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Welsh Government

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WELSH GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING TOOLKIT.

SUCCESS FACTORS



BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



HOW HAVE OTHERS BENEFITED?



PLANNING FOR BUDGETING



Personal Finance
Education Group



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ewrop & Chymru: Buddsoddi yn eich Dyfodol
Cronfa Gyndeithasol Ewrop


Europe & Wales: Investing in your Future
European Social Fund




INTRODUCTION



HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET



Get the most out of this Toolkit: How to plan a participatory budgeting project with young people, whether you have one hour or a number of sessions.



This Toolkit introduces participatory budgeting and sets out a rights-based rationale for why it can be good for young people and local government in Wales.

It identifies some conditions, values, principles and key factors that can underpin successful participatory budgeting projects.

It includes a range of tools, reflection points and practical activities to help you identify how to plan for and deliver successful participatory budgeting projects with young people in your community.

GET THE MOST FROM THIS TOOLKIT

- Use the roadmap below to plan how you'll work through this Toolkit
- Identify which parts are most helpful to you
- Take what's relevant and use these ideas as a starting point
- Use the reflection and action points in each section, including the separate resource sheets. These will help you plan and deliver your project
- For more resources to help support the teaching of this subject, see the signposting on Page 44

YOUR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING ROADMAP

WHO SHOULD USE THIS TOOLKIT?

THIS TOOLKIT IS FOR ANYONE WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IS BASED ON EXCHANGING INFORMATION AND IDEAS. THE IDEAS AND PRACTICAL STEPS IN THIS TOOLKIT ARE RELEVANT TO DECISION-MAKERS AT ALL LEVELS, FROM SENIOR LEADERS TO THOSE WORKING ACTIVELY TO DELIVER SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY.

FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING TO WORK, IT NEEDS TO BE PUT INTO PRACTICE THROUGHOUT EVERY LEVEL AT WHICH AN AREA OF BUDGET IS INFLUENCED, PLANNED, MANAGED, AND INVESTED IN DAY-TO-DAY SERVICE DELIVERY. HOW CAN YOU USE IT?

A CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Use the ideas in the Toolkit to find priority areas where participatory budgeting can shape strategy and policy development by identifying key areas for investment.?

A SERVICE DELIVERY MANAGER

Use participatory budgeting to shape how a budget can reflect and balance the needs of different sections of the community, whether based on geographical, economic or cultural need

SERVICE DELIVERY STAFF

Use the ideas in the Toolkit to create on-going, high-quality conversations about what matters most in the lives of those with whom you work.



1 FIND OUT MORE:

- **WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?**
- **HOW IS IT USED?**
- **WHY HAS THE WELSH GOVERNMENT CREATED THIS TOOLKIT?**

EXPLORE THE BACKGROUND TO PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING ON PAGES 6 - 10

2 FIND OUT WHAT WORKS BEST:

- **WHAT CONDITIONS DO WE NEED?**
- **WHAT VALUES AND PRINCIPLES WILL HELP US?**
- **WHAT ARE THE KEY FEATURES OF SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?**

EXPLORE THE SUCCESS FACTORS FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING ON PAGES 11 - 14

3 SEE PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN ACTION:

- **WHO IS USING PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?**
- **HOW ARE THEY BENEFITTING?**
- **WHAT HAVE PEOPLE LEARNT ALREADY?**

EXPLORE THE CASE STUDIES ON PAGES 14-20

4 PLAN FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE:

- **WHAT WILL WORK FOR US?**
- **WHAT AREAS SHOULD WE ADDRESS?**
- **WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED AND WHAT SHOULD WE COST FOR?**

BUILD YOUR OWN PLAN USING THE IDEAS AND TOOLS ON PAGES 28 - 33

5 LEAD A PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROJECT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

ACROSS SEVERAL SESSIONS

1 DESIGN

How can young people help to design the participatory budgeting project and identify priorities for funding?

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2 ENGAGE

How can young people help us to engage with their peers and wide community at each stage of the project - and how can we engage with them?

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3 GENERATE IDEAS

How can young people generate ideas for project we can fund?

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4 DECIDE

How can young people decide which projects to fund?

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5 REFLECT AND LEARN

How can young people help us reflect on the success of the project and of their chosen proposals?

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IN ONE DAY

**YOU CAN DELIVER
THE MAIN ELEMENTS
OF PARTICIPATORY
BUDGETING IN ONE DAY.
OR LESS. USE THE IDEAS
ON PAGE 40**

INTRODUCTION

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Participatory budgeting represents an opportunity for local authorities and their partners to **involve young people** in making decisions about how to spend local budgets that affect them. It goes beyond being a 'tool' and can represent a **cultural shift** in how you consider and act upon the rights of young people in your budgetary decisions.



What is participatory budgeting?

Participatory budgeting is a direct form of democracy. It enables people to make real decisions about how all or part of a public budget is spent. There can be many challenges to overcome when budgeting for, designing and implementing effective services. But participatory decision-making can be a vital step towards delivering a higher quality of life by better meeting your community's most important needs.

There are many definitions, because participatory budgeting takes different forms depending on where and how it is used. One definition is:

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING DIRECTLY INVOLVES LOCAL PEOPLE IN MAKING DECISIONS ON THE PRIORITIES AND SPENDING FOR A DEFINED PUBLIC BUDGET. THIS MEANS ENGAGING RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY TO DISCUSS AND VOTE ON SPENDING PRIORITIES, MAKE SPENDING PROPOSALS, AND VOTE ON THEM, AS WELL GIVING LOCAL PEOPLE A ROLE IN THE SCRUTINY AND MONITORING OF THE PROCESS.

