



Report To:	Inverclyde Alliance Board	Date:	18 March 2019
Report By:	Grant McGovern Head of Inclusive Education, Culture & Communities	Report No:	
Contact Officer:	Hugh Scott	Contact No:	5459
Subject:	Developing Participatory Budgeting in Inverclyde		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Inverclyde Alliance Board with an update on the progress of the Phase 1 Participatory Budgeting (PB) model pilot previously agreed to develop approaches to support decentralisation of budgets and enhance community empowerment.

It is also the purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an update of the outcome of the public consultation events to support the application of grant awards to community groups from both the Community Fund (£350K) and Community Initiative Fund (£100K) through the agreed Community Choices Framework developed as Phase 1 of an Inverclyde Participatory Budgeting model.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires that Inverclyde Council develops and implements a framework that enables local people to have a direct say in how defined public budgets can be used to address local priorities. Following discussion at the Inverclyde Alliance Board (11 December 2017), a report on the Community Choices Framework was agreed as a phased approach to the implementation of Participatory Budgeting/Community Choices budgeting through a process of community engagement

At a subsequent meeting of the Alliance Board (19 March 2018), it was also agreed that CPP members continue to identify opportunities for participatory budgeting in Inverclyde. There has been no response from Partners to date on this request.

In its 2018 – 19 budget, Inverclyde Council agreed to provide £350,000 (£50,000 per ward) to be distributed through the Community Choices Framework. Additionally, agreement was given to the allocation of £100K from the Community Initiatives Fund which had been previously agreed by Committee in March 2017, to support local projects to alleviate poverty.

On 7 August 2018, the Policy and Resources Committee agreed to the implementation of a three phase development of an Inverclyde PB model. Details of the pilot format, bid criteria, funding limits and the proposed communication and engagement plan are available at:

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2080>, (see PR/20/28/GM/HS).

- 2.2 The Communications and Engagement Plan outlined in the report has delivered a consistent approach to branding and messaging and combined a range of strategies including community engagement events and other print and online resources, to encourage residents and community groups to take part in the participatory budgeting consultation. This was co-ordinated by staff from the Corporate Communications Team.
- 2.3 Community Learning and Development's (CLD) Community Capacity Team led on the community consultations of Inverclyde's first phase of participatory budgeting in partnership with partners providing promotional support. The Community Capacity team engaged with every community hub, Community Council, faith groups, many uniformed and youth organisations and a range of 3rd sector providers.
- 2.4 Interest was initially slow but built over the weeks as word got out, largely through the work of CLD Community Engagement and Development Workers. Workers were able to follow up initial interest, speaking to potential applicants individually and encouraging people to submit. This was resource heavy but paid dividends with many groups submitting bid which might otherwise not have happened.
- 2.5 In addition to the sixteen advertised sessions, a further three were added in Ward 2 and one in Ward 5. Thirty-eight groups and organisations requested one-to-one support sessions with most subsequently submitting an application.
- 2.6 The next phase will be local scrutiny panels and then promotion of shortlisted bids with final voting in early February 2019. This timeline is slightly later than originally anticipated due to concerns over the potential impact of the Festive Period on participation.
- 2.7 The PB SLWG established to develop a long-term, sustainable PB model will review and evaluate both the application process and the effectiveness of the community engagement progress following the conclusion of the scrutiny events outline above.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Inverclyde Alliance Board:
 - a) Notes the content of this report and approves the intended actions;
 - b) Notes the consultation, communications and engagement methods, audiences and key approaches outlined in this report, and the timetable for voting through the proposed scrutiny events;
 - c) Notes the planned release of funding to the community through the Participatory Budgeting process after voting events in March 2019.

