



**Housing, Local Government
and Transport:**

Giving people the power to shape
their local communities

Thank you for taking part in the Labour Party's 2018 National Policy Forum Consultation, the Party's process for getting input from our members, supporters and stakeholders on how we shape our policies.

This booklet is one of eight policy documents published by the Labour Party as part of our consultation this year.

Each document contains sets of questions for you to answer. You do not need to answer every question, nor is there any specific way to answer them. We suggest picking the questions most important to you and using them as a guide to write a few lines or paragraphs on what you think about the issues in this area.

At the end of the document you can find a guide on how to send in your ideas to us and other ways to get involved in the consultation.

There are seven other documents that might interest you covering different areas of the Party's policies, you can find them in the consultation pack or online. If you have an idea or issue you would like to talk about that is not covered in this year's consultation, you can submit these to us too via www.policyforum.labour.org.uk

Whether you're a Labour Party member or not, we want to hear your ideas on how the next Labour government should tackle the challenges our country faces, and build a more equal Britain for the many, not the few.

Want to know more about how Labour makes policy?

You can learn more about how Labour makes policy, further details about the 2018 Consultation and find policy events in your area on our website www.policyforum.labour.org.uk

ACCESSIBLE MATERIALS

The Labour Party is an inclusive member-based organisation that prides itself on being accessible to all who share its values. If you would like an accessible version of these documents please email us at policydevelopment@labour.org.uk to discuss how we can best accommodate your requirements.

Housing, Local Government and Transport: Giving people the power to shape their local communities

Labour's vision

As the recent elections have shown there is a growing dissatisfaction with a centralised form of government. The traditional model of command and control from Whitehall has been viewed by many, especially in deprived communities in the North, seaside towns and rural areas, as failing to address their needs.

The Government talk of devolving powers to local people, yet the reality is one of a government intent on devolving cuts to local communities. By the end of the decade local government will be facing a funding gap of £5.8 billion. This is having a devastating impact on local public services.

Labour believes that devolution can help address the loss of trust in politics. We have also been clear, however - there is no one-size fits all devolution. Different communities with different needs require personalised approaches to devolution. Simply adding a new tier of government will not work for all areas.

In the 2017 manifesto Labour committed to funding councils fairly and giving people a real say over their local services but acknowledged the need to continue the debate on decentralisation. We recognised the need to help tackle the housing crisis in local areas by devolving powers and funding to get Britain building. In addition, we recognised the strong desire to give local areas and local people greater control over transport so councils can ensure that they meet the needs of their communities.

The challenge for Labour now is to build on the policies outlined in the 2017 Labour manifesto in a way which supports the debate about where power will sit in the future and how key services will be run and funded in a post-Brexit economy. Devolution should not be used as a cover for government cuts, but as a genuine move designed to enable decisions to be taken much closer to local people to improve lives.

Issues

Learning from current devolution deals

It was the previous Labour Government that delivered historic devolution settlements to London, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There is much that can be learnt from these four elected bodies.

Labour's manifesto was clear that we would be guided by public opinion when deciding the nature of devolution deals and whether to include directly-elected mayors in them. This consultation sets out Labour's clear intention to hear from a wide variety of voices to learn from the current settlements when discussing options for future deals.

Have your say – give us your thoughts on the questions below:

- What should devolution aim to achieve and how do we measure this?
- What best practice can be learned from the devolution deals currently in place, including in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, London and combined authorities in England?
- Which services would be best delivered at a national, regional or local level and does it differ from region to region?
- How can we ensure that there is sufficient support for locally elected representatives to carry out their roles?

Allowing people to play a greater role in society

If people feel they have little say over the decisions which affect them and their local communities they can feel disconnected and powerless to shape them.

The Labour Party exists to work together and build a sense of community. Since our creation we have recognised that it is those on the ground in their local communities who are best placed to guide their elected representatives in measures to achieve this.

Have your say – give us your thoughts on the questions below:

- What institutional and social barriers do local people face when trying to shape their local communities?
- How can the different tiers of government support local people in creating a sense of community and empower local people to feel they can play a greater role in society?
- How can more people of all different sections of society including vulnerable groups be given a real say over their local services such as housing, emergency service provisions or tackling problems with local transport?
- What positive examples are there where local communities, social enterprises and co-operatives have provided new services in their local areas?
- How can democratic accountability be improved in local communities?

Thank you for taking the time to read our consultation document.

We want to harness the views, experience and expertise of our members, stakeholders and the wider public. If you would like to respond to any of the issues in this document, there are a number of ways you can get involved:

- 1. Online:** The best and easiest way to send in your ideas and join the discussion is via our online home of policy making:
www.policyforum.labour.org.uk/consultation2018
- 2. By post:** If you have written down your ideas, you can post these to us at:
The Labour Party,
Policy Unit,
Southside,
105 Victoria Street,
London, SW1E 6QT
- 3. At your local party:** You may want to discuss your ideas with other members of your CLP or local branch. You can suggest to your CLP Secretary that a policy discussion is held at a future meeting.
- 4. Regional Policy Forums:** Look out for events hosted by your regional office, local parties and National Policy Forum Representatives.

You can find out more about the 2018 consultation, upcoming events and more details on how Labour makes its policy at

www.policyforum.labour.org.uk

Follow us on Twitter for regular updates during the consultation

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Please send your ideas before the consultation period ends, it runs until Sunday 24 June 2018.

