

# Leicester City Council Scrutiny Review

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Housing crisis in Leicester

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A review of the Housing Scrutiny commission

Date: March 2022

## **Background to scrutiny reviews**

Determining the right topics for scrutiny reviews is the first step in making sure scrutiny provides benefits to the Council and the community.

This scoping template will assist in planning the review by defining the purpose, methodology and resources needed. It should be completed by the Member proposing the review, in liaison with the lead Director and the Scrutiny Manager. Scrutiny Officers can provide support and assistance with this.

In order to be effective, every scrutiny review must be properly project managed to ensure it achieves its aims and delivers measurable outcomes. To achieve this, it is essential that the scope of the review is well defined at the outset. This way the review is less likely to get side-tracked or become overambitious in what it hopes to tackle. The Commission's objectives should, therefore, be as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Time-bound) as possible.

The scoping document is also a good tool for communicating what the review is about, who is involved and how it will be undertaken to all partners and interested stakeholders.

The form also includes a section on public and media interest in the review which should be completed in conjunction with the Council's Communications Team. This will allow the Commission to be properly prepared for any media interest and to plan the release of any press statements.

Scrutiny reviews will be supported by a Scrutiny Officer.

### **Evaluation**

Reviewing changes that have been made as a result of a scrutiny review is the most common way of assessing the effectiveness. Any scrutiny review should consider whether an on-going monitoring role for the Commission is appropriate in relation to the topic under review.

**For further information please contact the Scrutiny Team on 0116 4546340**

<b>To be completed by the Member proposing the review</b>		
<b>1.</b>	<b>Title of the proposed scrutiny review</b>	<b><u>Housing Crisis in Leicester</u></b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Proposed by</b>	Cllr Paul Westley (Housing Commission chair)
<b>3.</b>	<b>Rationale</b> Why do you want to undertake this review?	To understand and influence the factors which have combined to create a shortage of affordable housing for the communities within Leicester. Influences will include regional and national policy and economic and social factors
<b>4.</b>	<b>Purpose and aims of the review</b> What question(s) do you want to answer and what do you want to achieve? (Outcomes?)	To propose changes to local and national policy to mitigate the effects of housing shortages and poor-quality housing.  To provide a platform for campaigning on a local basis for a wider pool of affordable social and other housing.  To contribute by so doing to council (and other) policy formation and to encourage outside agencies
<b>5.</b>	<b>Links with corporate aims / priorities</b> How does the review link to corporate aims and priorities?	Housing, and good quality housing, have a direct bearing on homelessness, overcrowding, mental and physical health and employment and education performance. Social housing in particular helps the life chances of the most deprived members of our communities.
<b>6.</b>	<b>Scope</b> Set out what is included in the scope of the review and what is not. For example, which services it does and does not cover.	The review will include issues relating to the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• housing department, which has direct responsibility for the council's housing stock,</li> <li>• environmental health, which has oversight of private rented sector housing conditions;</li> <li>• economic development, which covers skill supply and shortage issues within the construction sector;</li> <li>• Planning and development control, and the clear definition of section 106 objectives to support the growth of social housing on a site-specific and more city-wide basis.</li> </ul>

7.	<p><b>Methodology</b> Describe the methods you will use to undertake the review.</p> <p>How will you undertake the review, what evidence will need to be gathered from members, officers and key stakeholders, including partners and external organisations and experts?</p>	<p>The review will be conducted by a task group chaired by Cllr Gee.</p> <p>Membership need not be confined to members of the housing scrutiny commission.</p> <p>A series of meetings will receive local and national evidence on the issues set out in sections 4-6.</p> <p>The meetings will look at a range of issues, including tenure, supply of housing and affordability.</p> <p>The commission may decide to invite key stakeholders to provide sector specific advice and the commission will be provided with summaries of and links to national reports and data.</p>
	<p><b>Witnesses</b> Set out who you want to gather evidence from and how you will plan to do this.</p>	<p>City council witnesses (officers, executive members and councillors) Local organisations dealing with homelessness and associated issues (health, poverty, private housing standards) may also be called upon.</p>
8.	<p><b>Timescales</b> How long is the review expected to take to complete?</p>	Up to six months
	Proposed start date	April 2022
	Proposed completion date	By September 2022
9.	<p><b>Resources / staffing requirements</b> Scrutiny reviews are facilitated by Scrutiny Officers and it is important to estimate the amount of their time, in weeks, that will be required in order to manage the review Project Plan effectively.</p>	<p>Scrutiny officer time within existing workload.</p> <p>The officer time from services within Housing and possibly other divisions contributing to the review.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any additional resources will be required.</p>

	Do you anticipate any further resources will be required e.g. site visits or independent technical advice? If so, please provide details.	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Review recommendations and findings</b>  To whom will the recommendations be addressed? E.g. Executive / External Partner?	Executive
<b>11.</b>	<b>Likely publicity arising from the review</b> - Is this topic likely to be of high interest to the media? Please explain.	The review will from time to time attract media attention depending on the nature and quality of the material provided.
<b>12.</b>	<b>Publicising the review and its findings and recommendations</b> How will these be published / advertised?	These will go to the OSC (and executive).  Usual media resources will be used to highlight the work in progress and the outcomes
<b>13.</b>	<b>How will this review add value to policy development or service improvement?</b>	The issues are national and regional, but the impacts are regional and local. They may help influence and frame policy development at council level.

<b>To be completed by the Executive Lead</b>		
<b>14.</b>	<b>Executive Lead's Comments</b>  The Executive Lead is responsible for the portfolio so it is important to seek and understand their views and ensure they are engaged in the process so that Scrutiny's recommendations can be taken on board where appropriate.	<p>I warmly welcome the Housing scrutiny reviews focus on the housing crisis which is probably one of the biggest challenges we face as a city now and also going into the future. Failure by Central government to lead the way and affect new build delivery because of poor policies and lack of financial investment in new build housing has led us to a crisis where people's health and wellbeing is being significantly affected because they are unable to find the home that meets their and their family's needs.</p> <p>It is essential from this piece of work that as a local authority we are able as a single voice to loudly call for much more to be done by Central government to rectify their failings and help the people of Leicester to get the home they deserve.</p>
<b>Comments from the relevant Director</b>		
<b>15.</b>	<b>Observations and comments on the proposed review</b>	The Scrutiny review working party by Housing scrutiny commission is welcomed to focus more attention on the Housing crisis that the City is facing. Highlighting the significant challenges and issues that brings for the people of Leicester and the ability for the City Council to be able to meet its statutory legal duties in relation to Homelessness and to enable people to be able to find suitable, secure and long-term homes that meet their needs.
	<b>Name</b>	Chris Burgin
	<b>Role</b>	Director of Housing
	<b>Date</b>	14/3/2022
<b>To be completed by the Scrutiny Support Manager</b>		
<b>16.</b>	<b>Will the proposed scrutiny review / timescales negatively impact on other work within the Scrutiny Team?</b>	The review as anticipated can be carried out within existing team resources.
	<b>Do you have available staffing resources to facilitate this scrutiny review? If not, please provide details.</b>	Yes
	<b>Name</b>	Francis Connolly
	<b>Date</b>	15 March 2022

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