

## **Proforma Guidance Notes**

These guidance notes also include the proforma to be used to submit your proposed items for review by Scrutiny.

A check list will be used to assist the Scrutiny Programme Board to ensure a consistent approach is taken in determining whether or not to proceed with a suggested proposal or item of business, review of suggested topic or area of work. Their deliberations will also include taking account of the current and future work priorities and the Board will also liaise with the Strategic Management Board.

### **Important considerations**

When Members are considering whether to put forward a proposal for review, it is important that they are aware of the following:

- a) The existing, agreed work priorities for Scrutiny. Members must take into account the capacity of Members and Officers to support the proposed work needed to do the review well;
- b) The Scrutiny Programme Board will wish to consider and prioritise those proposals which have the best chance of securing real improvement or local benefit or can make a positive change in line with the Council's agreed objectives and priorities.
- c) The Member who proposes the item, will be invited to take part in the Task and Finish Group/Spotlight Review to consider the matter.
- d) If it is decided not to proceed with the proposer's idea for review, full reasons will be given.

If a Member(s) wishes to put forward a request to Scrutiny to consider a specific topic or area of work, they must complete the following proforma.

Once completed, it should be emailed to the Corporate Manager, Democratic & Civic Support. Once the views of the Strategic Management Board have been sought, the request will be presented, together with any other supporting information provided, to the Scrutiny Programme Board for consideration and the proposer(s) will be advised of the outcome.

**SCRUTINY**  
**Consideration of an Item at Scrutiny Committee**

Please complete this form to provide information about your proposal for consideration by the Scrutiny Programme Board or request for a review to be undertaken on a topic or issue of concern. You may attach any other supporting information you feel might help the Board in considering your proposal. The Strategic Management Board will be advised of any proposal, to help advise on the timetable and any resource implications.

Please complete the following form which will be presented to the Scrutiny Programme Board (SPB)

<b>Issue to be Considered</b>	<i>Ways in which ECC might support or work with Community Land Trusts to promote protection of green space, creation and maintenance of community facilities and the delivery of affordable local housing.</i>
<b>Proposer (s)</b>	<i>Cllr Lynn Wetenhall</i>
<b>Scrutiny Committee (to be determined by the SPB)</b>	
<b>Lead Portfolio Holder</b>	<i>Covers affordable housing, green spaces, community facilities</i>
<b>Identification of Lead Officer</b>	<i>Head of Service - Customer &amp; Communities</i>

<b>Areas for consideration:</b>
<p><b>1. What is the specific topic area you want considered/reviewed?</b></p> <p>To explore how Community Land Trusts (CLT) have the potential to offer significant benefits to Exeter, in the delivery of affordable homes, nature recovery and the provision of community facilities. CLTs are vehicles for each of these different areas; any one CLT can deliver across one or more of these areas of operation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Social Housing CLTs</b> – deliver genuinely affordable homes, ensuring permanent affordability for local people.</li> <li>● <b>Nature-Recovery CLTs</b> – acquire or manage land to restore habitats, enhance biodiversity, create new woodlands, wetlands or wildflower areas, and support community-led climate and nature action.</li> </ul>

- **Community-Development CLTs** – secure land for shared facilities such as community hubs, workspaces, food-growing sites, play areas, cultural spaces and other projects that strengthen local wellbeing and cohesion.

With ever-increasing pressure on green space, council finances and the failure of the market to deliver realistic affordable housing, CLTs are something that could deliver innovative solutions for this and the future Unitary Authority that includes Exeter.

## 2. What are the main issues you feel need to be addressed?

There has been no exploration of this topic to date by the Council or by other third sector organisations. The review would take a first scoping consideration of whether ECC and other landowners hold land which has the potential to deliver benefits and some idea of the scale of these benefits, risks and approximate costs involved.

Council's can take a number of actions to promote and support CLTs ie this is a legitimate area of operation for a local authority. Areas of influence and action include asset transfers, planning policy, integration with relevant policies, financial and technical support and acting as a broker, facilitating and building support and interest in communities and training.

In the first instance a review would examine the Council's land and asset holdings with a view to assessing disposal via community asset transfer for the purposes of setting up a CLT.

Should the review find that there is merit in proceeding to support CLTs, the community asset transfer process would be advertised to the community and engagement by community organisations and supporting organisations in the setting up of a CLT(s) encouraged. This process would align with any disposal programme associated with Local Government Reorganisation and enable ECC to ensure its assets were to be used for community benefit.

## 3. Please identify which of the Council's key priorities your topic relates to? (If any)

From the Corporate Plan.

### People:

- Health inequalities will reduce.
- Communities will be more resilient.
- More residents, including those from our priority neighbourhoods and communities, will be participating in leisure and cultural events and activities.
- A safe and thriving city with great things to see and do for everyone.

To achieve this our strategic efforts will focus on partnership work alongside our priority neighbourhoods and communities. We will work to ensure the provision of sustainable cultural, leisure and enrichment opportunities.