Source: Participatory budgeting values, principles and standards, Participatory budgeting Unit 2008

Where did participatory budgeting originate?

Participatory budgeting has its origins in deprived communities in Latin and South America in the late 1980s, most notably in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where in 1989, despite high life expectancy and literacy, a third of the city's population lived in isolated slums at the city outskirts and lacked access to such public amenities as clean water, sanitation, medical facilities and schools.

Participatory budgeting emerged as one of several reform programmes. These were designed to overcome the issues identified by a range of social movements that formed in response to years of military dictatorship, political patronage and corruption. Participatory budgeting proved to be the most effective way to make best use of limited and precious financial resources. Faced with severe inequality in living standards, it opened up a way to include the city's most marginalised residents and give them a voice in budgetary decisions.

Participatory budgeting was quickly adopted by many LDCs (Less [Economically] Developed Countries) as a route to addressing inequality, poverty and the challenge of finding sustainable routes to development. The principles of participatory budgeting have since spread to developed countries including France, Canada and since 2000, the UK.

As of December 2010, there are now over 75 projects in England and 13 in Wales. Wales has taken a different approach from England with the majority of projects to date being driven by a small third sector organisation called Together Creating Communities (TCC), which was funded by Help the Aged and Big Lottery rather than the Welsh Government. Since the start of 2008, it has supported 13 participatory budgeting projects in the north of Wales, primarily with community councils and their partners.

Support for participatory budgeting is now growing in Wales with significant interest in the south of Wales and in children and young people. →



What are the steps to participatory budgeting?

Broadly speaking, participatory budgeting forms a cycle that includes the following key steps:

- 1 The organisation and representatives of the community work together to **design** a participatory budgeting project to decide where and how an identified sum of money will be spent.
- 2 The organisation **engages** the wider community to secure their involvement in these decisions.
- 3 Together, they identify **priorities**: areas of spending that local people believe will deliver the outcomes they most want or need.
- 4 The community works with technical experts to come up with **costed proposals for projects** that will address these areas of need.
- 5 The community **votes or decides** on the top proposals.
- 6 Each chosen proposal is **delivered** as agreed and jointly **monitored** to review whether the results and outcomes are as intended.
- 7 Together, the organisation and community **reflect** on the process and the outcomes for local people **and learn** how to improve the process of participatory budgeting for the future.

A cycle might be linked to a one-off budget item, or to your annual budgeting process.

How is participatory budgeting used?

There is no single best model or approach. Participatory budgeting has spread around the world and this success is based in part on how local needs and contexts have been allowed to shape the original approach into local models. The steps above can take on different forms and combinations in different circumstances and places.

However, three emerging models describe how participatory budgeting has been used so far in the UK:

COMMUNITY GRANTS POT.


A discreet pot of money for a particular area or theme, e.g. a neighbourhood or for children and young people, is allocated using participatory budgeting. The type of project the pot can fund is usually dictated by the funding. Community, voluntary and sometimes statutory groups propose projects for funding and then present them at a decision day event (typically) where residents vote on which should receive.

DEVOLVED FUNDS TO WARDS OR WARD GROUPINGS.

Typically this is either council funding or partnership funding, which is devolved to neighbourhoods or wards. The funding is used for a mixture of public and third sector projects. Sometimes residents are involved in setting the priorities for the funding. Again, bids are usually presented to a meeting for votes which determines who receives funding.

MAINSTREAM FUNDING FOR MAINSTREAM SERVICES.

This is a new process for the UK although it more closely follows the original Brazilian model of participatory budgeting. It involves voting on public sector funding for services, although this is usually a 'top up' to basic services. All citizens within an area are able to vote on which services should receive the funding and are also involved in setting the priorities for the locality which will shape the direction of the funding. It usually involves 1 – 18% of the overall budget.



Producing children's budget statements enables stakeholders to examine with clarity how a child's rights are being implemented. This makes it more possible to identify a specific intervention and changes that are needed to speed up the delivery of this right to children and improve outcomes. Producing children's budgets are an enabler to achieving effective participation of children in spending decisions that affect their lives.

A practical tool for achieving this is the delivery of participatory budgeting.

Despite its origins in a context very different to that of modern Wales, participatory budgeting is good for government and good for communities.

Participatory budgeting can deliver many benefits. When community members come together to share ideas and information, their participation can build social cohesion as diverse sectors create together a shared vision and aspirations. It can deliver increased transparency and through this can build respect for local government, enhancing local participation in democracy while representing a genuine shift in power from the state to communities.

Local councillors, council employees and local people can forge more effective partnerships and by doing so build a new consensus on who 'owns' the decisions that affect peoples' lives. This can in turn build social capital as people feel empowered to get involved, take responsibility for their participation, gain greater control over their lives and a genuine sense of ownership of the outcomes.

This Toolkit has been developed in the wider context of the need to improve young peoples' financial capacity and literacy in Wales. Access remains possibly the greatest obstacle to efficient budget analysis and therefore to peoples' ability to take part in participatory budgeting.

To overcome this challenge and allow groups – including young people – to participate in budget analysis and budget decision-making, we need to increase budget transparency and build capacity to give people the skills to participate.

SUCCESS FACTORS



As you **develop** and **deliver** your own participatory budgeting projects it is helpful to **build** on what is already known about best practice.

SUCCESS FACTORS FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

As you develop and deliver your own participatory budgeting projects it is helpful to build on what is already known about best practice.

The benefits and appeal of participatory budgeting have driven a good deal of research to identify how best to make it work, both in its original contexts and in how the approach is evolving in countries like the UK.

