

SCA Response to the National Performance Framework: Scotland's Wellbeing Engagement Paper

Scottish Community Alliance (SCA) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the National Performance Framework (NPF) engagement paper.

SCA is a coalition of 28 national community-based networks and umbrella organisations¹ each one representing a different aspect of Scotland's diverse community sector. Collectively, we engage with local and national government to influence policy development, build a wider understanding of the community sector in Scotland and create more opportunities for collaboration to maximise our contributions.

Communities throughout Scotland must be front and centre in delivering locally appropriate services and solutions. Achieving this requires that community-led intermediaries and community organisations are invested in, supported and enabled to play a full part in helping to deliver a resilient, sustainable Scotland.

We believe a name change to Scotland's Wellbeing Framework would provide clearer purpose and intent, including better reflecting its purpose while also making it more accessible to a wide range of audiences.

In our view, devolved power and decision making is an inherent part of how we implement wellbeing that is sustainable. These principles must be embedded across policy areas including economic development, planning, health, food systems, transport and climate. Our sector's strengths lie in local knowledge, shared learning and the ability to scale practical solutions which contribute to the national outcomes.

We ask for the addition of 'Democratic participation and local decision making' and 'Cultural and social inclusion' as these are not fully captured in the outcomes.

To implement the wellbeing framework meaningfully, a credible path must be clearly articulated including outlining long-term goals and a transparent appraisal of the key challenges. Indicators should reflect national and local impact and measures of equity, inclusion and community participation. Data and evidence should be presented in ways that are accessible to communities not only policymakers.

We agree NPF should be closely linked to Public Sector Reform Strategy, taking inspiration from the Welsh approach. A key part of reform is ensuring public bodies have a duty to promote and support sustainable wellbeing. This includes additional reference to the accountability and responsibilities of public sector leaders for driving progress, ensuring commitments are followed through and enabling Community

¹ [Members - Scottish Community Alliance](#)

Wealth Building through equitable procurement partnerships with community anchor organisations who are often filling the gaps where public services are withdrawing.

SCA are mindful of the policies surrounding the NPF and believe these cross-cutting policy areas can serve to support accountability and implementation. The NPF should align strongly with existing and future policies and legislation, including the Local Governance Review, Community Wealth Building, National Strategy for Economic Transformation, National Planning Framework 4, the Good Food Nation Plan, and the Human Rights Bill. Stronger alignment will support accountability, implementation and coherent delivery of national outcomes.

Meaningful implementation of the NPF requires significant cultural change within public authorities and Scottish Government. This includes more equitable partnerships with community and third sector organisations, co design of services and budgets to meet local needs and a shared way of working. Robust, clear and accessible guidance is needed for community led organisations to influence and contribute to national outcomes.

While Christie principles provide a strong basis, current decision-making often remains short-term and distant from affected communities. The reformed NPF must address this democratic deficit, supporting thriving local democracy including; practical steps for embedding outcomes in strategy, operations, governance and leadership and clear expectations for collaboration between public bodies and community organisations.

To deliver a reformed wellbeing framework, we recommend:

- Clear, measurable outcomes for sustainable wellbeing at both national and local levels.
- Explicit integration with existing policies to ensure coherence and avoid duplication.
- Community led decision making, with local organisations supported to co-design and implement solutions.
- Accountable leadership in public bodies, ensuring responsibilities for wellbeing are followed through.
- Transparent appraisal of challenges, including barriers to equity, democracy and sustainable development.

We believe that communities are central to the delivery of Scotland's wellbeing and a reformed NPF should be an opportunity to drive meaningful, lasting change across the country.