## Homes

- Better quality, energy efficient and more affordable homes to buy or rent.
- New housing developments that are well integrated into existing communities.
- Fewer people will be homeless or in temporary housing.
- The number of people on the social housing waiting list will reduce.

## Sustainable Environment

- A city taking action to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- A carbon-neutral city.
- Well-maintained parks, open spaces and biodiversity across the city.

CLTs relating to green space could also play a useful role in Exeter's Local Nature Recovery work.

### **What outcome are you aiming to achieve with this consideration/review?**

The City Council can have confidence in knowing that CLTs could be, or are not worthy, of further investigation as a policy and delivery vehicle, including an initial scoping of areas of potential synergy where CLTs mesh most strongly with ECC policies and actions. The exercise would align with any asset disposal programme as part of LGR in order to secure long term community benefits.

### **5. Do you consider this review urgent and if so why?**

This is urgent since ECC will be considering the disposal of assets as part of LGR and by taking an active approach to securing social and environmental value over the next year, will lock in long term community and environmental benefits .The following are examples of where action via CLTs could help deliver on pressing issues:

- The considerable pressure on Exeter's green spaces and the need to enhance biodiversity on existing green spaces are areas where CLTs could add real value.
- The shortage of truly affordable housing in Exeter is a critical element driving homelessness and crisis levels of poverty. Again, CLTs could contribute to increasing the city's stock of protected affordable housing
- There are at least two current 'on the drawing board' community facility projects - the Pinhoe Hub and the Wonford community and sports centre. Both of these initiatives could benefit from a CLT-focused approach.

Date of Request

23rd Dec 2025

Please note that the Programme Board will consider the following matters (if relevant) when determining the request. *Please tick any that are appropriate.*-

<b>Potential Criteria for Selecting Topic (NB This is not an exhaustive list)</b>	<b>Please tick</b>
The issue has potential impact on one or more sections of the local population	✓
The issue is strategic and/or significant	✓
Scrutiny of this matter will add value to the Council's and/or its partners' overall performance	✓
The review will lead to effective outcomes	✓
This will improve service outputs	✓
The issue is of concern to partners and stakeholders	✓
The issue is a key issue for the public (as identified through contact with constituents or meetings of local organisations)	
This will be of benefit to the community	✓
Poor performing service (evidenced from performance indicators)	
Service/issue ranked as important by the Council's community (via market surveys/annual residents' survey/consultation with tenants, local business community)	
High level of user/general public dissatisfaction with service (via market surveys/complaints)	
Public interest issue (e.g. covered by local media)	
High level of budgetary commitment to the service or policy area	✓
Pattern of budgetary overspends	
Council key priority area	✓
Central Government priority area	

Issue poses significant or potential risk to the Council (can be financial, reputational or other risk)	✓
Issue raised by external auditor	
Issue raised by Council or one of its Committees	
Issue arises from new legislation or Government guidance	
Key reports or new evidence (provided by external organisations on key issue)	✓

**FOR SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD USE ONLY**

The following will be used if the Proposal/Topic is rejected	Please tick
The timing of this review is inappropriate	
The review will duplicate other work within the Council or elsewhere	
The issue is already under examination by Council	
The issue is already under examination by an Officer Group and changes are imminent	
Issue being examined as part of a service review	
New legislation/guidance expected within a year	
There is an alternative, more effective, route the Member can take to address the issue	
The issue is outside the scope of the Scrutiny Committee	
The issue would not bring about any sustainable and on-going revenue savings	
The issue does not meet any of the Council's corporate priorities	

Comments from SMB	<p>Community Housing Trusts are an important approach to housing and community spaces development where there is community appetite and capability for them.</p> <p>The landscape on this issue is currently unknown to the Council: officers are unaware of any Community Land Trusts in the City interested in any specific project to promote protection of green space, creation and maintenance of community</p>
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	<p>facilities or the delivery of affordable local housing. Whilst the member has proposed a first step is to review the Council's land and asset holdings with a view to assessing disposal via community asset transfer for the purposes of setting up a CLT this would be a resource intensive project that may lead to nothing if there is no appetite from Community Land Trusts in the City.</p> <p>We already have a Community Asset Transfer policy and a process to facilitate any interest expressed by a community group in the transfer of council assets which is kept under regular review. Alongside this we also maintain an Asset of Community Value (ACV) list as required under the Localism Act which enables local groups to nominate assets that further community social well-being or interests which then gives community groups the change to bid if the owner sells. We propose that a first step would be to reach out to communities as try to identify any Community Land Trusts in existence or development and any appetite for their formation. Once we have a better understanding of need/interest we can then consider what further action to take.</p> <p>This project will be built into the 26/27 workplan of the Customer and Communities team in the People and Communities Directorate.</p>
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Overall recommendation of Scrutiny Programme Board Please tick relevant box)	Review Supported	Review not supported
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Confirm approval of review by Committee	Yes/No ( <i>Delete as appropriate</i> )  Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee or Strategic Scrutiny Committee
Date	