This section of the Toolkit is not intended to be a formal review of this literature, but is informed by such a review. It outlines:

- the underlying conditions that appear necessary for a participatory approach
- some key values and principles that can underpin an effective model for projects
- some key features that can indicate effective practice taking place.

Conditions

Participatory budgeting with young people within a rights-based approach to policy making must be underpinned by a rights-based approach to budgeting.

While your local context will shape your approach, the following conditions appear necessary for a rights-based approach to budgeting to be successful:

- A willingness of relevant political and administrative actors to open up the political system, to reform public administration and to implement human rights obligations in a participatory manner.
- Acceptance of the rule of law and meaningful democratic participation; an independent judiciary, which may enforce the right to information, is an added plus.
- The willingness of government and civil society to cooperate for a specific common goal.
- The existence of civil society organisations with the potential to mobilise the population and initiate broad networks.



Specific recommendations are to:

Increase budget transparency through:

- making public all the documents you produce,
- conducting public hearings on the budget; and
- establishing audit mechanisms for getting public input on problems with specific programs and what should be audited.

Increase the capacity of stakeholders to analyse and understand government budgets through:

- developing applied budget training modules that can be used in designing targeted and tailored training packages for different audiences. Modules need to cover system issues, budget analysis and budget process and advocacy issues.
- delivering training through workshops for the media, non-departmental government bodies and the community and voluntary sector to allow them access and to debate budgeting information.

Produce children's budgets that increase the transparency of your spending on children and young people. Ensure that these children's budgets:

- are developed collaboratively with local communities and community leaders and building their capacities to act as the real watchdogs.
- are long-term cumulative efforts built over time over time, so budgets can grow to include spending from both public and private sectors, and from multiple levels of government, with trend data.
- contain analysis to add commentary to the budgets
- are set in local context and cover the themes important to the specific geographic area they are concerned with.

When these conditions are in place, an environment can exist within which effective participatory budgeting can take place.

Values and principles

Participatory budgeting is context specific. You will need to design your approach so that it fits with the characteristics of your community, such as government structures and your local political environment.

The right values and principles will help you do this in a collaborative way to ensure it best meets the objectives of all those involved.

The Participatory Budgeting Unit has identified nine principles of key importance:

- **Local ownership.** Residents should be involved in setting budget priorities and identifying projects for public spend in their area wherever possible.
- **Direct involvement.** Participatory budgeting should involve direct as well as representative engagement wherever possible.
- **Support for representative democracy.** Participatory budgeting can increase citizens' trust of councillors and boost the role of ward councillors.
- **Mainstream involvement.** Over time participatory budgeting processes should move towards residents being involved in decisions over mainstream budgets (as opposed to only small grants processes).
- **Accessibility.** Participants must have good and clear access to participatory budgeting processes.
- **Transparency.** Participatory budgeting processes are designed to give citizens full and clear knowledge of public budgets in their area, even those over which they do not have a direct say.
- **Deliberation.** Participatory budgeting processes should take citizens beyond personal choice and involve real deliberation around budget decisions. →

- **Empowerment.** Participatory budgeting events are centrally concerned with empowering local citizens in decisions over local services and shaping their local area through allocating part of a public budget.
- **Shared responsibility.** Participatory budgeting should build common purpose and a commitment from all stakeholders.

The Participatory Budgeting Unit publication 'Participatory Budgeting Values, Principles and Standards' (2008) expands each of these principles to include:

- The values that underpin each principle.
- Standards to aim for as you put each principle into practice.



Key features

The following key features can indicate successful participatory budgeting in practice:

- There is an annual cycle of budget, priorities review and planning. Your projects work on an annual cycle linked to your budgeting timetable.
- Local people are involved throughout the cycle, in priority setting and budgeting decisions, including reviewing past performance and setting future priorities.
- People are given the skills to participate, so they understand how budgeting works and make meaningful contributions to discussions and decisions.
- Projects start by 'thinking small' with budgets. The size of the budget allocated often starts small, such as one per cent of your budget, and grows slowly in successive years as your model and your experience develops.
- Your chosen budgets clearly link priority areas of need to local peoples' choices.
- Your model includes decision-making rules, agreed by local people, that take into account local factors and guide how you weight the allocation of money to those areas most in need.
- Your process is open and transparent. Local people can see their decisions being translated into real projects and services in their communities.

When these features are evident, this can indicate that your participatory budgeting initiatives are creating a genuine power shift from the state to communities, creating shared responsibility and local ownership.

HOW HAVE OTHER ORGANISATIONS BENEFITED FROM PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?



Who uses participatory budgeting? What works and what have organisations learnt? These case studies will help you build on the progress made and lessons learnt by other groups in Wales and the UK.

HOW HAVE OTHER ORGANISATIONS BENEFITED FROM THIS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING TOOLKIT?

ENGAGING LEARNERS IN SWANSEA (INFORMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT)

ELiS is an alternative curriculum project working with 15 schools across Swansea for the local authority. Young people are referred to the project from schools due to low attendance and because they are at risk of being permanently excluded from school. ELiS used participatory budgeting in order to build team working skills and to highlight the value of money through planning a group visit.

Aims

- Introduce participatory budgeting as a tool to enable young people to take ownership of their decision making.
- To develop budgeting skills, as well as associated skills such as communication and negotiation.
- To facilitate discussion around money and an appreciation of value.

Process

- Group facilitators attended a training session on using the participatory budgeting toolkit.
- A programme of learning was developed which focused on budgeting with the end goal of planning a trip for the group.
- Sessions were held with the young people to decide on aspects of the visit, such as location, travel arrangements and food.
- Each of these held financial implications which the group had to research, feed back on and then negotiate the best option within the budget available.
- Budgeting activities from the personal finance toolkit were used to enrich the learning.
- The trip was planned solely by the group itself and successfully ran prior to the Christmas holidays.

