



## Your Moray - Your Safety

**REPORT TO: SAFER AND STRONGER STRATEGIC GROUP – 10 SEPTEMBER 2009**

**SUBJECT: PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING – ASB PILOT INITIATIVE**

**BY: CORPORATE POLICY UNIT MANAGER**

### **1. REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1 The Safer and Stronger Strategic Group is asked to give support to the participatory budgeting proposals with the remaining funding from the Community Planning Board budget.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 It is recommended that the Safer and Stronger Strategic Group:

- (i) agree to apply to the national participatory budgeting-antisocial behaviour (ASB) match fund to progress the community engagement proposals; and
- (ii) if agreed to the participatory budget proposal note the establishment of a project team with representatives from the organisations listed in para 3.25.

### **3.0 PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING**

3.1 At the Community Planning Board meeting on 27 August 2009, it was agreed to develop the participatory budgeting proposal with the remaining Community Planning Board budget to be used for the project with the understanding that if successful it will be matched funded through the Scottish Government's ASB pilot initiative. As the match funding is coming from the ASB pilot project, our proposal must be supported by the Community Planning decision making group for ASB, which in our partnership, is the Safer & Stronger Strategic Theme Group.

- 3.2 Background - Nationally there are moves to progress participatory budgeting as an effective method of community engagement.
- 3.3 Participatory budgeting is relatively new and is continually evolving. There is no fixed definition because innovative participatory budgeting projects constantly challenge existing explanations. A short definition is: Local communities decide how to allocate a small part of a public budget. If citizens or local communities directly make decisions on the allocation of any public money (not only small local authority budgets) this is participatory budgeting.
- 3.4 Participatory budgeting directly involves local people in making decisions on the spending and priorities for a defined public budget. Participatory budgeting processes can be defined by geographical area (whether that is a neighbourhood or multi ward area) or on a specific theme basis e.g. ASB. This means engaging residents and community groups representative of all parts of the community to propose, discuss and vote on spending priorities. This approach also gives local people a role in the scrutiny and monitoring on the process and results to inform subsequent participatory budgeting on an annual or repeatable basis.
- 3.5 For this partnership to move towards participatory budgeting it would take time to build capacity within the community to enable them to contribute meaningfully to the process. Some interactive technology has been developed which could assist the partnership to involve the community in defining their priorities and identifying budget spend to support them.
- 3.6 Interactive Technology – Public-i have been working to develop technology for budget simulation. There are various examples of trials of a 'Sim City' type approaches to participatory budgeting where the participant is able to alter spend in various parts of the budget - and is required to balance additions with appropriate reductions in other areas. This can be a highlight visual approach and is more flexible than similar offline approaches using monopoly money and the like.
- 3.7 Although this technology is aimed at a younger audience it is not exclusively so; the easily accessible interactive technology serves both as an introduction to participatory budgeting and as a method of taking part in the process. It is web-based, and the introduction element required the participant to make funding decisions for a community or townscape. This is designed to illustrate the wider effects to the community of budget decisions. The object is to designate funding within a functioning community and overcome problems. This participatory element of the programme allows participants to choose where certain funds are allocated within their community.
- 3.8 Participatory Budgeting-ASB Pilot Programme - This is a new initiative from the Scottish Government and is at its early developmental stage.

According to their guidance, participatory budgeting started in Brazil where it has successfully empowered people in deprived communities since the late 1980s. Its tools and principles are now used in many places across the world. Over 300 municipalities or local authorities have used participatory budgeting in countries such as Canada, Venezuela, Spain, France and Chile as well as more recently in England.

3.9 Currently the Scottish Government is piloting some participatory budgeting project under the Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) Framework. A few months ago information was sent to all local authorities asking for bids into this matched fund but as the projects were limited to ASB initiatives rather than community planning initiatives Moray Council decided at that time to not apply.

3.10 In relation to the Scottish Government's participatory budgeting pilot programme, it is proposed that 3-5 councils/community planning partnership take part in a participatory budgeting pilot to take forward as part of a specific national action of the ASB framework's community engagement elements. This national action is set out as follows:

*The Scottish Government and COSLA will establish, by autumn 2009, a participatory budgeting pilot exercise across three community planning partnership areas as part of the community empowerment agenda. Participatory budgeting should enable local community and neighbourhood groups to influence local action by helping to direct how small action funds are spend to develop solutions to local ASSB problems. This pilot exercise will be supported by COSLA and the Scottish Government though the provision of training, guidance and match-funding.*

3.11 As such it will be expected that council and community planning partners would identify and allocate a small pot of funding which would be match funded by the Scottish Government up to a certain limit for the proposed participatory budgeting pilot exercise to be undertaken locally specifically in relation to addressing ASB issues.

3.12 According to the Scottish Government, participatory budgeting in the pilot exercise will complement and enhance existing democratic structures as local elected members will play a big part in approving and supporting participatory budgeting by chairing or helping to facilitate events, explaining the impact of different options and through monitoring and scrutiny to their local communities.

3.13 At June 2009, 14 councils/community planning partnership have formally notified COSLA to declare their interest in being part of the participatory budgeting - ASB pilot. As mentioned earlier Moray is not one of those 14 councils/community planning partnerships. However, last week the Corporate Policy Unit was approached by the Scottish Government to apply for the fund as they have heard about our ideas

for developing a technology-based solution and have invited us to apply. After the test period the most appropriate model for participatory budgeting in Scotland will be rolled out nationwide.

