



# ***In Every Corner of Scotland***

## **The local election manifesto for social enterprise 2017**

***We believe in local solutions.*** Social enterprises are making a positive difference in Scotland's towns and cities, islands and villages, in both urban and rural areas.

From the delivery of social and child care, to managing sports centres, running community transport and recycling services, regeneration, the culture and creative industries, supporting local employment, providing social housing and more - the scope and range is impressive.

***Social enterprises are on your side.*** We share the same values as people working in local authorities. We should work together to empower individuals, drive public service change, help the most excluded, improve the natural environment and strengthen local democracy.

Local authorities and other local bodies are often the first point of contact for social enterprises, whether that's as customers, for business support, funding, influencing policies or getting access to decision-making and contracts. But barriers still exist in many areas.

***We believe that there's strength in diversity.*** The support infrastructure for social enterprise varies across Scotland but it's about striking a balance between national standards and local decision-making.

If election candidates, political parties and council officials support the policies in this manifesto they'll fulfil their remit to serve the public in every part of Scotland. We look forward to working with you for the benefit of everyone.

### **Work with your local social enterprises for:**

- ✓ Clear social impacts and a person-centred approach
- ✓ Jobs and wealth creation
- ✓ Potential cost savings to local authority budgets
- ✓ No leakage of local money for shareholder profits
- ✓ Environmental improvement and regeneration
- ✓ Delivery of value added public services
- ✓ People and planet at the heart of procurement
- ✓ Greater flexibility, innovation and efficiency
- ✓ Public land/buildings working for community benefit

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***A local social enterprise strategy in every area*** - Increasing numbers of local areas now have Social Enterprise Networks (SENs) and a social enterprise strategy. We're calling on those who haven't to now drive this forward in their own areas. Learn from existing local strategies, align with the new, national, 10 year social enterprise strategy (including social enterprise in schools), take into account City Deals and other initiatives and seek assistance from national social enterprise support bodies. Ensure that the Business Gateway has dedicated social enterprise officers, in order to back up implementation of the local strategy. Most importantly - ensure that the process is led by your local social enterprises.

***Guarantee access to local forums*** - Social entrepreneurs often tell us that there are barriers for participation in local forums, committees and other decision-making bodies. We're calling on all local authority officers and elected members to ensure that opportunities are available for the social enterprise voice to be heard in every arena. From council committees, to funding decisions, formal consultations, service redesign, the local Third Sector Interface and in community and neighbourhood planning.

***Buying from social enterprises*** - local authorities can choose to buy catering, venue space, training, stationary and a wide range of goods and services from local or Scotland-based social enterprises. As well as driving forward procurement reform, Community Benefit Clauses and the simplification and widening of access to contract opportunities, councils should help promote the purchase of social enterprise products across the local community. Annual procurement strategies should include a specific pledge to engage social enterprises and commit to co-produced and person-centred services.

***Local funding and social investment*** - We call on councils to protect and enhance third sector and social enterprise budgets wherever possible. To implement an authentic 'spend to save' preventative approach to public services and a wider 'whole community' approach to social impact. Publicise/extend such things as Business Rates relief for social enterprises and other beneficial tax or spending policies. Explore affordable business loans and blended loan/grant support and develop local sources of lending for those social enterprises unable to access mainstream finance. Promote credit union membership to council employees, businesses within your supply chains and to local residents generally.

***Reaching out for support*** - Many local authorities engage with both national and local social enterprise support and development bodies. But too often we work in our own sectors, not engaging with the wide variety of other support that's available. Scotland's national social enterprise intermediary and support bodies are here to assist local authorities in developing local social enterprise strategies and finding new ways of engaging with social enterprises. We look forward to working with you to take Scotland's social enterprises forward. Social Enterprise Scotland can help - or direct you to the right place for support:

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