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Cllr Kelly Parry,  
COSLA Community Wellbeing Spokesperson  
By email via COSLA Executive and Presidential Team  
[megan@cosla.gov.uk](mailto:megan@cosla.gov.uk)

19 November 2020

Dear Kelly,

Thank you for your letter dated 22 October 2020 and for your contribution to the National Participatory Budgeting (PB) Strategic Group on the 8th October 2020. I agree that the input from members and the frank discussions about the 1% Framework Agreement has helped considerably to inform next steps.

I certainly share your appreciation of the way local authorities, public services, community organisations and the third sector worked collaboratively to respond to the COVID-19 crisis with speed and agility. This brings into sharper focus our commitments to relocate power to communities, pursuing subsidiarity that progresses equality and builds capacity to secure human rights.

I believe that when we trust and empower our communities that the outcomes are positive and lasting. I know you share that commitment. Our Framework Agreement sets the expectations that PB is the enabler for active participation of our citizens in local decision making and helps support our shared aspirations to become real.

I am grateful for the helpful update and overview of local authority PB activity to date and the considerable work undertaken. Also for the reassurance that councils share our commitment to the 1% Framework Agreement to go beyond current arrangements for consultation and engagement, despite current challenges. I believe it is really important that we continue progress and momentum on PB, especially in light of the significant community and voluntary efforts we have seen over the last nine months. It is also helpful to see progress on the CONSUL digital platform as an important addition to face to face engagement. I will ask officials to liaise with your colleagues on the proposed work plan to support the implementation of the framework agreement where we would welcome an increased focus on making online methods of PB more widely available.

As you will know, since the 1% framework was agreed in October 2017 the Scottish Government has provided £673,000 to COSLA for this important work. I can confirm that for 2020/21 the Scottish Government can provide £100,000 for the PB team for the remainder of this financial year and a final £100,000 for 2021/22 subject to agreed budgets. If this is acceptable, officials can liaise on the project proposal and grant offer.

Finally, I would be happy to issue a joint letter to local authorities based on our discussions and this correspondence to inform them that the target remains as it is but providing flexibility to those who need more time and recommitting to the framework agreement as the agreed route forward for mainstream PB.

I look forward to working in partnership on this important agenda.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aileen Campbell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Aileen Campbell  
Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government

Copied to:  
Anil Gupta, COSLA Chief Officer (Communities).