

## **Moray Council Participatory Budgeting Policy Statement & Framework**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background**

- 1.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 provides a range of powers to strengthen the voices of communities in decision-making that directly matters to them. It makes particular provisions on participation in public decision making and the role that Participatory Budgeting can play in this.
- 1.2 Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a way for people to have a direct say on how public money is spent to address local needs. It gives people the opportunity to identify what matters to them in their local community and to vote on their priorities.
- 1.3 On 29 October 2017 the Scottish Government and Cosla agreed a framework to work together to have at least 1% of Council budgets subject to Participatory Budgeting (PB) by 2021. This is to ensure local decision making and the commitment to work together with wider public and third sector partners.

#### **Benefits of Participatory Budgeting**

- 1.4 PB can be used to give everyone who is affected by a decision on how money is spent an opportunity to share their views and listen to others. It provides a space for sharing information and for everyone involved to develop their knowledge about how public finances work. PB is a way for people who live and work in communities to work together to make sure that public money is used to achieve the best possible results.
- 1.5 PB is intended to:
  - Proactively involve and engage local people in making decisions on how public money is spent in their community.
  - Engage people in the design of policy and strategy that eliminates participation gaps.
  - Create a dialogue that allocates resources in a way that delivers shared and individual outcomes using direct community participation in the decision-making process.
  - Provide a clear demonstration of individual and community need in final service delivery that creates meaningful life outcomes.

#### **Our Journey So Far**

- 1.6 For many years the Council has been consulting and engaging with the public about our financial challenges, savings proposals, priorities for the community planning partnership (CPP), economic development, and a whole variety of

service specific work. Work with service users to influence service development and delivery has included: council tenants surveys to inform housing improvement; consultation on school meal menus; the Dial M bus service and the development of online payments and services in schools.

- 1.7 In 2018 we undertook our first locality planning projects along with CPP partner agencies which has resulted in local plans by and for the community that directly influence the services we provide. We have also been involved in various grants distribution participatory budget projects that have been led by the local agency Money for Moray.
- 1.8 All of this provides a great foundation for PB in Moray. Moving forward we will build a programme of PB by identifying a range of projects to involve communities in local decision making and democracy.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

### Our Commitment

- 2.1 The Council’s Corporate Plan recognises the value of increasing the involvement and influence of our communities in service design and elements of our budgets. The plan commits to empowering and supporting communities to build capacity by becoming more involved, influential and active in service design and delivery. PB will help to take these commitments forward.
- 2.2 The Council recognises and will adopt the PB Scotland Participatory Budgeting Charter ([PB Charter](#)) in our PB work with local communities. The 7 Key features of the PB Charter set out below.

<b>Fair and Inclusive</b>	Creates new opportunities for people to become involved in ways that bring new and different voices to discussions about how public money is spent. Working together in this way encourages stronger relationships in and between different communities.
<b>Participatory</b>	<b>Anyone from the communities affected by decisions on how money is spent should have opportunities to be involved at every stage of the PB process. This includes identifying what budgets are being allocated, how the PB process is planned, how it works in practice and how it is evaluated.</b>
<b>Deliberative</b>	PB supports communities to access information, share ideas, listen to each other and consider different views.  Sharing ideas and views helps people to learn more about different issues and leads to informed decisions that are best for the whole community
<b>Empowering</b>	<b>Decisions about how public money is spent are usually</b>

	<p><b>made by politicians and their officers. PB gives people and communities the power to decide what matters most to them and how public money should be used best.</b></p> <p><b>The PB process encourages more people to become involved in their community and to work together to make change happen</b></p>
<b>Creative and Flexible</b>	<p>PB processes should be designed in a way that makes it easy and attractive for people to get involved. A creative mix of face-to-face approaches and online tools should be used to distribute information, encourage participation and get the best results.</p>
<b>Transparent</b>	<p><b>Everyone involved in a PB process should be able to see why and how decisions are taken, and what effect those decisions have.</b></p>
<b>Part of Our Democracy</b>	<p>PB is a central part of our democracy in Scotland and should be standard practice for how budget decisions which affect communities are made.</p> <p>PB should be resourced and delivered as part of regular budget planning.</p>

## **Our Aims for PB in Moray**

2.3 The Council recognises that Participatory Budgeting (PB) can help build relationships between people, communities and public organisations; encourage democratic participation by reducing barriers; target resources to where they are most needed; encourage new ideas and ensure that everyone who is affected can see how decisions about budgets are taken.

2.4 Our goals are to:

- ❖ build strong relationships between people, communities and public organisations;
- ❖ build trust between people and make joint action possible;
- ❖ encourage democratic participation by reducing barriers to involvement and making sure that everyone who wants to take part can do so;
- ❖ target resources to where they are most needed;
- ❖ encourage the testing of new ideas to help transform communities in a positive way;
- ❖ make sure that everyone who is affected can see how decisions about budgets are taken, how money is spent, and what happens as a result; and
- ❖ Improve services and service delivery by enabling residents to express what is important to them and how it can be achieved.

