

## **OLDER AND DISABLED PEOPLE TASK AND FINISH PANEL**

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

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### **Summary of issue to be scrutinised**

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

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

### **Public interest justification**

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

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

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

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

### **Council Performance**

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

### **Keep in Context**

DDA relevance is stated above.

27 February 2006