

**100% of delegates like the principles of democracy**

**16% like how it works in practice** (2021vSRP)

UK and Scottish democracy is inaccessible, constrained by uncodified rules; by complex, siloed legislation and by lack of investment in the structures of local governance and community empowerment including Community Councils and Anchor organisations.

**18% of people feel they can influence local decisions**  
(Scottish Household Survey 2019)

- **We expect** the **reform of local governance** to deliver smaller local councils with greater fiscal and functional authority and a more powerful community-level tier of local democracy building on Community Councils. One cannot happen without the other.
- **We expect** the **National Planning Framework (NPF4)** to prioritise climate action and wellbeing and champion the Place Principle. We expect Local Place Plans to give real power to communities over their future development.
- **We expect** the **community empowerment agenda** to deliver guaranteed funding and investment in communities and to act as a vehicle for advancing equality and social justice.

## We also expect...

### Participation

An evidence-led National Volunteering Strategy that supports and builds capacity of governance volunteers - members of Boards and Community Councils.

Research into the feasibility of setting up a body able to support community structures to manage conflict in positive ways.

### Local democratic structures

Action research to test approaches which enhance public engagement with Community Councils and increase the diversity in their membership. This should be linked to a high-profile national campaign in the run up to the 2023 elections.

Investment in network organizing across Community Council areas with a view to achieving greater integration of local activities and greater collaboration amongst CCs, other community anchors, planners and the local council.

### Community Empowerment

A top-up of the 1% Framework Agreement commitment by a further 0.2% with the allocation going to addressing persistent structural inequalities in the design and delivery of local authority Participatory Budgeting activities.

Guaranteed funding for anchor organizations' main salaried post and a reasonable allocation to organisational overheads. Funding must come with capacity building support & scrutiny on advancing equality and inclusion.

### National initiatives

National and local government to pilot digital platforms for involving citizens in democratic deliberations, including crowdsourcing policy initiatives.

Scottish Government to invest in inclusive consultation and co-design processes, including dedicated mini-publics, to shape the local governance reform and NPF4.

Scottish Parliament to demonstrate leadership and commitment to these three linked agendas through an early debate and launch of Committee and Cross-Party Group.