recommended in’.

**Q62:** Answer was agreed.

**Q65:** Answer was agreed.

**Q79:** Answer was agreed.

**Q91:** Members asked to add to the answer that “when a major flooding incident occurs there can only be a local response.”

**Q110:** Noted two typos in the third paragraph from the end of the answer on the first line the word ‘has’ to be replaced with ‘have’ (two occurrences).

**Q115:** The Panel agreed that the money should be ring fenced for flood risk management.

**Q116 and 117:** Riparian responsibilities should be made clear to potential purchasers of a property. This could be added to a Con 29 Local Land Charges search.

**Q132:** Surface water flooding should be addressed; this will mean more work for the local authority.

**Q133:** To replace ‘confidentially’ with ‘Confidently’.  
Members queried possible problems if the people responsible were the County or the Highways Authority.

**Q135:** Answer was agreed.

**Q143:** Members were wanted some measure of restrictions on commercial premises as they were missed out under the last hose pipe ban. They would something added on 'non-essential use on commercial premises' they could add an example such as watering of hanging baskets.

**Q144:** Answer was agreed.

**Q151:** Answer was agreed.

### **3. FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Panel agreed that their next meeting should be on 22 September 2009, starting at 7.30pm.

### **4. COVERING LETTER TO DEFRA**

The Panel considered the draft letter from the Director of Environment and Street Scene to Defra on the draft Flooding and Water Management Bill. The Panel noted a couple of typographical errors and the need to change the wording on the first sentence of the eighth paragraph to replace some awkward wording. The Panel also thought it was desirable to add in an example of this District dealing with (and preventing) flooding in the district on their own.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Panel endorsed the draft letter to Defra as amended.

This page is intentionally left blank

## ACRONYMS

<b>ALT</b>	Agricultural Land Tribunal
<b>CCWater</b>	Consumer Council for Water
<b>CFMP</b>	Catchment Flood Management Plan
<b>CIL</b>	Community Infrastructure Levy
<b>CLG</b>	Communities and Local Government
<b>CPA</b>	Coast Protection Act 1949
<b>DWI</b>	Drinking Water Inspectorate
<b>EA</b>	Environment Agency
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EPP</b>	Environmental Permitting Programme
<b>EUFD</b>	EU Floods Directive
<b>FCERM</b>	Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management
<b>FHM</b>	Flood Hazard Map
<b>FDGIA</b>	Flood Defence Grant in Aid
<b>FHM</b>	Flood Hazard Map
<b>FRM</b>	Flood Risk Map
<b>FRMP</b>	Flood Risk Management Plan
<b>ICE</b>	Institution of Civil Engineers
<b>IDB</b>	Internal Drainage Board
<b>ISP</b>	Infrastructure Service Provider
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority
<b>LDA</b>	Land Drainage Act 1991
<b>LFRM</b>	Local Flood Risk Management
<b>LPA</b>	Local Planning Authority
<b>LRR</b>	Large Raised Reservoir
<b>LTIS</b>	Long Term Investment Strategy
<b>OA</b>	Operating Authority
<b>OPC</b>	Office of the Parliamentary Counsel
<b>PFRA</b>	Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment
<b>PPS25</b>	Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk
<b>RFERAC</b>	Regional Fisheries, Ecology and Recreation Advisory Committee

<b>REPAC</b>	Regional Environment Protection Advisory Committee
<b>RFCC</b>	Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
<b>RFDC</b>	Regional Flood Defence Committee
<b>RFRA</b>	Regional Flood Risk Assessment
<b>SAB</b>	SUDS Approving Body
<b>SFRA</b>	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
<b>SMP</b>	Shoreline Management Plan
<b>SRR</b>	Small Raised Reservoir
<b>SUDS</b>	Sustainable Drainage Systems
<b>SWMP</b>	Surface Water Management Plan
<b>WFD</b>	Water Framework Directive
<b>WRMP</b>	Water Resource Management Plan
<b>WSL</b>	Water Supply License



## Annex C – Glossary of terms and abbreviations

**Adaptation** – changing our behaviour to respond to the impacts of climate change. Adaptation to climate change involves making decisions that are sustainable, made at the right time, maximising the benefits and minimising the costs. Adaptation needs to be built into planning and risk management now to ensure the continued and improved success of businesses, Government policies and social operations.

