

Report

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	10 March 2020
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Participatory Budgeting
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to: -

- provide an update in relation to Participatory Budgeting, and to gain agreement to progress with areas of participatory budgeting in due course.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the information be noted; and
- (2) that the Participatory Budgeting areas identified in Appendix 1 are agreed.

2. Background

- 2.1. An awareness session was held in May 2019 to provide elected members with proposals on where Participatory Budgeting could be rolled out across some council services. A subsequent session took place on 21 February 2020 and an Elected Members Briefing Film was made available on 27 May 2020.
- 2.2. An Executive Committee paper was considered in June 2020. The rest of this paper covers the details of the proposals discussed in that paper. At the Executive Committee in June, members agreed that consideration of this item be deferred to a later date.
- 2.3. The timescales for delivery of Participatory Budgeting were that, by 2021, councils would see 1% of budgets delivered through Participatory Budgeting. At their meeting on 29 January, Cosla Leaders considered a joint letter from COSLA Spokesperson Cllr Parry and Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government, Aileen Campbell. That letter recognised the exceptional circumstances brought about by the pandemic, and the impact this has had on councils' ability to meet the 1% Framework Agreement by the end of March 2021.
- 2.4. The letter outlined a degree of flexibility in meeting the deadline and stated that COSLA will work with local authorities to review progress as at March 2021 on PB activity. This will form the basis of a report to the Scottish Government in Spring 2021 which will explore the positive impact Mainstream PB is having on local communities, the details of the budgets involved to date and how PB is being designed into COVID recovery and renewal efforts. The report will benchmark mainstream PB activity against which to review progress at the end of March 2022.

- 2.5. Cosla Leaders agreed that COSLA officers re-draft the 1% Framework Agreement to contextualise and frame the need to integrate participatory budgeting in the recovery from COVID-19. This piece of work is still outstanding. There is still a requirement to move towards delivery of Participatory Budgeting.
- 2.6. This paper will cover the following points from the June Executive Committee:-
- the areas proposed to progress through Participatory Budgeting (see section 3)
 - how we engage with the community in the proposals for Participatory Budgeting (section 4)
 - update on Participatory Budgeting Charter (see section 5)
 - the role of elected members in Participatory Budgeting (section 6).

3. Proposed Participatory Budgeting Areas

- 3.1. At both Awareness Sessions and at the Executive Committee in June, members were advised of the proposed areas for Participatory Budgeting. A summary of these areas is included in Appendix 1.
- 3.2. When approval is given, services will then work to prepare and plan to deliver Participatory Budgeting over the coming months. Practical considerations that will need to be addressed include: -
- arriving at options for consideration by the community
 - awareness raising for communities on Participatory budgeting
 - planning and delivering consultation exercises
 - consolidation of results
 - practical planning for delivery of outcomes (change management).

4. How Do We Engage with the Community for these Proposals

- 4.1. How we engage with the community was also addressed at the awareness sessions. Since then, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that adaptations have had to be made in the methods which the Council uses to engage with communities. Face to face discussion is no longer possible at present, however the partnership work around the response to the pandemic has helped improve our communication with communities and this can be built upon with the benefit of the Participatory Budgeting process.
- 4.2. COVID aside, the Council is working to improve levels of community participation and activity that aid the delivery of the aspirations contained in the Community Empowerment Act.
- 4.3. Measures have been implemented, including the requirements for Local Outcome Improvement Planning and locality planning (referred to as neighbourhood planning within South Lanarkshire), and the expectation is that partnership approaches, both with communities and with other partner organisations, will become more prevalent. This will ensure a coordinated approach to community participation and empowerment which is clearly and demonstrably outward looking.
- 4.4. In relation to Participatory Budgeting, the 8 proposals suggested in the awareness session through which Participatory Budgeting could be taken forwards are covered in Appendix 1.
- 4.5. The way Participatory Budgeting could be carried out for each proposal will vary, depending on the question which is being asked of the community.