Grant McGovern
Head of Inclusive Education, Culture and Communities

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Participatory Budgeting (PB) is local people deciding on how to allocate part of a public budget. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 provides a range of new powers to strengthen the voices of communities in the decisions that matter to them. It makes particular provisions on participation in public decision making, and the role that Participatory Budgeting can play in this.
- 4.2 Nationally, there is a COSLA and Scottish Government agreement for 1% of a local authority's budget to be decided using Participatory Budgeting by 2020/21.
- 4.3 A number of local authorities have used the PB model to focus mainly on small grant giving in areas such as community safety, local environmental issues, etc., rather than involving the public in decisions on mainstream budgets. This would be inappropriate for the full implementation of PB which requires that 1% of the Council's budget is included in the process – this would be £1.9M for Inverclyde.
- 4.4 It was agreed at Policy and Resources Committee on 7 August 2018 that a model of delivery would be piloted by Inverclyde Council's Community Learning and Development team to spend £350,000 allocated as a Community Fund in the Council's 2018/19 budget.

The evidence gathered from Our Place Our Future community consultation results will inform the identification of priorities that:

- **Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in Inverclyde** – examples include: dementia friendly activities/projects, ideas that promote volunteering opportunities, ideas which help build skills, confidence and resilience within the community and community growing initiatives.
- **Support the development of a more positive environment** – examples include environmental clean-ups, development of community facilities and public spaces, anti-litter campaigns.
- **Bring people together** – examples include developing new activities, ideas which support intergenerational activities, events which bring local communities together, ideas which promote the use of facilities, amenities and services and consultations in local need. Ideas which reduce social exclusion.

At the Council Budget Meeting on 16 February 2017 it was agreed to set up an Anti-Poverty Fund using the existing Welfare Reforms Policy Earmarked reserve plus an additional £200,000 allocated from Reserves giving a fund total of £1.0million. At the subsequent meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee (March 2017), members agreed that £100K of the Anti-Poverty Fund would be allocated to a Community Initiatives Fund to support locally based anti-poverty initiatives. The meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 7 August 2018 also agreed that this funding would be included in the proposed PB process with the funding being specifically targeted to community projects in the three Community Planning (CP) Localities rather than the Ward based approach recommended for the Community Fund.

The CP localities are Port Glasgow, Greenock East and Central and Greenock South and South West.

For further detail on the proposal, including arrangements for funding allocation and criteria see PR/20/28/GM/HS, <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2080>.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The application phase of Inverclyde Council's Participatory Budgeting (PB) pilot drew to an end on Friday, 23rd November with 36 applications having been submitted from across the authority area.
- 5.2 Community Learning and Development (CLD) staff engaged with every community hub, Community Council, faith groups, many uniformed and youth organisations and a range of 3rd sector providers.
- 5.3 Interest was initially slow but built over the weeks as word got out, largely through the work of CLD Community Engagement and Development Workers. Workers were able to follow up initial interest, speaking to potential applicants individually and encouraging people to submit. This was resource heavy but paid dividends with many groups deciding to bid which might otherwise not have.
- 5.4 In addition to the sixteen advertised sessions, a further three were added in Ward 2 and one in Ward 5. Thirty-eight groups and organisations requested one-to-one support sessions with most subsequently submitting an application. The process to date has been successful in engaging with individuals and groups with whom CLD had no previously working links which has facilitated the development of relationships and is encouraging future partnership working.
- 5.5 The process to date has been successful in engaging with individuals and a range of community groups including those that had no previous working links with CLD. It is hoped that engagement in this process will help build relationships and enhance future PB and community development work.

5.6 Applications Received

The total number of applications received was thirty six

Applications (by Ward)	
1 East	5
2 East Central	4
3 Central	7
4 North	8
5 West	5
6 South West	5
7 South	2
Total	36

Applications were submitted by a range of individuals to constituted groups. Examples of proposed initiatives include:

- Holidays for families in deprivation;
- Facility upgrades;
- Community Theatre resources;
- Development of social enterprises;
- Workshops for those impacted by poor mental health;
- IT resources;
- Lunch clubs;
- Community mini-bus;
- Universal Credit Support Hub; and
- Community Music events.

The total funding requested on the initial submission was £391.5K, however it should be noted that not all of the proposed initiatives met the criteria previously agreed by Committee. For projects or initiative to target poverty, funding requests totalled £100K.