**Aquifer** – a permeable geological formation of rock, mud or gravel containing or conducting water.

**Building Regulations** – the UK Building Regulations are rules of a statutory nature to set standards for the design and construction of buildings, primarily to ensure the safety and health for people in or around those buildings, but also for purposes of energy conservation and access to and about other buildings.

**Catchment** – an area that serves a river with rainwater, that is every part of land where the rainfall drains to a single watercourse is in the same catchment.

**Category 1 responder** – a person or body listed in Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004. These bodies will be at the core of the response to most emergencies. As such, they are subject to the full range of civil protection duties in the CCA.

**Category 2 responder** – a person or body listed in Part 3 of Schedule 1 to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. These are Cooperating responders who are less likely to be involved at the heart of multi-agency planning work across the board, but will be heavily involved in preparing for incidents affecting their sectors. The CCA requires them to cooperate and share information with other Category 1 and 2 responders.

**Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004** – legislation that aims to deliver a single framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom. The CCA is separated into two substantive parts: local arrangements for civil protection (Part 1) and emergency powers (Part 2).

**Coastal erosion** – the wearing away of coastline, usually by wind and/or wave action.

**Coastal flooding** – occurs when coastal defences are unable to contain the normal predicted high tides that can cause flooding, usually when a high tide combines with a storm surge (created by high winds or a deep depression).

**Community Infrastructure Levy** – powers introduced by The Planning Act 2008 for a new charge under which local authorities in England and Wales will be empowered, but not required, to introduce a charge on most types of new development in their area to fund local and sub-regional infrastructure.

**Community resilience** – the ability of a local community to prepare for emergencies and to respond and recover from them.

**Consequence** – the outcome of an event. This can be expressed qualitatively or quantitatively to direct or indirect losses and gains.

**Controlled Waters** – under section 104 of the Water Resources Act 1991 controlled waters include all inland waters (other than enclosed ponds) and ground waters.

**Cost-benefit analysis** – a decision-making technique that analyses and evaluates the implications of alternative courses of action by assigning a quantified monetary value for each Positive criterion (benefits) and negative criterion (costs).

**Culvert** – a covered structure under road, embankment etc, to direct the flow of water.

**Climate change** – the change in average conditions of the atmosphere near the Earth's surface over a long period of time.

**Dams** – a barrier constructed across flowing water that obstructs, directs or Slows down the flow, often creating a reservoir.

**Draft Bill** – a Bill published in draft before Introduction.

**Emergency (in the UK)** – an event or situation that threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK or to the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism that threatens serious damage to the security of the UK.

**Emergency management** – the process to deal with the initial or acute phase of an emergency.

**Emergency planning** – development and maintenance of agreed procedures to prevent, reduce, control, mitigate and take other actions in the event of an emergency.

**Environment Agency Coastal Strategic Overview** – the Strategic Overview was introduced in April 2008 as a result of Making space for water and is a way of working between Government, the Environment Agency, Local Authorities and coastal flooding groups to improve the sustainability, prioritisation and management of all work on the coast. Whilst the Environment Agency has the overview, close collaborative working with Local Authorities on the coast is essential to ensure vital skills and expertise is used effectively for communities in need.

**European Commission** – an institution of the European Union, located in Brussels with 27 members (Commissioners). It is responsible for proposing new policies, implementing existing policies, and ensuring that EU rules are obeyed by Member States.

**Flash flooding** – a rapid increase in water levels, leading to flooding, occurs when excessive rain falls over a short period of time.

**Flood** – temporary covering by water of land not normally covered with water.

**Flood risk** – product of the probability of Flooding occurring and its consequences of happening.

**Fluvial flooding** – same as river Flooding.

**Floodplain** – low-lying area adjacent to a watercourse and prone to flooding.

**Generic plan** – a single plan designed to cope with a wide range of emergencies.

**Geographic Information System (GIS)** – a mapping system to display geographic information.

**Government Offices** – 9 offices represent 11 Whitehall departments in English regions.

**Green roof** – a roof purposely covered in vegetation to reduce and treat water run-off.

**Greenhouse gas** – a gas that absorbs infrared radiation in the atmosphere.

**Home Information Pack (HIP)** – a pack containing a set of documents that aims to provide house buyers with some of the information that they need to make an informed choice about a property they wish to buy.