## **2.5 We will do this by**

- ❖ Proactively involving and engaging local people in making decisions on how public money is spent in their community.
- ❖ Using the Moray Community Planning Partnership Community Engagement Strategy and National Standards for Community Engagement to guide us.
- ❖ Developing deliberative dialogues to influence allocation of our resources in a way that delivers shared and individual outcomes
- ❖ Using direct community participation in the decision making process.
- ❖ We will build on the foundation of various PB projects offered in Moray by groups such as Money for Moray, Bucks for Buckie, tsiMoray (You Choose), YP Decides and the Church of Scotland Community Choices.
- ❖ We will deliver a programme of PB by identifying a range of opportunities which will involve communities in local decision making and democracy.

## **3. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Types of Participatory Budgeting**

- 3.1 Once a budget has been identified for PB, a lead officer will be identified and will work with a delivery team to develop a proposal for PB that suits the particular budget. This development work will include community representatives as per the PB Charter. Examples of PB project approaches are:
- i) A grant distribution model: where communities determine the distribution of defined amounts from an overall budget allocation, possibly based on a policy direction or requirement. Support may be sought from a partner to facilitate the process.
  - ii) A deliberative discussion that influences: where technical issues, including legality, feasibility, and need are worked through by the community and service experts to improve shared understanding and so that the community can provide their views and priorities on local issues to influence the matter e.g. development of a contract specification.
  - iii) A collaborative decision making process: residents will be involved in the development of a range of options alongside service experts and advisors and then choose or vote based on a 'menu of options' that may be delivered.
  - iv) Communities determine their priorities: locality planning is an example of communities working with local agencies to prepare a plan for their area that reflects the experience and priorities of the people living there. The actions will be a mix of community, single and joint agency activity and resourcing that will have been influenced by the priorities of the community.

- 3.2 The techniques and tools used for each PB exercise will depend upon the nature of the project. However, all projects will be underpinned by transparency and ensure the open gathering of views where all voices can be heard. This will involve some kind of voting process, examples of which would include: either digital, community event or a combination of both. The basis upon which decisions are made will always be made clear in advance and the results will be communicated openly.
- 3.3 To develop PB in the Council we will consider projects at different levels, from strategic cross service budgets to local operational budgets. This is explained below with some examples from other areas to illustrate what could be considered.

	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples of PB at work</b>
<b>Level 1</b>	Discrete projects within service	Residents of 3 Aberdeen tower blocks voted on how £100k would be invested in their buildings
	Small policy grants	Economic development grants
<b>Level 2</b>	Contract reviews and specification Capital projects Whole or significant service issues	Local bus contract for the Western Isles
<b>Level 3</b>	Multi-service and possibly multi-agency major service (re) design	Glasgow City Council £1m PB initiatives to be used on priorities identified in the Council's strategic plan, ie. Child Poverty; Income and employment deprivation; black & ethnic minority; young people

