

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF HOUSING SCRUTINY STANDING PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 21 JULY 2005
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 5.00 - 7.20 PM**

Members Present: S Murray (Chairman), Mrs R Gadsby (Vice-Chairman), K Angold-Stephens, Mrs A Grigg, Mrs J Lea, L Martin, T Richardson and Mrs J H Whitehouse

Other members present: M Heavens

Apologies for Absence: Mrs S Perry

Officers Present A Hall (Head of Housing Services), R Wilson (Assistant Head of Housing Services (Operations)), L Swan (Environmental Services), S Stranders (Environmental Services) and Z Folley (Democratic Services Assistant)

1. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

The Panel noted that there were no substitute members appointed for the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel considered their terms of reference and work plan.

Noted that the OSC had asked the Panel to raise the priority given to work plan item 14- Initiatives for Reducing the Number of Empty Homes in the District.

S Stranders and L Swan of Care and Repair stated the team supported the views of OSC and had considered the information and action required to progress the review. Agreed that further information be obtained on the review (scope, legal requirements, initiatives implemented at other authorities) and that a work-plan be formulated to guide action and reported to the next meeting.

Agreed that a review of the Council's Introductory Tenants Scheme be added to the work programme.

Agreed that starting times for future meetings be 5.00pm.

ACTION:

A Hall, S Stranders and L Swan to produce an item and work plan for next agenda.

4. HOUSING SERVICE STRATEGIES - OLDER PEOPLES SERVICES & HOUSING MANAGEMENT (PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION).

(i) Housing Service Strategy – Older Peoples Services

The Panel considered the report. Agreed that:

- (a) paragraph 1.3 - last sentence be amended to read ..'The Strategy was approved by the Housing Scrutiny Standing Panel and Housing Portfolio Holder.
- (b) Paragraph 4.8 - Figure for number of leaflets on Services to Older People distributed be changed to 1178.
- (c) Paragraph 6.1 – word 'older' to replace 'elderly'.
- (d) Paragraph 8.4.1 be reworded
- (e) Paragraph 9.1 first Action in table be reworded to clarify current position.

ACTION:

R Wilson to amend report as indicated.

(ii) Housing Service Strategy – Housing Management.

Agreed.

5. INFORMATION EVENING AND BASIC HOUSING LAW BRIEFING FOR HOUSING SCRUTINY MEMBERS

Members agreed that information sessions be arranged for the following dates:

Housing Information Evening – 8 September 2005

Basic Housing Law Briefing for Housing Scrutiny Members (2 Sessions) – 13 September 2005 and 17 October 2005.

6. ETHNIC MONITORING - HOUSING REGISTER AND ALLOCATIONS

The Panel noted the report.

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

No reports were submitted to the OSC for consideration.

8. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING.

Agreed that the next meeting would consider the following reports:

Housing Services Strategy on Tenants Participation.

Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

Allocation Scheme and Annual Review.

Six Monthly report on Local Supporting People Strategy

Housing Services Plan.

Introductory Tenants Scheme,

Initiatives for Reducing the Number of Empty Homes in the District Work Plan.

9. FUTURE MEETINGS

Agreed that the next meeting be held on 15 September 2005 at 5.00pm. Room booking to be announced.