5.7 Arrangements for voting by the public on proposed projects or initiatives are now in place with voting taking place between 1 and 8 March 2019. The venues and dates/times are detailed in the table below. These arrangements are designed to minimise the need to travel distances and also to ensure that the process is as inclusive as possible. In that context, it is propose that the CLD Community Engagement Team will work with Your Voice and the Carers' Centre to promote the events through their registered service users/client lists. If people are unable to attend an event due to disability or caring responsibilities the opportunity to offer a vote via email will be available.

Similarly, to encourage residents of the Inverclyde villages to take part, a dual voting mechanism, as detailed below, will be in place with main events and staff-manning voting boxes in outlying areas. The arrangements are as follows:

	VOTING/MANNED STANDS	VOTING BOX ONLY
WARD 1	Port Glasgow Town Hall Thursday 7 th March 2019 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Kilmacolm Community Centre Tuesday 5 th March 2019 4.30pm – 6.30pm
WARD 2	Port Glasgow Town Hall Thursday 7 th March 2019 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Port Glasgow I Zone (Dubbs Place) Wednesday 6 th March 2019 2.00pm – 4.00pm
WARD 3	Notre Dame HS Wednesday 6 th March 2019 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Crawfurdsburn Community Centre Monday 4 th March 2019 4.30pm – 6.30pm
WARD 4	Notre Dame HS Wednesday 6 th March 2019 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Customer Contact Centre Tuesday 5 th March 2019 12noon – 2.00pm
WARD 5	Gourock I Zone (King Street) Saturday 2 nd March 2019 11.00am – 1.00pm	Gourock I Zone (King Street) Friday 1 st March 2019 4.30pm – 6.30pm
WARD 6	Inverclyde Academy Sunday 3 rd March 2019 11.00am – 1.00pm	Inverkip Hub Friday 1 st March 2019 2.00pm – 4.00pm
WARD 7	Inverclyde Academy Sunday 3 rd March 2019 11.00am – 1.00pm	Inverkip Hub Thursday 28 th February 2019 4.00pm – 6.00pm

Information at each venue will inform voters of the following:

- Voting forms will be available on each date/venue for voters to rank their application preference - 1st, 2nd and 3rd;
- Voting paperwork will give a brief description on all Ward applications and the value being requested;
- All voters will be required to provide their name/address and sign a declaration that they live in the Council Ward for which they are voting;
- There will be only one vote per person;
- All groups must achieve 10% of the votes cast to be eligible for funding. Where this criteria is met, groups in receipt of the highest number of votes will be awarded a share of the £50,000 available for each Ward; and
- While Inverclyde Council will provide press coverage however it is each groups responsibility to promote their application and encourage supporters to attend a venue and cast their vote

- 5.8 Inverclyde's Corporate Communication Team issued a press release informing Inverclyde residents of the above arrangements. The release also included details of the projects and initiatives being presented for public vote.
- 5.9 The PB Steering Group will review and evaluate both the application process, the effectiveness of the community engagement progress and the voting procedures following the conclusion of the events outline above. The steering group also looks to continue to learn from the experiences of other local authorities identified as having embedded good practice in their participatory budgeting models.
- 5.10 Directorate Management Teams (DMT) have been asked to identify areas of service provision or grant/award funding that could be considered for inclusion in the Phase 2 PB pilot of Inverclyde's PB model. Detailed proposals for the Phase 2 pilot will be submitted to the next meeting in March 2019.
- 5.11 Members of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) are asked to consider aspects of their service provision that might be included in Phase 2 of Inverclyde's PB model development. While there would be no commitment required in terms of budget allocation for partner services, the opportunity to engage in consultation with the public and community groups would exemplify good practice in partnership working.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Legal: N/A

Finance: Community Fund - £350K; Welfare Fund - £100K

Human Resources: N/A

Equality and Diversity: Arrangements are in place to support those with disabilities to vote on-line

Repopulation: The development of a high quality, progressive and inclusive Participator Budgeting model will enhance to Inverclyde's reputation.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

There have been a variety of consultation events across Inverclyde as detailed in the report.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND OF PAPERS

- 8.1 None.