- 4.6. Support should be given to those sections of the community which are least likely to participate, and this can be provided through Community Engagement staff who are already working within geographical communities and with communities of interest. In addition, many other partners are in regular contact with those who are digitally excluded and can be asked to support them to engage with the process to ensure their views are represented.
- 4.7. In line with the National Standards for Community Engagement as well as the Participatory Budgeting Charter, a range of different options as to how people can participate in the process will be needed to ensure that as many people as possible are able to have their say. This may include online methods, focus groups, the use of paper ballots or other methods that are suited to the decision the public are being asked to contribute to. These methods would require to be adapted according to the restrictions which are in place at the time they are carried out and to ensure that communities remain as safe as possible during the pandemic.
- 4.7. Smalls grants programmes have been delivered for some years using Participatory Budgeting methods in neighbourhood planning areas. Online methods such as the website CONSUL, used worldwide and supported by COSLA, will be trialled this year for these programmes to check their suitability for wider use in the mainstream programme.
- 4.8. Initial proposals as to the processes which could be used have been identified and are included in Appendix 1.

5. Participatory Budgeting Charter

- 5.1. A Participatory Budgeting Charter has been published by Participatory Budgeting Scotland. Participatory Budgeting Scotland is a network funded by the Scottish Government and developed by Scottish Community Development Centre, the recognised lead body for community development within Scotland. This charter lays out features of what a fair and quality Participatory Budgeting process should be.
- 5.2. The charter states that Participatory Budgeting is a way of making sure that everyone affected by a decision has an opportunity to share their views and listen to others.
- 5.3. There are 7 key “Features” of the Participatory Budgeting Charter for Scotland. These are: -
- Fair and Inclusive
 - Participatory
 - Deliberative
 - Empowering
 - Creative and Flexible
 - Transparent
 - Part of our Democracy
- 5.4. The charter was co-produced by people with experience of Participatory Budgeting processes in Scotland, including those from equality groups, community organisations and public bodies, and provides a good practice guide as to what a fair and high-quality Participatory Budgeting process should look like. The Council will

look to link our plans to deliver Participatory Budgeting with meeting the aims of the charter.

6. Role of Elected Members

6.1. An elected member briefing on Participatory Budgeting has been developed by the Improvement Service. As part of this guidance, the role of elected members is covered.

6.2. The briefing details roles and responsibilities for elected members in relation to Participatory Budgeting which include: -

- Ensuring the aims of the process are clearly understood by all participants.
- Making sure the relevant resources to run an effective Participatory Budgeting process are in place.
- Ensuring the process is inclusive and promotes the participation of communities within in all stages of Participatory Budgeting design.
- Engaging with local people to raise awareness of local Participatory Budgeting activity.
- To approve the decision made by local people in the allocation of funding through the appropriate decision making committee/ body in the Council .

6.3. Support can be provided to elected members through appropriate training on Participatory Budgeting, through regular updates on progress and through the work that the Community Participation and Empowerment team undertake in the community.

6.4. Through the work being taken forward by the Standards and Procedures Advisory Forum (SPAF), the role of Area Committees in Participatory Budgeting was clarified.

6.5. The Council meeting on 13 February 2020 agreed a change in the Terms of Reference for Area committees including the power to:

“To carry out a scrutiny function, at a local level, in relation to participatory budgeting”.

6.6. As the majority of Participatory Budgeting is likely to be covered under “mainstream Participatory Budgeting” it is being proposed that the community would be provided with service delivery options to choose from. Members’ roles would include being consulted on the options being presented to the community, and on the results of the Participatory Budgeting exercise.

7. Employee Implications

7.1. At this stage, there are no employee implications in terms of the content of this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. Financial implications are as detailed throughout the report.

9. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

9.1. There are no implications for climate change, sustainability or the environment in terms of the information contained in this report.