Outcomes and impact

- Cohesive working of the whole group towards a common goal.

- Appreciation of the actual cost involved in planning a trip – many of the young people had not considered how much it costs to take them out on such visits.
- The learners were enthusiastic about the participatory budgeting process. They felt involved and, as such, responded well to the sessions, providing positive ideas and insight and displaying good communication and negotiation skills.

Key learning points

- Combining the learning materials from the Personal Finance Toolkit with the opportunities and ideas from the Participatory Budgeting Toolkit created a programme that was able to develop learning around budgeting while also providing a practical budgeting experience.
- The fact that the learners were working towards a real end goal incentivised their participation and stimulated their engagement in the learning as a whole.

HOWARDIAN PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT (FORMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT)

Howardian PRU caters for young people aged 11-16 all of whom have been excluded from mainstream education due to behavioural issues and special needs. The young people attend on a full-time basis, participating in both lessons and work placements. Participatory budgeting was introduced using the concept of a trip for the young people as a reward.

Aims

- Increase the level of attendance.
- Build the confidence of the young people, specifically in relation to living independently.
- Improve the level of participation amongst learners.

Process

- Those young people who had achieved at least 85% attendance over the term were given the opportunity to plan for a reward trip.
- Links were made to the OCN qualification 'Participatory Budgeting', allowing the work that the young people engaged in to also contribute towards a qualification.
- TProject management roles were given to selected learners to encourage communication, negotiation and participation skills.

Outcomes and impact

- Young people were engaged and enthusiastic about making financial plans and decisions.

- Genuine improvement in team work, problem solving and decision making.
- An awareness from the young people that learning how to budget effectively is important for their future lives.
- Learners involved achieved additional accreditation in the form of the OCN qualification.
- An improvement in attendance for those involved in the participatory budgeting.

Key learning points

- While participatory budgeting opportunities cannot always be 'real' opportunities, it was clear that the learners were enthused by the fact that they were working towards their own reward.
- As learners begin to take ownership of the decision-making process, the skills they are developing are done so discretely and it is important that these are reflected upon.
- Making links to qualifications is a beneficial way of having the work that young people engage in formally recognised.

HOW HAVE OTHER ORGANISATIONS BENEFITED FROM PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?

BRIGHTON AND HOVE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S TRUST AND THE NOVAS SCARMAN GROUP - 'CHILDREN CAN DO' PROGRAMME

The Novas Scarman Group (in partnership with Brighton and Hove Children and Young People's Trust) has, over the past five years, been running a city-wide programme called Children Can Do. It provides grants of up to £3,000 and dedicated development support, to small emergent organisations that are providing activities and services for CYP aged 5 – 13.

Aims

- To focus on Children and Young People (CYP) who have little access to appropriate activities.
- To be children-led and engaging and supporting CYP to participate actively in identifying their own needs.

- To help children to stay safe, be happy, have fun and do well, make positive change in their community and prepare them for their future.

Process

- £50,000 per annum is on the table for children and young people to take decisions on. The whole emphasis across all the processes is about the programme being children-led.
- Children form the core of the decision-making processes about how the money is going to be spent.
- Panel is established and made up of children and adults
- Training is provided so that the panel is equipped with the skills, knowledge and experience that they need as well as ensuring that their expectations are realistic.
- Children vote and decide which projects are going to be funded and by how much.
- Technical support is provided from the adults as well as the facilitator who will have visited all of the groups, often more than once.
- Participation comes via schools, after school clubs and various networks.
- Aim to reach more marginalised groups of children working with outreach workers and development workers.

Outcomes and impact

- Over the past five years 140 projects have been funded through this programme benefiting over 4,000 CYP in the city.
- The panel members included CYP with disabilities and were recruited to reflect the cultural diversity of the city as well as all geographical areas.
- Led to the funding of projects that are often very different to the usual activities that the Children and Young People's Trust would support. They are often new initiatives developed by the children themselves
- Progression routes for the children and young people who become involved. Through engaging children at a young age, they are then linking into other decision-making processes across the city. ➡

Key learning points

- Facilitation - The importance of investing adequate time and resources into facilitating processes in an appropriate way that does not create dependency. This includes the initial outreach visits to support children in developing their ideas.
- Training - The importance of providing appropriate training that equips all participants with the skills, knowledge, experience and confidence that allows them to engage in participatory budgeting processes in a meaningful way.
- Decision-making processes - This needs to be led by CYP whilst allowing adults to provide the technical input and support needed to ensure that there is an informed debate and that decisions made are arrived at in a transparent manner.



'YOU DECIDE!' IN TOWER HAMLETS: A CHANCE TO INVOLVE YOUNG PEOPLE

The Tower Hamlets 'You Decide!' project began in January 2009. In the first four months they ran eight events across which 815 residents spent almost £2.4 million. The money was from the central council budget and was spent on additional mainstream council services. In October 2009 they ran a children and young people's participatory budgeting event at a School Council Conference where participants could decide how to spend £160,000 of the council's budget.

Aims

- To introduce participatory budgeting as a tool to deliver LAA targets.

- To introduce participatory budgeting as a core competency within the council and in turn to strengthen transparent and accountable budgetary decision-making within and across key delivery services.
- To continue to strengthen participatory engagement, local democracy and resident empowerment in Tower Hamlets.

