

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 19 APRIL 2006  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING  
AT 7.30 - 10.02 PM**

**Members Present:** D Stallan (Chairman), Mrs D Borton, K Faulkner, Mrs A Grigg, F Maclaine and Mrs J H Whitehouse

**Other members present:** (none)

**Apologies for Absence:** Mrs D Collins and Mrs M Sartin

**Officers Present** J Scott (Joint Chief Executive), I Willett (Head of Research and Democratic Services), S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)

**Also in attendance:** (none)

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**1. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

The panel noted apologies for lateness, received from Councillor Mrs D Borton.

It was also noted that there were no substitute members.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

**3. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW SEMINAR - 11 MARCH 2006**

The panel received a paper from Councillor Mrs Sartin, on the background and outcomes for the review seminar held on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2006. They then considered the seven main points that arose from the seminar.

**(a) Better Prioritisation:**

Noted that the PICK system had not been used this time as all the requests for review received for next year could be accommodated within the programme.

**RECOMMENDED:**

(1) That panel chairmen be asked to report back to the O&S committee only when:

(i) Standing Panels have commented on a current Executive matter; or

(ii) Panels are formally reporting their findings on an issue in their work programme; or

(iii) They are seeking changes to their memberships, working practices, terms of reference, reporting deadlines or any other significant issue;

(2) That the Leader of the Council and other Portfolio Holders should be asked to the July Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, to outline their plans for the year ahead (see Overview & Scrutiny Procedure rules 3 (p));

(3) That Portfolio Holders be asked to attend the O&S meetings prior to the Cabinet meetings on an exception basis – members will need to ask Democratic Services (through the O&S Committee Chairman) to ask Portfolio Holders to attend the O&S committee meeting to discuss any items that relate to their portfolio that the committee would like more information on; and

(4) That a separate section of the Members Bulletin to be created to update members on the latest work of the O&S panels, Chairmen of the panels are to be requested to supply any updates they think appropriate – also dates of forthcoming meetings should be listed so interested members could attend if they so desired.

**(b) Ownership**

Recommended that no member should chair more than one panel.

**RECOMMENDED:**

That a list of the various panels and a brief description of their terms of reference be placed in the Members Bulletin to inform members of the proposed programme for next year indicating that they should contact their Group Leader regarding nominations.

**(c) Investigations/ Methodology**

**RECOMMENDED:**

(1) That reports and investigations should include:

(a) Details of evidence gathered and reasons for decisions;

(b) Conclusions that can demonstrate outcomes for further consideration and the annual report;

(2) That a common format for reports of Panels be devised by Democratic Services.

**(d) Work Planning**

Noted that the Leader of the Council and other Portfolio Holders should be asked to the July Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, to outline their plans for the year ahead (see Overview & Scrutiny Procedure rules 3 (p)).

**(e) Measuring Performance and Achievements**

Noted that there was a need to track progress on reports made so that O&S would know what had been implemented.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (1) That six months after a Task and Finish panel has finished, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should undertake a review to revisit the outcomes and progression of the recommendations made;
- (2) That Standing panels be asked to review their own recommendations on a six monthly basis;
- (3) That a rolling record of outcomes be established to keep a continuous record of recommendations made and the outcomes of those recommendations; and
- (4) That the Annual Report to be sent out to Town and Parish Councils, local libraries and to each newly elected member.

**(f) External Liaison / Participation**

Noted that we have been successfully liaising with external partners such as the Police, London Transport and the Health services etc.

**(g) Media Coverage**

Noted that:

- O&S needs to be more proactive in getting publicity; and
- Perhaps Public Relations could work up some sort of Publicity Plan.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (1) That O&S should be more proactive in requesting Public Relations to publicise Scrutiny;
- (2) That an item to be added to the end of each agenda to remind chairmen to agree at their meeting if anything covered at that meeting needed to be publicised; and
- (3) That Public Relations be requested to produce a draft publicity plan for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny.