

What Women Want (from local councils)

THANK YOU for agreeing to start a conversation about what women want from local councils in your local area. Women 5050 and Engender have teamed up to make sure women's voices are heard loudly in the 2017 local council elections and beyond.

Only 24% of local councillors are women and despite women being the majority of local community campaigners, volunteers and local government staff, their voices are often missing from decision making. We want to change that.

By talking about this issue, you are helping us collate women's voices from across Scotland and make sure councillors not only hear what they have to say but know they have to engage women before making any decisions about our lives and communities.

We hope that there will be lots of different workshops and discussions happening across Scotland by May 2017 and we will be using your feedback to create a "10 questions" document for newly elected councillors. These 10 questions will act as reminders to councillors that they need to talk *to* women, not about them.



[#whatwomenwant](#)

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What we need from you:

1. Organise your event. This could be a workshop which you organise independently, getting your pals together, or you might already be part of a group who would be interested in having a discussion about local council elections.
2. Email and let us know your plans so we know where things are happening, and can offer any support you need.
3. Create a supportive and inclusive space for women from all backgrounds to participate.
4. Make sure that the feedback sheets are filled out and take photos of them. Email them to scottishwomen5050@gmail.com or tweet them on the #whatwomenwant hashtag to @Women5050 and @EngenderScot (preferably within 5 days of the event taking place).

Who we are:

Women 5050 is the national campaign for at least 50% of public board members, members of Scottish Parliament and councillors to be women. We launched in September 2014 and are campaigning for legislated candidate quotas in future elections. We have the support of four out of five party leaders (Nicola Sturgeon, Kezia Dugdale, Patrick Harvie and Maggie Chapman and Willie Rennie). We are a cross party campaign and are supported by a range of equalities organisations too. Find us at www.Women5050.org

Engender is Scotland's feminist membership organisation. Engender have a vision for a Scotland in which women and men have equal opportunities in life, equal access to resources and power, and are equally safe and secure from harm. Engender have worked in Scotland for 20 years to advance equality between women and men, producing research, lobbying decision makers and empowering women to campaign for change. They are a membership organisation, and welcome all those who identify as feminist women (you can become a member too!). Find out more:

www.engender.org.uk



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| Timing | Activity | Points to get across and things to remember |
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| 10 mins | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce yourself, and give everyone in the room a chance to say who they are. • Explain why the workshop is taking place, and who Women 5050 and Engender are (see handout) | <p>Explain that in May there will be local council elections that they are able to vote in, however turnout is notoriously low and the lowest representation of women anywhere in politics (24%).</p> <p>Women 5050 and Engender want to make sure local decision making includes local women. The workshop will go through key issues that local councils deal with, the policy issues which matter to women in this room and how we make sure councillors consider women's viewpoints before make critical decisions about our communities.</p> <p>Information will be written up, but it is a safe space for women to reflect and ask questions.</p> |
| 10 mins | <p>The issue of women's representation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand out and go through handout 1 which explains current state of women's representation • Ask the room the question: "What impact would having more women in our parliament and councils have on Scotland?" | <p>Ensure that the following has been covered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role models for young women to be interested in politics 2. Tackling stereotypes about leadership 3. Inclusive decision making 4. Issues impacting women prioritised 5. Make sure that you reiterate that councils have low representation of |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make notes of what is said, and have participants vote on which they think are most important (a simple way of doing this is to tell people they have 3 dots, they can either vote for 3 different things, or give all their dots to one thing) • Write down the top three answers on your feedback sheet | <p>women and this impacts women's ability to influence policy.</p> <p>Objective of activity: Participants understand better the issue of women's underrepresentation.</p> |
| 10 mins | <p>Local authority elections – The facts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the group to shout out issues they think local councillors deal with. • Give out Handout 2 with information on the 2017 local elections. Go through the full list of what decisions local councillors make. | <p>Ask the group is there anything on that list that surprises them and ask them if they have any follow up questions.</p> <p>Objective of activity: Participants understand better what local government does and why it matters</p> |
| 15 mins | <p>Policy Pyramid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on numbers, split the room into groups, or do the activity all as one. • Hand out the slips with topics on • Each group should sort the topics into a pyramid, with the most important (to their lives) at the top, then the next 2 most important, then 4 in the | <p>Many will find this a tough exercise – that is ok, as one policy area does not stand in isolation from another for instance the NHS does not exist in isolation from the economy, and that's sort of the point of the exercise. For those finding it difficult ask them to consider which policy issue would they sign a petition on and be passionate about if something happened that they didn't like.</p> |

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| | <p>middle, then two less important ones, then the least important. There will be one left over. It's find to move the pyramid around lots of times until there is something folk agree on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put the top three areas on the feedback sheet. | <p>We're trying to get people to think about which policy areas affect them the most, not just which they think are most important overall.</p> <p>Objective of activity: Participants get a chance to consider their individual policy priorities and what issues they will be voting on in 2017.</p> |
| 20 mins | <p>Filling in the Gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the large worksheet is a sentence that needs to be filled in about what councillors should focus on. In the envelope are words/phrases which can be used to fill in the gaps. Ask the whole group to work together to fill in the gaps with words they feel are most accurate to what they feel are group priorities. Once the group is happy, fill out the chosen words on the feedback sheet | <p>Participants should reflect on the pyramid activity but also allow debate and inclusion of ideas. Help them come to an inclusive, shared vision.</p> <p>Objective of activity: Participants get a chance to consider group policy priorities and what women want from the decision making and representative behaviour of their councillors</p> |
| 10 mins | <p>Making our councils accountable to women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that Women 5050 will be sending packs to all councillors after the May election, this will include a | <p>Example questions can be: "Have you consulted women constituents on this decision?"</p> |

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| | <p>poster for their office of questions they should ask themselves before taking decisions and voting on policy. We want to put together 10 questions they should ask in relation to women they represent and policy decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In groups (depending on size of group), consider ONE question that you would want councillors to consider when they make decisions. • Once everyone has agreed, write down the question in the speech bubble on the sheet. | <p>“Are women in any way negatively impacted by this decision?”</p> <p>When you collect these in, take a photo and send to scottishwomen5050@gmail.com</p> |
| 10 mins | <p>Sum up and next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind everyone of the local election date, explain that photos of the flipcharts will be emailed to women 5050 and be part of a collection of women’s thoughts on local council engagement and the questions will be part of the set of ten sent to councillors post-election. • Take any final questions and say thanks | <p>Council elections are on 4th May 2017, they should be registered to vote if they are over 18 and have a registered address. If participants want to check their status or register they can go to aboutmyvote.co.uk. You must be registered to vote by Midnight on the 17th of April.</p> <p>Participants can find out information about who their candidates are on party websites and on their local council website.</p> |