Process

- The participatory budgeting team asked for 'bids' for services that could appear on the 'You Decide!' menus. All services had to be mainstream council services. In addition they had to meet one of the five cabinet priorities or one of the LAP priorities identified by the LAPs over the past year.
- These services were then presented to Cabinet before being put together in the menu.
- The menu items came under the categories of: 'Reducing Levels of Youth Unemployment', 'Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour', 'Raising GCSE results', 'Improving the Quality of the Public Realm' and 'Improving Cleanliness'.
- Tower Hamlets ran an advertising campaign that involved both 'above' and 'below' the line advertising. Mixing traditional advertising techniques (such as adverts, press releases, posters and leaflets) with a more networked approach.
- Using the community networks built up by members of the Neighbourhood Management Team, they were able to spread the word about the event via youth groups and organisations.



- Upon arrival young people were split up and placed on tables with people from different communities and age groups.
- Each table was facilitated by a trained facilitator who attempted to ensure that everyone around the table had a chance to express their opinions.
- This worked well at many of the eight events and led to the young people being advocates for their services but also helped them think about the important issues to vote for once their services were 'purchased'.

Key learning points

- Use of school councils to reach a wide cross section of young people.
- Running advertising for events that utilises traditional techniques with community networks and outreach work.

THE VILLAGE SPEND. COEDPOETH. NORTH WALES

Together Creating Communities, a broad based community organisation, together with Help the Aged and the Community Council in Coedpoeth, used precept funds in a participatory budgeting process to decide how to spend £20,000 in the local village. The pilot was designed by a small steering group of interested parties from the community and voluntary sector, a representative from the Participatory Budgeting Unit, plus the chair of the Coedpoeth Community Council.

Aims

- Engage residents in participatory budgeting process with Community Council.
- Encourage new Community Councillors to come forward.
- To enable taxpayers to have a say in how money is spent.
- Develop citizenship in local school children.
- To trial the participatory budgeting model in Wales.
- To engage policy makers in Wales.
- To develop a model of engagement in budgets for older people.

Process

- A leaflet was distributed to all residents in the village informing them of the process and inviting them to a public meeting.
- At the first public meeting participants were asked to suggest project ideas under pre-prepared themes.



- These projects ideas were prioritised and the six most favourite were selected.
- Project ideas were costed and worked up.
- A second public meeting was held at which projects were presented and participants asked to select their top three.
- A parallel prioritisation process was held with the primary school children who fed in their ideas for project proposals. Although they did not attend the public meetings.

Outcomes and impacts

- Although 'The Village Spend' pilot was a small initiative, it established a strong case for further participatory budgeting initiatives in Wales and in rural areas.
- Residents and school pupils engaged about what was good about their village and what needed improvement.
- The process affirmed the work and leadership of the Community Council.
- The process increased budget literacy.
- There was a sense of ownership of the resulting projects.
- The issue of putting in a pedestrian crossing led to local people building a relationship with the local Co-op supermarket and persuading them to put money into the crossing scheme.
- Participatory budgeting addresses citizenship in terms of rights, roles and responsibilities and worked well as a vehicle within which to engage the school council.

Key learning points

- Value of engaging older residents alongside children and young people. ➡

CASE STUDY: YOUTHBANK UK

There are good examples of young people's involvement in participatory budgeting in the UK, in schemes such as YouthBank and the Youth Opportunity and Capital Funds. The key features of YouthBanks are:

- YouthBank is a UK-wide grantmaking initiative run by young people for young people.
- YouthBanks provide small grants to projects led by young people, of benefit to the community and that also benefit the young people taking part. YouthBank UK co-ordinates the network of more than 80 local YouthBanks across the United Kingdom.
- Young people themselves make decisions about who receives the money, how the YouthBank is run and, through a Trustee Board of young people, also direct the UK-wide programme.

Youth Banks involvement with the Big Lottery Fund

One national example of young people's involvement in budgetary decision-making is through YouthBanks involvement in the decision-making process to allocate £40 million of the Big Lottery Funds Young People's Fund Grants to Organisations.

Process

- From April 2005 to December 2006 young people from local YouthBanks and adults from a range of organisations formed a panel in each of the nine English regions.
- Each panel analysed bids from organisations from within the region and decided which ones would receive funding.
- YouthBank facilitated the meeting (held in each region every two months) making sure that young people took a full part and establishing a method of decision-making that made sure everyone's views were represented.
- The meetings were designed to be fun and inclusive.
- Pre-meetings were held with young people to ensure they had they were well prepared and had the confidence to take part.
- Young people had the opportunity to lead the process through chairing meetings.

Outcomes and impacts

- Young people were actively involved in the decision-making process for £40 million worth of spend – a major achievement.
- The combination of young and older people brought different experiences and outlooks to the decision-making process.
- Young people involved reported that they gained the following from their involvement:
 - Increased confidence and assertiveness.
 - Team working and working with people new to them.
 - A greater understanding of outcomes and targets.
 - Communication, negotiation, time-keeping, decision-making and organisational skills.

Key learning points

- Increasing young people's participation through designing meetings that are fun and enjoyable.
- Running pre-meetings with young people to ensure they are prepared and have the confidence to contribute to adult discussions.

PLANNING FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



What will work for us? What areas should we address? The first steps are to **consider** which areas of budget or activity might **benefit** most from a participatory approach, and to identify an **approach** that is right for your organisation and for the people you wish to reach and include.

PLANNING FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

What will work for us? What areas should we address? The first steps are to consider which areas of budget or activity might benefit most from a participatory approach, and to identify an approach that is right for your organisation and for the people you wish to reach and include.

The right preparation will help your first steps in participatory budgeting to be a success: a strong foundation on which to build and extend its reach within your organisation and within your community.

Use the topics in this section to help you plan your participatory budgeting project, before using the ideas and step-by-step activities in 'Leading participatory budgeting with young people' to deliver it.

