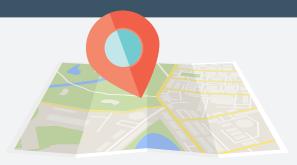
# COUNCILS MUST BOOST LOCAL BUSINESS

Smaller firms are key to prosperous local economies. By helping them thrive, we can reduce inequality and drive local growth.

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) understands that Scottish councils are being asked to deliver more with less. Therefore it has never been more important that council powers and limited local resources are used to boost local businesses.

## **BE LOCAL**



- Target rates relief powers on hard-pressed high streets. Offer disused council town centre premises for free to local start-up businesses, pop-up operators or the self-employed.
- Support the local visitor economy rule out a tourist bed tax.

### **BE OPEN FOR BUSINESS**



- Appoint an independent small business champion for each City Deal. Charge them with promoting supply chain opportunities, increasing regulatory consistency and ensuring local firms get their voice heard on key spending decisions.
- Help develop tomorrow's workforce by tapping employability budgets to forge closer links between schools and local businesses.

### **BE CONNECTED**



- Connect local places by using City Deal money to pilot 5G solutions in cities and subsidise local solutions in rural Scotland to target mobile coverage not-spots.
- Collaborate with neighbouring councils to reverse the decline in quality of local roads by 2022.

### **BE SMART**



- Make council money work harder by increasing procurement spend with smaller local firms by 2 per cent every year – resulting in tens of millions of extra pounds spent locally.
- Save time and money for both business and the council by developing digital interfaces for routine business requests, like paying for bills and applying for licenses. Council functions like planning and civic licensing must work more closely with business support.