**Hive down** – a well established mechanism that involves the transfer of a viable part of a business to a wholly-owned subsidiary of the insolvent company.

**Hydrology** – the scientific study of water, including its properties, movement and effects on the Earth's Surface, underground and in the atmosphere.

**Impact Assessment** – is both a Continuous process to help the policy-maker fully think through and understand the consequences of possible and actual Government interventions in the public, private and third sectors; and a tool to enable the Government to weigh and present the negative effects of such interventions, including by reviewing the impact of policies after they have been implemented.

**Infrastructure Service Provider** – specialist third party owning and financing a large project and delivering the service provided by the new infrastructure to the water companies or companies.

**Inset Appointment** – allows one or company to replace another as the statutory water and/or sewerage undertaker for a specific geographic area.

**Internal Drainage Board (IDB)** – independent statutory bodies responsible for land drainage in areas of special drainage need that extends to 1.2 million hectares of lowland England. They are long established bodies operating predominantly under the Land Drainage Act 1991 and have permissive powers to undertake work to secure drainage and water level management of their districts.

**Inundation** – the flooding of an area with water.

**Land management** – this includes the way land is drained, used and farmed in the rural environment.

**Land use planning** – branch of public policy encompassing various disciplines seeking to order and regulate the use of land.

**Lead responder** – a Category 1 responder charged with carrying out a duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 on behalf of a number of responder organisations, so as to coordinate its delivery and to avoid unnecessary duplication. by the Secretary of State. Through these, different localities can channel public resources towards the priorities of their own areas, alongside national outcomes and targets.

**Local Area Agreement (LAA)** – are three-year agreements, developed by local councils with their partners in a local strategic partnership (LSP). Each LAA is negotiated with the Government Office for the region, before being agreed and signed off.

**Local Government Association (LGA)** – voluntary lobbying organisation to promote the interest of English and Welsh local authorities.

**Local Resilience Forums (LRF)** – a forum for bringing together all of the Category 1 and 2 responders within a facilitating cooperation in fulfilment of their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

**Local Planning Authority** – the statutory authority (usually the local council) whose duty it is to carry out the planning function of its area.

**Main river** – is a watercourse shown as such on a main river map and for which Environment Agency has responsibility.

**Ordinary Watercourse** – all Watercourses that do not form part of a main river, and which are the responsibility of local authorities or, Where they exist, internal drainage boards.

**Operating authorities** – is a term we use to describe the Environment Agency, local authorities and Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) who have powers to carry out flood risk management and land drainage works.

**Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25)** – government policy planning statement relating to development and flood risk.

**Pluvial flooding** – same as surface water.

**Precipitation** – for example, rain, snow, hail and sleet.

**Primary legislation** – the general term used to describe the main laws passed by the legislative bodies of the UK, for example Acts of the UK Parliament. These types of legislation are sometimes referred to as 'statutes'.

**Probability** – a relative measure of the likelihood or chance that something is the case or will happen, typically expressed as a number between zero and one or as a percentage.

**Permeable** – allowing liquids or gasses to pass through.

**Permissive powers** – the statutory granting of impact, authority (not a duty).

**Phosphorus pollution** – phosphorus is a nutrient that is used by plants. If it is present in the environment in excessive amounts it can lead to rapid undesirable plant growth which is called eutrophication. This can lead to disturbance of the ecological balance and, in severe cases, a reduction of oxygen in the water which could cause fish kills.

**Recharge period** – a period of time during which groundwater is absorbed into geological formations below the surface.

**Recovery** – the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency.

**Reservoir** – a natural or artificial lake where water is collected and stored until needed. Reservoirs can be used for irrigation, recreation, providing water supply for municipal needs, hydroelectric power or controlling water flow.

**Resilience** – the ability of the community, services, area or infrastructure to withstand the consequences of an incident.