As you work through the ideas, consider the conditions, principles and key features that you should put in place.

PREPARING FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

HOW CAN PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING HELP MY ORGANISATION MAKE BETTER BUDGET DECISIONS?

Participatory budgeting enables detailed conversations about what matters most in peoples' lives.

From these conversations, a shared understanding of issues and priorities can emerge. When done well, participatory budgeting can deliver better organisational performance because budgets are directed to where they are needed most – not where budget holders think they are.

What this means will depend on how you (and your community) choose to define better performance. It may mean efficiency: maintaining present outcomes by spending less money in more focused ways. It may mean effectiveness: increasing the outcomes you can achieve while maintaining existing budget levels. Or you may aim to achieve more from less.

However you define it, better performance happens when stakeholders at all levels, from strategy development to service delivery and residents, are engaged in these conversations so that the right information can travel from where it is found to where it is needed – including within the community.

Reflect:

- What areas of our work could benefit from detailed conversations that tell us what is really important?
- Who in our communities could be involved in these conversations, so that their lives will benefit from improved outcomes?
- Who in my organisation could be involved in these conversations, so that information can get from where it is found to where it is needed?

Take action:

- Use template sheet number 1 in the back of this pack to capture your ideas for areas of work that might most benefit from better budget decisions, and why. This can include broad service areas, such as transportation, schools or aspects of leisure and culture; it may be specific areas or communities; or a one-off budget item.
- Build a chart of the people you should involve so that every level of your organisation is engaged in these conversations.

HOW CAN PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING BENEFIT THE YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED?

When young people are involved in participatory budgeting, they benefit in two ways: from better outcomes in services that affect them and/or others; and from the experience of taking part.

Young voters are among the most disengaged from politics, which means their views can be under-represented in the decisions taken by elected representatives and, potentially, in the day-to-day decisions taken as services are delivered for them in their communities. Involving young people in participatory budgeting makes democracy real. It creates a clear link between their involvement and what happens as a result. It moves decisions that affect their lives away from being based on assumptions and towards being based on their first-hand experiences and insights. When budgets take into account their real needs, young people have opportunities to benefit from improved outcomes in health, education, family support, leisure and youth provision, safety and their transition into the world of work. This level of engagement can endure over time and translate into greater participation in electoral voting.



Being part of the process will also contribute to, and encourage, the development of young peoples' active citizenship and life skills. The workshops and youth-led activities detailed in the second part of this toolkit can build vital skills in numeracy, literacy and communication, working with others, self-management and reflection.

Taking part challenges young people to identify and engage with the issues they think are important, and with other groups in their community, thinking creatively to generate new ideas, turning these into practical proposals for improvement and presenting their case. In voting for proposals, they must think critically about each option and evaluate how it can contribute to their vision of a better future. This may not only enhance their personal development but also their contribution to the development of their communities and an understanding of the need and process for prioritising resources.

The financial aspect of taking part will contribute to developing the skills and knowledge that young people need to make more informed, long-term decisions about their own finances. This will assist them in developing skills in managing their money more effectively in the future and can contribute to breaking the poverty cycle.

For participatory budgeting to work for young people in communities, it must address the issues that really matter for them and involve them in ways that are meaningful and realistic.

Reflect:

- Ask young people what areas of our provision affect them the most?
- How are young people most in need of better outcomes from the services we provide?
- How can participatory budgeting improve how we engage with young people of different ages?
- What are the barriers to their participation?

Take action:

- Use template sheet number 2 in the back of this pack to capture your ideas and focus your planning. →

WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN MY ORGANISATION?

When participatory budgeting is done well, the budget areas covered will often increase over time. This enables more areas of provision to benefit from better, community-directed outcomes. But it's important to start in the right place.

Many indicators from within your community will direct you towards potential starting points in your budget. Wherever you begin, you will need to balance internal limitations against the bold steps that can help your community to see the process as real and meaningful.

These limitations may include a lack of understanding of participatory budgeting, natural resistance to change, resistance to outside or non-specialist involvement in decision-making, or simply where personalities may clash on either side of the debate.

This means that before they will support any extension of participatory budgeting into their budgets – or their lives – internal and external stakeholders may need to feel that the process will work for them. But when you start in the right place, you can create advocates for participatory budgeting in your organisation and your community.

What is 'the right place' for your organisation? The right choice will depend on your unique circumstances. In the past, participatory budgeting has been used to allocate spending on areas including crime and anti-social behaviour, the environment, young people, and activities supporting health, but new projects continually show how other budget areas can benefit. There may be an area where you feel you know least about your residents' real needs or wants. Or it may be an area where you most urgently need to improve outcomes. It may be a small percentage of a major, core budget area, or a small, more discretionary fund. (To date, many budgets have been fairly small or have represented a modest percentage of total service spending.)

The scale of your chosen budget area will shape your approach, the model you use and the steps and activities through which you deliver your project. The seven-step cycle described in the introduction is a good starting point. You may wish to adapt this to suit your circumstances.

As you consider your options remember that participatory budgeting is collaborative. Involve colleagues and young people where necessary as you identify and narrow down your options. Are their views consistent with yours, or do they differ? Why is this? Do views alter as you move up or down within a department? What about between front-line workers and their office-based colleagues, or between people with different backgrounds and career experience? Your community, including and aided by young people, will tell you their priorities within your chosen budget area. But could they also point you towards which areas these need to be?

Reflect:

- What areas do I think would be appropriate for piloting and developing our approach to participatory budgeting?
- What factors are driving my ideas? Am I being bold or cautious?
- What are the views of my colleagues?
- How do they differ from mine, and from each other, and why?
- How do they differ at different levels within departments, and why?

