

Members' Task and Finish Groups

PROTOCOL

1. A Committee of the Council, including the Cabinet, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee, may set up a Task and Finish Group to work through a particular issue and report back to its parent committee.

In addition, an individual Cabinet Member, or the Business Routeing Panel, may convene a Task & Finish Group to consider and seek agreement on issues on which members have expressed interest or dissent.

2. The term "Task and Finish Group" will be used rather than "working party", or any other term.
3. A Task and Finish Group is not a Committee or Sub-Committee under the Local Government Act 1972. Therefore the public and press do not have a right to attend or see the agenda papers, although the Task and Finish Group may invite outside parties to contribute.
4. The Task and Finish Group should consist of at least three Members selected by the relevant parent committee, Cabinet Member or Business Routeing Panel, one of whom will be appointed the Chairman of the Group by the Committee or convenor of the Group.
5. When it is established, the Task and Finish Group must be set clear Terms of Reference by the parent Committee or convenor. (The terms of reference can be altered by the Committee or convenor during the lifetime of the Task & Finish Group).
6. The Task and Finish Group should have a finite life. (This should normally be no more than six months).
7. The Task and Finish Group Chairman will co-ordinate the activity of the Group within the Terms of Reference. There should be a formal Agenda for each meeting drawn up by the chairman, so that members of the group are clear about the purpose of the meeting. This should be sent to members no later than one week before the meeting date.
8. Agendas and notes of the meetings will normally only be circulated to members of the Task and Finish Group.
9. A Lead Officer should be appointed for the Task and Finish Group to give advice and assistance. The Lead Officer will be appointed following discussions between the Task and Finish Group Chairman and the relevant Director.

It should normally be the case, however, that the Members on the Group will support themselves, This will be especially the case for a Task and Finish Group which has not been set up by a Committee.

10. The Business Routeing Panel must be informed whenever a Task and Finish Group is established. The Panel will control the overall number of such groups, and ensure their purpose is clear and necessary, and their reporting back arrangements are appropriate.

As the Business Routeing Panel meets on a quarterly basis, Members' requests to set up a Task and Finish Group via the BRP may be considered by the Members of the BRP between its meetings. This should normally be done electronically.

11. Progress Reports should be made to the parent Committee or convenor. These may be oral or in writing.
12. A final report must be presented to the parent Committee or convenor, listing the recommendations.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR MEMBERS' TASK & FINISH GROUPS

The Terms of Reference and objectives etc. of Members' Task and Finish Groups will vary depending on the subject being addressed. However, below is a suggested list of areas which the parent committee, or convenor, may wish to address when setting up the Task and Finish Group;

Review Topic	
Membership (and Chairman)	
Aims and Objectives (Outcomes to be achieved)	
Scope	
Review Period	
Officer support	
Review completion date	
Frequency of Meetings	
Training Requirements	