**Resilience measures** – resilience Measures aim to reduce the consequence of flooding by, for example, facilitating the early recovery of buildings, infrastructure or other vulnerable sites following a flooding event or by ensuring that key infrastructure such as power distribution centres, telecommunication control centres and key emergency access routes have enhanced levels of protection or other mitigation measures.

**Resistance measures** – are designed to keep out, or at least minimise, the amount of water that accommodation of evacuees from an incident enters a building, or other area of adverse in times of flood.

**Return period** – this is the measure of the rarity of a flood event and is the average time interval between occurrences of a flood event of a similar magnitude.

**Riparian ownership** – owning shoreline land or land on the boundary of a river or watercourse.

**Risk** – measures the significance of a potential event in terms of likelihood and Impact. In the context of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the events in question are emergencies.

**Risk assessment** – a structured and auditable process of identifying potentially significant events, assessing their likelihood and impacts, and then combining these to provide an overall assessment of risk, as a basis for further decisions and action.

**River flooding** – occurs when water levels in a channel overwhelms the capacity of the channel.

**River Basin Management Plans** – plans for the integrated management of whole body water systems, from areas of surface run-off through to estuaries and the sea. It is designed to provide a detailed account of the objectives that have been set for the water bodies within the river basin district, and explain how these are to be achieved. The Water Framework Directive places a duty on EU Member States to ensure that a comprehensive plan is produced, and updated every six years, for each river basin district.

**Runoff** – water that is not absorbed into the ground and drains or flows off the land, often appearing in surface water bodies.

**Secondary legislation (also called 'subordinate legislation')** – is delegated legislation made by a person or body under authority contained in primary legislation for example statutory instruments. Typically, powers to make secondary legislation may be conferred on ministers, on the Crown, or on public bodies.

**Spatial** – relating to relative locations on the ground surface.

**Standards of Protection** – the flood event return period above which significant damage and possible failure of the flood defences could occur.

**Statutory duty** – an action required by law.

**Storm surge** – abnormal rise in sea level along the shore, usually caused by strong winds and/or reduced atmospheric pressure, often resulting from storms.

**Strategic Coordination Group (SCG)** – a multi-agency group that sets the policy and strategic framework for emergency response at local level (see also Gold command).

**Surface run-off** – occurs when the level of rainfall overwhelms the capacity of the drainage system to cope.

**Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)** – help to deal with excesses of water by mimicking natural drainage patterns.

**Swales** – shallow, trough-like depressions that carry water.

**Voluntary sector** – self-governing organisations, some being registered charities, some incorporated non-profit organisations. They deliver work for the Public benefit using volunteers.

**Trunk main** – large-diameter water pipe.

**Undertaker** – a company licensed to provide water supplies under Chapter 1 or 1A of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended).

**Utilities** – companies providing essential services, for example water, energy and telecommunications.

**Vulnerability** – the susceptibility of an individual, community, service or infrastructure to damage or harm.

**Water table** – the upper surface of groundwater; the boundary between Saturated and unsaturated soil conditions.

**Watercourse** – is any river, stream, ditch, drain, cut culvert, dyke, sluice, sewer and passage through which water flows, except a public sewer.

This page is intentionally left blank

**Origin:**

Cabinet (minute 177 - 10 March 2008) " That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be invited to consider the implications for the Council arising from the final report of the Pitt Review, expected to be published in the summer of 2008."

The final report has now been published and the Government has published its response to the Pitt Review recommendations.

The District does suffer from river and other water courses (fluvial) and surface water (pluvial) flooding in various locations.

The Council has a proactive approach to addressing flooding issues. It has maintained a Land Drainage Section since the 1970s and continues to invest in flood risk management.

