

Leicester City Council Scrutiny Review

Community Asset Transfer

A review of the Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny
Commission

2026

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 Governance Services Manager. Governance Support 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 Governance Support 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.

To be completed by the Member proposing the review. (Filled out by Senior Governance Officer on behalf of the Chair).		
1.	Title of the proposed scrutiny review	Community Asset Transfer
2.	Proposed by	Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission
3.	Rationale Why do you want to undertake this review?	<p>On 18 September, the Council approved an updated Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy, amended in light of changes to legislation, Council objectives, the Community Services & Library Needs Assessment, policy and practice since adoption of a CAT Policy in 2008 as last updated in 2022.</p> <p>Prior to this, at the meeting of the Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission on 11 September 2025, the Commission considered a report on the updated CAT Policy. At this meeting a task group was requested by members to consider the implications of the policy updates and proposals.</p>
4.	Purpose and aims of the review What question(s) do you want to answer and what do you want to achieve? (Outcomes?)	<p>The task group aims to address questions around the processes of CAT and its effect on the community and community groups.</p> <p>The overarching aim is to look at potential implications of the new policy and to assess whether any improvements could be made.</p> <p>It aims to analyse the processes and the process map that the Council uses and how the Heads of Terms have been used in past CATs and look at the reasonings behind how and why certain approaches, models and processes were taken in certain CATs.</p> <p>Ultimately, the group aims to produce recommendations on how the updated CAT policy and the processes within it can be best implemented.</p>
5.	Links with corporate aims / priorities How does the review link to corporate aims and priorities?	With certain Council assets potentially being made available for CAT, it is fitting that the policy be reviewed to ensure it is suitable and of value to the community.

6.	<p>Scope 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.</p>	<p>The scope will cover the work of both Neighbourhood Services and Estates.</p> <p>It will consider the model Heads of Terms on property lease and the processes that are undertaken in a CAT.</p> <p>It will look at how groups are chosen for a CAT, including their business plans and whether existing occupants of a building are given higher scores.</p> <p>It will also consider both the previous policy and assessment criteria as well as the updated guidelines as an evolution on how the new guidelines improve on the previous ones, particularly in terms of providing more guidance for those interested in applying for a CAT through the new guidebook.</p> <p>It will also look at the engagement that Councillors have in the CAT process and to what extent Ward Councillors and Scrutiny members can be involved.</p> <p>The group can look at how groups are monitored post-transfer to ensure they fulfil the conditions of the transfer.</p> <p>It will also look at the disposal processes that the Council follows, including whether a CAT can be applied for if an asset is being disposed through the market.</p>
7.	<p>Methodology 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 group will consider the previous policy and the updated policy.</p> <p>Members will share their experiences of engagement with CATs and the community groups that have undertaken them.</p> <p>The Director of Neighbourhoods and Environment, The Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Service Manager - Asset Strategy will provide data and information regarding the previous and updated policies and guidance, and examples of previous CATs.</p> <p>Governance Services can aim to provide benchmarking information on the CAT policies from other local authorities.</p> <p>Stakeholders (as below) will be approached to provide evidence potentially through joining meetings, providing written representations, or through submitting questionnaires.</p>
	<p>Witnesses Set out who you want to gather evidence from and how you will plan to do this.</p>	<p>Stakeholders that could be approached include community groups that have undertaken successful CATs to assess their experience.</p>
8.	<p>Timescales How long is the review expected to take to complete?</p>	<p>The task group will take place over the first half of 2026.</p>

9.	Resources / staffing requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance Support Officers will facilitate the review. The Director of Neighbourhoods and Environment, The Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Service Manager - Asset Strategy will provide data and information.
10.	Review recommendations and findings To whom will the recommendations be addressed? E.g. Executive / External Partner?	Recommendations will be directed to the Executive for consideration and implementation.
11.	Likely publicity arising from the review - Is this topic likely to be of high interest to the media? Please explain.	The future of Libraries and Community centres and Adventure Playgrounds have been discussed in local media. If they are considered with regard to CAT, it may generate media interest.
12.	Publicising the review and its findings and recommendations How will these be published / advertised?	The final report will be published on the local authority's website as part of the Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission papers and shared with the Council's Executive.
13.	How will this review add value to policy development or service improvement?	The review is aimed at scrutinising the updated CAT policy in comparison with the previous policy, and noting potential improvements in the policy with any recommendations hoping to add value to that process.
Comments from the relevant Director		
14.	Observations and comments on the proposed review	<p>The purpose of this review is to test the processes of the Community Asset Transfer policy that was introduced in 2025 by using existing case examples. It aims to provide insight into the ease of use by community groups to bid to run a council facility.</p> <p>The scope must be carefully contained to ensure that clear recommendations are made as an outcome.</p>
	Name	Sean Atterbury
	Role	Director of Neighbourhoods and Environment
	Date	12/3/26
To be completed by the Governance Services Manager		

15.	Will the proposed scrutiny review / timescales negatively impact on other work within the Scrutiny Team?	I am comfortable that Governance Services can support this review and that we have enough resource to facilitate it. The timeframe is tight so consideration should be given to allow for the completion of the final report.
	Name	Kalvaran Sandhu, Governance Services Manager
	Date	7 th January 2026