- 3.14 Proposals - We would like to see groups and individuals develop their own vision of what their 'city' would look like once they have put in their priorities. We propose that our youth council lead this development and we will assist them in promoting that programme to other groups, area forums, and local members. In addition the youth council will also promote diversionary youth projects for development in the communities. The software will have to be reasonably sophisticated to meet the demands of the game-playing generation, otherwise we will lose them early on.
- 3.15 Our objective will be
1. we want to see by how much the 'cities' differ/marry and develop a local ideal, and
  2. using the technology we want to develop a reasonable knowledge base within the community of the knock-on effect of budget decisions, at which point we see participatory budgeting becoming a reality
- 3.16 The project will be to enable the youth council to work with the community using the technology to identify overall priorities for their area. In addition the youth council will have a platform to work with community groups to identify diversionary projects for young people as part of the ASB pilot programme.
- 3.17 With the increase in the budget the partnership will be able to develop the technology approach to participatory budgeting to assist community groups to develop their budget priorities for their area. The match funding from the Scottish Government would provide a project fund to enable the priorities for young people to be developed.
- 3.18 Recent Developments - Peter Jones, PPR & Communications Officer, Moray Council, attended a seminar organised by COSLA on 3 July for all participants interested in applying for the match funding pilot programme.
- 3.19 On 15 July, a meeting was held with the Public-i who will be responsible for developing the software. Arising from the meeting the software proposals below have been costed and will form part of the bid for match funding pilot programme.
- 3.20 There are 3 options available with increasing costs dependent on the software development which can be afforded to the project. The three options are basic, intermediate & advanced.

- (i) Basic: incorporates Public-i Viewfinder with the DEMOS interaction budget slider (as demonstrated) & minimal graphic interaction. Initial cost would be £13,500. Annual cost thereafter would be £3,800.
- (ii) Intermediate: consists of the same user interface as Basic with "equivalent to" scenario or "implications" - i.e. staff reductions or loss of services and "1 preference dimension". Initial cost would be £19,500. Annual cost thereafter would be £3,800.
- (iii) Advanced: consists of same user interface as Intermediate with enhanced graphics (yet to be determined, but possibly a cockpit or dashboard with dials or meters to play with) and with "3 preference dimensions". Initial cost would be £31,000. Annual cost thereafter would be £3,800.

3.21 As part of the software development of this project, the Partnership will need to define our criteria (by partnership & cost line) that will govern the "equivalent to" scenario or "implications".

3.22 In relation to the youth diversionary initiatives the project will enable the youth council to work with the community using the technology to identify overall priorities for their area. In addition the youth council will have a platform to work with community groups to identify diversionary projects for young people as part of the ASB pilot programme

3.23 An application needs to be submitted to COSLA for the match funding bid in September with an anticipated decision shortly afterwards.

3.24 To progress the proposal it is suggested that a project team be established consisting of representatives from the following areas:

- Chief Executive's Office (Bridget Mustard, Peter Jones & John Ferguson)
- Youth Council representative
- Moray or Local Area Forum representative
- Community Council representative
- Community Development representative

3.25 The budget for this project is as follows:

CPP unallocated spend	5,575
Citizens Panel (removing 1 of 3 surveys)	10,000
ASB funds	<u>10,000</u>
Total Partnership contribution	25,575
Match Funding	<u>25,575</u>
Total	51,150

3.26 It would be recommended at this stage to invest as much as possible in the software development to enable a usable product to be produced.

This would involve committing to the “advanced” software development at £31,000 which leaves £20,000 for youth diversionary initiatives.

- 3.27 If successful this project will also be put forward to the COSLA excellence awards under category 7 “The one to watch” which seeks to recognise innovative project which as yet may not have evidence of results. These project may be at a very early stage, but must have been approved and be ‘ready to go’. The main criterion for entry into this category is that project must have the potential to deliver substantial results by bringing new ideas or approaches to resolve recognised problems.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Community Plan / Theme Plans / Partner Plans**

Consultation with stakeholders is an important element of community planning. The participatory budgeting could offer opportunities to expand the involvement of the community into community planning to provide the mechanism to consult with a representative sample of the Moray population.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

Best Value legislation requires the Council to consult with its stakeholders. The Scottish Government is moving towards participatory budgeting for community planning partnership and has developed a pilot programme to assist 3-5 partnerships to develop the mechanisms to take this project forward.

**(c) Resources (Financial, Staffing and Risks)**

Reflecting the existing and adjusted financial contribution from each partner over the next year, the budget breakdown is below.

**(d) Consultations**

Participatory Budgeting – The following people were consulted in relation to our proposals and are in agreement with them:

- Mike Callaghan, Community Resourcing Contact, COSLA
- John Ferguson, Community Planning & Development Manager, Moray Council
- Andy Jamieson, ASB Co-ordinator, Moray Council
- Peter Jones, PPR & Communications Officer, Moray Council
- David Eaton and Davy Jones, Public-i

**5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Budget has been identified to enable the Partnership to submit a bid to the COSLA participatory budget ASB pilot fund. If successful the proposal will also be submitted for the COSLA excellence award.**

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**Background Papers:**

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