**Term of Reference:**

1. To establish a Task and Finish Panel to consider and make recommendations on the implications for the Council arising from the recommendations of the review by Sir Michael Pitt following the flooding of 2007 (The Pitt Review).
2. To consider the number of flood risk assets within the District, some public infrastructure and residential properties that remain at a high risk of flooding.
3. To consider how the proposed changes in legislation would improve the management of flood risk and communication between various organisations.
4. To ensure that the Council fully understands and participates in the early stages of the implementation of the new legislation to gain maximum benefits for its residents.
5. To consider the recommendations within the Pitt Review that place additional responsibilities on Local Authorities in respect of management and coordination of all forms of flooding.
6. The District also implements Planning Policy Statement 25 'Development Control and Flood Risk' which seeks to reduce the impact of new build. The Panel to consider the changes proposed in the Pitt Review to further improve the work being done under this policy.
7. To note that County Councils are recognised as the lead authorities, working in partnership with Districts where appropriate, for those matters affecting local authorities within the Pitt Review Recommendations. Essex County Council have not, so far, indicated the likely split of responsibilities between County and Districts but it is reasonable to assume that Districts will have a role to play in implementing the recommendations, specially a District like EFDC which takes flood risk management seriously. To consider the implications of this split responsibilities to the District and to its emergency planning provisions.

**Aims and Objectives:**

To gather evidence and information in relation to the topics through the receipt of data, presentations and by participation in fact finding visits;

To consult with Partners, Agencies, Stakeholders and Users of the services under review, to establish key issues and future need;

PITT REVIEW ON FLOODING- TASK AND FINISH PANEL : TERMS OF REFERENCE

To evaluate all relevant facts in relation to the topics under review in an objective way and to produce recommendations for future action accordingly;

To establish whether there are any resource implications arising out of the topics under review and advise Cabinet for inclusion in the Budget Process 2009/10; and

To report back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee at appropriate intervals and to submit any final reports in the proposed Corporate Format for consideration by O & S, the Cabinet and Council.

<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>ESTIMATED</b>	<b>ACTUAL</b>
Commencement	July 2009	
<u>Finish</u> 1. Interim report to include any budgetary items for the next budget round.  2. As a time limited review - to end by January 2010.	By October 2009  January 2010	
Reports.		



## TASK AND FINISH PANELS GUIDANCE NOTES

### Introduction

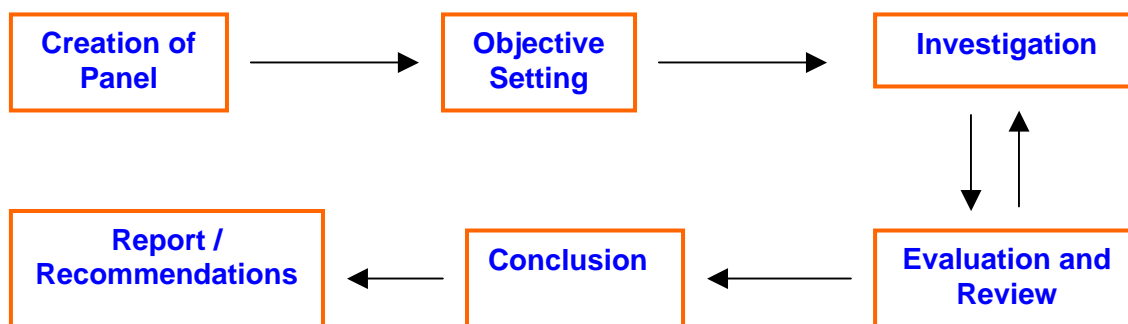
1. Task and Finish Scrutiny Panels are established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to deal with ad hoc projects or reviews included in the annual work programme for Overview and Scrutiny.
2. Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel status will be restricted to those activities which are issue-based, 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 panel). 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**

This page is intentionally left blank



Epping Forest District Council



# SCRUTINY

## REPORT OF THE XXX TASK AND FINISH PANEL

**JULY 2009**

Contact for enquiries:  
John Gilbert, Lead Officer  
Epping Forest District Council, Civic Offices  
Epping, CM16 4BZ  
[jgilbert@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:jgilbert@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)  
01992 56 4062

## CONTENTS

		<b>Page</b>
1.	Chairman's Foreward	3
2.	Introduction or Overview	4
3.	Context	5
4.	Summary of Recommendations	6
5.	Report	7
6.	Conclusions	8
7.	Acknowledgements	9
8.	Appendix 1	10
	Appendix 2	11

- 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 indicate 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.