Take action:

- Consider how you could use the ideas in this toolkit to involve your community in identifying budget areas that can help you pilot and develop your approach to participatory budgeting.
- Use the table on sheet number 3 to gather your ideas for suitable budget areas. You can fill in the other columns later.

WHAT ARE THE LIMITS. AND WHY?

Participatory budgeting shares control of selected budget decisions with your community. How will those who stand to lose it respond to this change?

Any budget involves risk. Successful budget control is based, in part, on having the right skills and experience to anticipate and manage financial risks. Your colleagues at all levels in your organisation provide these skills and experiences.

Participatory budgeting involves community representatives working alongside your technical experts. At first, this will be to explain the limitations of the available budget. Then together, they will develop and plan proposals to tackle the issues that the community has identified as most important, and on which the wider community can vote. This means that technical experts remain fully involved, just as they would be in your normal processes.

However, your project can stall if colleagues perceive it as handing control to people not qualified to make the decisions with which they are entrusted. Internal perceptions of the risk of participatory budgeting may define the boundaries of what is possible both in financial terms (deciding first where money is spent, and how much) and in the actions taken and outcomes that they create (working together to design projects that shape how the money is then spent). This means identifying and responding to these risks at all stages of your participatory budgeting process.

At the same time, elected representatives may view participatory budgeting as reducing their role and adding complications and costs. But their support is vital for the process to have legitimacy. Remember that they are already trying to support their constituents using limited funds. But with the direct input of community, they can be helped to make their votes work harder by supporting what they know for sure really matters. Participatory budgeting is a form of direct democracy that can complement and inform your existing democratic processes and decisions, not bypass them.

To make participatory budgeting a success, you must identify who may object, their reasons, and the impact that this might have on your ability to identify suitable budgets. Such objections may even be at strategic level if your community's wishes do not sit well with your objectives. But uncovering this information creates an important opportunity for realigning your organisation. By tackling each objection you can remove these limits and increase your opportunities for improving your performance.

Reflect:

- Remember that participatory budgeting should fully involve your technical experts in developing potential solutions, just as much as in more traditional approaches. How can you reassure both your experts and the service delivery managers who are responsible for implementing their recommendations?
- Remember that participatory budgeting captures the insights of the very people the budget is meant to help. How could these external perspectives reduce your budget risk, and how best can you explain this internally?
- What information will internal stakeholders need to reassure them? Where can you – or they – retain the right to 'draw the line'?
- How best should you communicate this internally to foster a productive discussion?

Take action:

- Complete the table on sheet number 4 to record your ideas about the risks that people may attach to participatory budgeting.
- Read the next two sections and then use the grid on sheet number 4 to plan how you will sell participatory budgeting across all levels of your organisation. ➡

WHERE DOES RESPONSIBILITY LIE?

Participatory budgeting does not shift responsibility out of your organisation and into your community. It brings your community into your organisation and shares with them the authority to make agreed decisions.

Technical staff remain accountable to their service delivery managers. Managerial staff remain accountable to elected representatives. And they, in turn, remain accountable to their electorate. Participatory budgeting is not an excuse for passing blame or blurring responsibilities. It is not opening the door to runaway decision-making.

And so ultimately, responsibility remains at the top – as it should. But with the right support, all those who participate can be helped to take on their own, related responsibility: to act with integrity.

Participatory budgeting takes political will to begin, sustain and then to ensure that the projects your community chooses are delivered. It can strengthen the roles of managerial, technical and delivery staff, and of elected representatives, by enhancing their ability to create positive change and increasing the meaning they can draw from their work. This can help to transform political will at the top into real transformation at community level.

But it is important to develop and communicate well a shared understanding of how participatory budgeting is compatible with your organisation's existing systems for control and accountability. This needs clear guidelines on what will happen and what won't, developed together alongside the flexibility to change as your approach develops and your experience builds.

Reflect:

- How can I help technical and managerial staff to identify ways in which participatory democracy can strengthen their roles?
- How can I involve them in the process in ways that enhance their ability to draw meaning from their work?
- How can I help elected representatives to see that participatory budgeting can enhance their ability to support their constituents, without eroding their direct links with their community?
- How can I involve them in the process in ways that enhance their accountability?
- What steps should I take to create a clear understanding of where responsibility lies as we include participatory budgeting?
- How can I help participants to understand their responsibility to act with integrity?

Take action:

- Map out the involvement you need to establish clear guidelines and embed participatory democracy within your existing systems for control and accountability.
- Consider how best to engage key internal groups to create a rich dialogue through which you can develop shared guidelines that support participatory budgeting.

HOW CAN WE EXPLORE DIFFERENT TRADE-OFFS AND OUTCOMES?

Any participatory approach to decision-making must balance differing views both within your organisation and within young people across your community. Managing these tensions means understanding their roots and using this understanding to work together to identify the common ground on which you can take concrete steps for action. Resolving tension means using the selected budget to create outcomes with which everyone is happy.

When you share the decision-making process you share the outcomes. Getting there will involve trade-offs, concessions and consensus building. When approached badly, this negotiation can create divisions. But done well, it can build social cohesion just as the outcomes can build social capital.

What does 'done well' mean here? Effective participatory budgeting manages the expectations of everyone involved. When people are realistic in what they promise and what they expect, it is easier to work towards an outcome where everyone is happy with the result. It means creating clear expectations that people will approach discussions with openness and honesty, listening to and valuing different perspectives, exploring all options and seeking a shared solution, not a 'win' over an opposing group or person.

You may need to support this by training facilitators from within the groups that will be present and using them to help groups find areas of common ground.