10. Other Implications

10.1. N/A

11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

11.1 This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy, or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

19 January 2021

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- Achieve results through leadership, good governance and organisational effectiveness
- Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent
- Fair, open and sustainable

Previous References

None

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact: -

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Appendix 1 – Proposed areas for Participatory Budgeting and how we will engage with the Community

Area of Participatory Budgeting	Proposal	Geography	Consultees (e.g. stakeholders / CC / others)	Method	What needs to be done
Community and Enterprise Resources					
Renewable energy fund – micro grants	<p>£5k micro-grants for community councils / community development orgs (in line with proposals agreed at Community and Enterprise Committee Oct 2018)</p> <p>CC's take responsibility for disseminating awards of up to £500 in their area.</p> <p>Community decides how REF money is spent.</p>	Rural South Lanarkshire and a small number of other communities within 10 miles of wind farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Councils Other Community Interest Organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through community councils / community interest organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Micro grant process already in operation
Street Cleaning Services	Street Cleaning is an area where there have been lower levels of satisfaction. The proposal is to improve service through involving the community through online surveys to prioritise task areas, to shape how service is delivered	4 Geographical Areas (Hamilton, EK, Clydesdale and Cam/Ruth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All SL residents including community councils; local forums etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online consultation, with additional support via libraries and other partners to promote and support engagement (e.g. for those lacking digital access or skills) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulate process and identify the options for choice Discussion with staff and trade unions Public consultation Plan changes to service and inform the public Apply changes

Carriageway resurfacing programme on council wide basis	Identify list of roads that the community can prioritise to be delivered (from a portion of existing roads budget). The service will continue to deliver the highest priority projects	South Lanarkshire wide level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public • Community Councils • Local Businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online consultation as on council wide basis, tapping into contacts in Community Councils and use of social media to promote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of projects for choice • Consultation • Feedback on results
Education Resources					
Proportion of PEF funding (initially 5%)	PEF is allocated to individual schools. The proposal would be to take an element of PEF to allow stakeholders (pupils, parents, parent councils) to propose and decide on how funds are spent. This move towards Participatory Budgeting is included within the current guidance in relation to PEF.	School Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Councils • Parents • Young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At school level by Head Teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a draft set of PB procedures to apply to the PEF in identified pilot schools • Pilot schools to implement draft PB procedures for a portion of their PEF budget • PB to be included in School Improvement Plans
Finance and Corporate Resources					
Place Based Participatory Budgeting programme	This is a continuation of work in Neighbourhood and Community-led planning activity which is currently delivered. The programme invests £40,000 through facilitated community engagement to decide on priorities and choose projects in local areas. The funds are then spent by the Community.	Neighbourhood Planning Areas (currently 1. Whitlawburn and Springhall, 2. Hillhouse, Udston and Burnbank and 3. Strutherhill and Birkenshaw)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Place Our Plan Stakeholder Groups (to determine themes and projects) • Residents of Neighbourhood planning areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face voting and consultation sessions complemented by digital voting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current year's activity already underway

Housing and Technical Resources					
H&T Environmental programme	Tenant participation currently takes place in relation to the setting the annual housing budget including the environmental programme Tenants will decide on how elements of the environmental budget are spent.	South Lanarkshire wide level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLC tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with tenants through Local Housing Forums • Consultation with Tenant and Resident groups • Tenants will rank preferences and agree priorities for use of environmental budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial discussions with local forums and tenant groups • Priorities agreed with tenants • Funds to be allocated throughout financial year based upon progress of Environmental programme
H&T Estates Improvement Budget	Tenants will identify and prioritise small scale improvement works to be undertaken across housing estates.	South Lanarkshire wide level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLC tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with tenants through Local Housing Forums and tenant representatives • Estate walk-about involving staff and tenants • Tenants will rank preferences and agree priorities for use of Estates Improvement budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial discussions involving tenants on format and method • Priorities agreed with tenants • Funds to be allocated throughout financial year.

H&T Positive Communities/ Problem Solving Budget	<p>Consultation with the community will inform the use of the Problem solving budget.</p>	<p>South Lanarkshire wide level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Lanarkshire residents • Community safety partner organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with all South Lanarkshire residents through online survey and face-to-face at community events across South Lanarkshire. • Projects developed by community safety partners to address priorities identified through SLC's anti-social behaviour consultation programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation planned for summer • Budget allocated based on results of this
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