### **Management and Monitoring of PB**

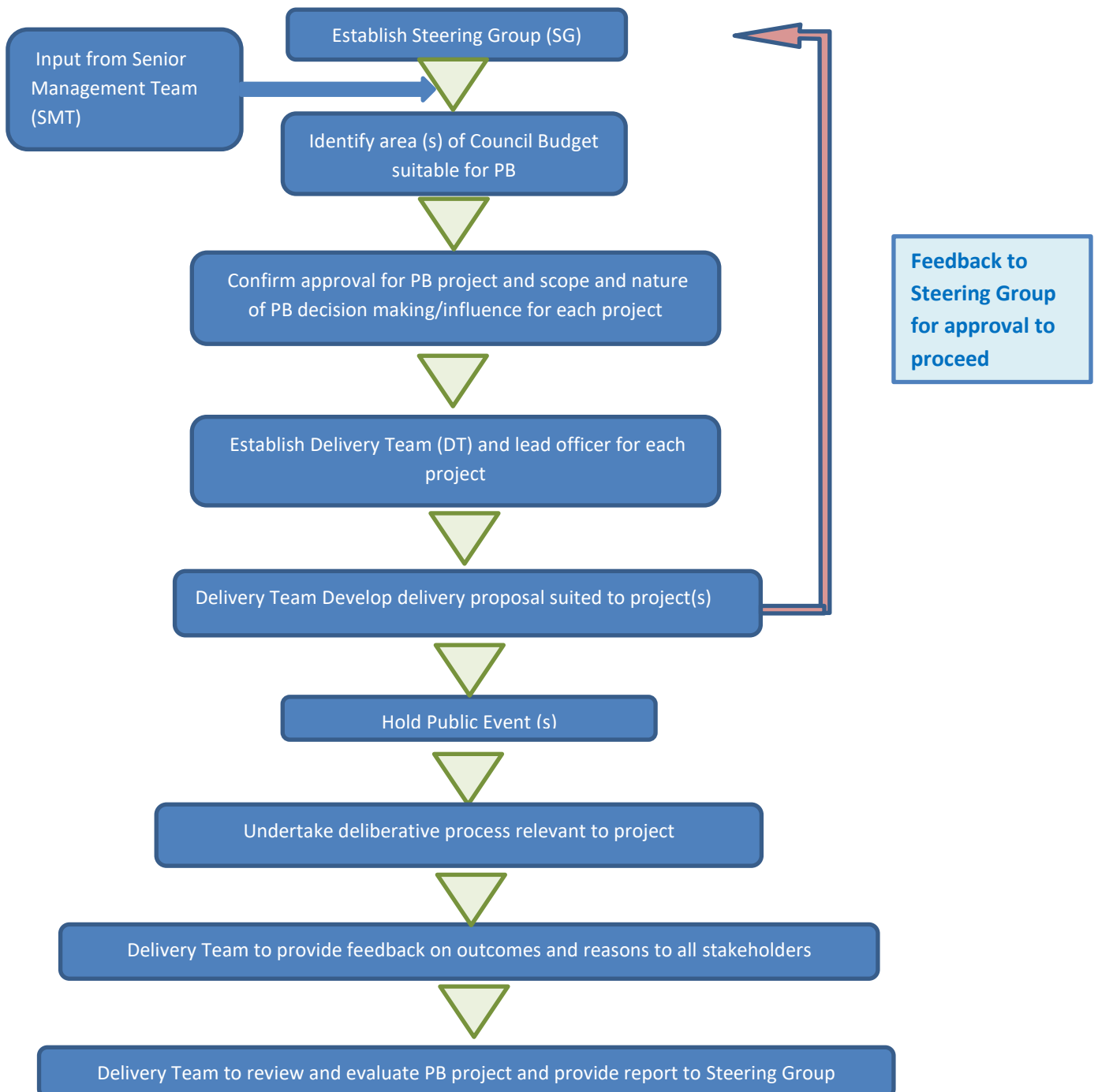
- 3.4 The Lead Officer for PB in the Council will be the Depute Chief Executive – Education, Communities and Organisational Development. They will Chair an internal steering group of officers to co-ordinate and oversee the Council's programme of PB work and ensure effective monitoring and reporting of the effectiveness of the work against the outcomes set out in the PB Charter and any local priorities set for PB projects.

3.5 They will also take account of and ensure effective links and co-ordination with other community involvement and consultation work.

### The Steering Group (SG)

3.6 The purpose of this Group is to have an overarching responsibility for the PB process within Moray Council. This group will take responsibility for giving strategic guidance and focus to the process and to evaluate feedback from the Delivery Team to use in determining future PB initiatives. The Steering Group will seek authority from the Council for the approval to allocate projects to the PB process.

### PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROCESS – MORAY COUNCIL



- i) Steering Group established to give strategic direction to PB process – which will involve input from Senior Management Team 1a - and to take ownership for delivering PB within the council.
- ii) The Steering Group identifies an area where user outcomes could be improved through the application of a PB process, and if relevant the appropriate locality.
- iii) Authorisation will be sought by Steering Group from Committee as to what budgets will be identified for PB
- iv) A Delivery Team is formed to run each of the PB initiatives and will include local community representatives. It is the responsibility of the Delivery Team to set up all of the required mechanisms for the PB process, whether that is a deliberative discussion, voting, community plans, etc. The Delivery Team must ensure wide and effective communication as part of the PB process and that results are communicated at the end of the process to all stakeholders. The DT will make connections with appropriate community groups in developing and progressing proposals for the PB process.
- v) For most schemes there will be one or more community meetings or events.
- vi) Public / community voting will take place to identify the preferred options for funding; votes are counted, verified and announced by the Delivery Team. There is no appeal mechanism. It is then the responsibility of the DT Lead Officer to ensure that the service area delivers the budget in line with the outcome of the PB exercise and takes responsibility for monitoring progress and reporting back to the Steering Group.
- vii) The Delivery Team will produce a report to the Steering Group on the outcome and effectiveness of each PB initiative in order that learning is taken forward into future events. The SG will evaluate and report back on the overall programme of PB work to the Policy and Resources Committee and the progress made towards the PB charter outcomes.

**The National Standards for Community Engagement will be applied in in designing and implementing PB, ensuring: inclusion, support, planning, working together, methods and communication.**



National Standards for Community Engagement



## **GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**CMT – Corporate Management Team**

**CPP – Community Planning Partnership**

**DT – Delivery Team**

**M4M – Money For Moray**

**PB – Participatory Budgeting**

**SG – Steering Group**

**SMT – Senior Management Team**