



LOCAL GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION 2030

Lord Gary Porter, CBE

Commissioner





Revitalising local government: What we heard?

- Too often local government is subordinated to the centre.
- Support for the constitutional protection of local government.
- Fragmented delivery of local services and responsibilities held by other public bodies.
- Calls for local government to be the 'custodian of place', integrating local service delivery.



Revitalising local government

1. The role and powers of local government should be enshrined in a constitutional settlement.
2. There should be clarity for the public over the responsibilities of local, regional, and national government.
3. Government should agree and develop, in consultation with local government and the devolved administrations, a clear devolution framework, based on the principles of subsidiarity, local autonomy and flexibility. This should include a clear indication of powers and funding available and should allow all local authorities to access/benefit from it, although at a pace and scale that fits best local needs.



Revitalising local government

4. Based on the principles set out in the framework, the Commission calls for new 'Devolution Bills' for all the nations of the UK. The Bills should not provide a 'one size fits all' approach across the nations of the UK, but deliver a flexible, place-based model of devolution that can benefit all areas by improving governance and addressing inequalities.
5. The Commission calls for the creation of permanent National Governance Committees across nations of the UK, which should be consulted for any law and policy-making processes that affect directly local government and devolved institutions (such as reforms and re-organisation).



The roles and powers of local government

- Support for an effective and collaborative approach to centre-local relations, with more protection, power and freedom for local government.
- Acknowledgement that certain problems can only be addressed locally.
- Calls to update the current devolution settlement to ensure the local level can maintain its role as steward of place.
- Need to redesign devolution to focus on the public service needs of areas rather than the presumed geographies of economic development.



The roles and powers of local government

6. The Commission supports local government determining its own structures, scales and size. Councils should be left to determine for themselves the organisation, configuration, and modes of service delivery, as fitting with local circumstances and choice.
7. In England, we propose that structural reforms, mergers or reductions in scale are submitted to an independent and representative Standing Commission. This Standing Commission would make recommendations on proposals to central government.
8. New powers should be transferred to local government as a major step towards the integration of local services and accountability for place-based services. The Commission strongly supports local government exercising responsibility for primary health care, local policing, funding for public housing and for further education and the management of local schools (allowing for differences across the devolved nations).