

Public Participation Network Representative
Public Participation Network

14 July 2025

Re: Local Democracy Taskforce Targeted Stakeholder Consultation Process

Dear Public Participation Network Representative,

The Programme for Government commits to reforming and strengthening local government which is the “beating heart of our democracy” and provides many of the essential services on which we all depend. In furtherance of this commitment, earlier this month, the Government agreed the Terms of Reference of a Local Democracy Taskforce which has been convened with the Local Government sector to finalise a programme for the reform and strengthening of local government.

In carrying out its work, the Taskforce will have regard to the substantial work which has already been undertaken to examine the powers, functions and responsibilities of Local Government in the following reports:

- [Council of Europe’s Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, October 2023](#)
- [The 21st Century Councillor in Irish Local Government by Association of Irish Local Government, December 2023](#)
- [Seanad Public Consultation Committee Report on the Future of Local Democracy, October 2024](#)
- [Building Stronger Local Government Report by Association of Irish Local Government, November 2024](#)

Taking an evidence-informed approach, the Taskforce will examine the four reports and make recommendations, including for any legislative amendments, based on them. The Taskforce will have a key focus on the role of Local Government in supporting the implementation of Government policy and the recommendations emerging will be devised to ensure suitability for implementation.

Further information regarding the establishment of the Taskforce, its Terms of Reference, membership and the work which predated its establishment is all available on the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage [Local Democracy Taskforce webpage](#).

To inform its work, the Taskforce has decided to hold a targeted stakeholder consultation process. It is hope that this process will enhance its current

understanding of the Local Authority Sector from a broad range of perspectives. The Taskforce has identified the Public Participation Network as an important stakeholder which engages with the sector and, as such, as Chair of the Taskforce I am writing to you to invite you to engage in the consultation process.

The Taskforce would be obliged if the Public Participation Network would offer its positions on the questions found attached to this letter. The questions are based on the four key pillars that Government has asked the Taskforce to focus on, relating to the structures, functions, finance and governance of local government in Ireland. The Taskforce recognises that the Public Participation Network may not currently engage with Local Government in a way that allows you to respond to all of the questions posed. You should therefore feel free to select the questions which are most relevant to the Public Participation Network's area of expertise/engagement with the local government sector.

The Government has asked the Taskforce to ensure that the recommendations emerging are actionable. As such consultees are asked to account of this to allow the Taskforce to ultimately ensure that the recommendations emerging will be devised to ensure suitability for implementation.

Please note that responses to this stakeholder consultation will be circulated to all members of the Taskforce. Responses are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014. As a consequence, parties are asked to note that responses to the consultation may be published on the Department's website. As such, please clearly indicate where your responses contain personal information, commercially sensitive information or confidential information which you would not wish to be released under FOI or published. Please note that submissions outside the Terms of Reference cannot be considered as part of this consultation.

This consultation process is now open for a six-week period, and we would therefore be obliged if you could please forward your input by email to localgovernmenttaskforce@housing.gov.ie by **Friday 22nd August**.

Yours sincerely,



Jim Breslin
Chairperson, Local Democracy Taskforce