Within your organisation and across your community there will be areas of agreement and areas of disagreement. These may seem obvious choices on which to focus. But between them, there will be grey areas where there is no clear direction or conflicting views on the right course of action. These are areas of provision where people may be willing to accept trade-offs and concessions as long as the process moves broadly in the right direction. Often there may be multiple 'right' outcomes with which everyone can agree.

Treat these grey areas as opportunities to develop your organisation's understanding of its mission: participatory budgeting can clarify expectations, both internal and external, transforming grey areas into clear opportunities.

Reflect:

- Select one or more broad budget areas that could benefit from participatory budgeting. What are the grey areas from your organisation's perspective? What are they from your communities' perspectives?
- Why is the right course of action not clear to you or your community?
- What information would transform this grey area into a clear course of action?
- How can you obtain and share this information, internally and externally?

Take action:

- Consider how you can involve colleagues in identifying grey areas that could benefit from participatory budgeting.
- Plan how you will bring people together in a shared conversation that can turn an area of conflict into a shared opportunity to learn more.
- Plan how you will share your findings internally and across your communities as you agree where and how you will start to use participatory budgeting.



HOW CAN WE PLAN FOR THE COSTS AND TIMESCALES NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THE INVOLVEMENT WE NEED?

Participatory budgeting is an opportunity to build inclusion and representation across your community – including young people. This means tailoring your approach so you support young people from within each section of your community in ways that are appropriate for their needs and their existing level of engagement.

Participatory budgeting usually manages a very small proportion of a total budget. But for decisions to have legitimacy, they must be made by a group that is broadly representative of the people they affect.

To create this group you may need to combine quantitative data, for example from the census, housing register and other demographic sources, with qualitative information from people who work with each group to provide support or deliver services.

You may find that there are gaps in the understanding you need. To fill these gaps you may need to think of new ways to find out more about these groups so that you can base your thinking on facts, not assumptions. This may take time and effort but is an investment in building your understanding of your community.

Use your information to create targets for participation from within each group that are proportional to their presence in your community. You may even discover that the people who may be affected are different to who you thought, causing you to modify your initial ideas for your targets.

Participation can apply to groups as well as individuals, including charities, voluntary groups and faith groups that can represent the views of their members and the people they help or represent. Involving these groups can be a way to reach deeper into your community. You may already devote more time to reach and include 'hard to reach' groups in your existing practice. Embed and build on this work: reaching these groups may still be difficult, but their inclusion can represent a step-change in your ability to understand and meet their needs. ➡

As your community votes to select areas for participatory budgeting; is represented as selected members work with technical colleagues to develop proposals; and finally votes to choose the most important projects, remember that you will need to balance the voting rights of organisations against those of individuals. But remember also that groups can gain a disproportionate vote if the wider community does not participate as individuals: both are vital.

Consider each group separately using what you already know. You may need to budget for:

- staff and community training
- the hours that will be spent working with each group to promote participatory budgeting and deliver participation (which could include working out of hours at weekends and in the evening)
- the costs of communicating with each group in appropriate ways
- involving your technical staff in developing proposals on which to vote
- transporting some groups to meetings and awareness-raising events.

Some groups may take more investment than others to deliver the same level of participation. Some may also require a longer timescale to do so. Again, build on your existing experience of working with and supporting these groups. For a simplified approach, consider focusing on budgets that support a more tightly defined group, such as young people of a particular age group, or in a defined community or area.

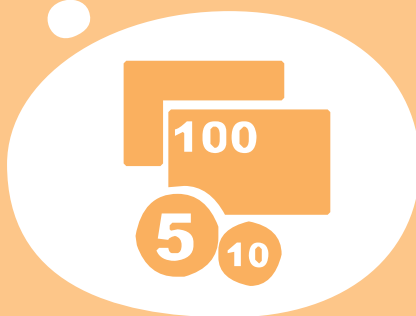
Reflect:

- Which groups do we need to involve, for participatory budgeting to be legitimate and representative?
- How large is the budget we wish to manage in this way, in total and in percentage terms?
- What might this require in terms of overall participation?
- What do we do if participation is below this level?
- What is our experience of working with these groups to promote inclusion and involvement?
- What has succeeded and what has not?
- What are the implications for budgets and timescales?
- How can we share the total cost of participatory budgeting between support for different sectors of our community?
- How can we plan our activities so that each group is ready for participation at the right time in our budget cycle?

Take action:

- Identify priority groups to support through discussions with colleagues and elected representatives.
- Find out from colleagues what needs to be done to engage these groups, and what this means for timings and budget.
- Agree a budget to support participatory budgeting, to include internal and external costs for supporting each group as well as for core activities.

LEADING PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



How can I help young people to participate? How can we use technology to help us? How can we deliver a project through a series of workshops or a one-day event? Think about how you can best engage young people at every stage of the process, make your participatory budgeting project a success and learn from what you achieve together.

LEADING PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Much of the preceding section has had an internal focus: it will have helped you to identify a possible model for participatory budgeting projects in your community, map out potential issues and influencing factors and planned how you can pave the way for embedding participatory decision-making within your organisation.

This section has an external focus: it includes further tools to help you reflect and identify how you can best engage young people at every stage of the process.

The final part of this section, 'Delivering participatory budgeting' provides step-by-step guides to activities for your colleagues to adapt and use as you put your participatory budgeting project into practice.



HOW CAN I HELP YOUNG PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE?

There are different ways to involve young people in participatory budgeting.

You may focus on a budget area that only affects young people. In this case, you might work with selected young people to reach their peers within the different groups to which they belong.

You may instead focus on a budget area that affects people of all ages, in which case you may wish to involve young people as a way to reach all members of the groups to which they belong – including 'hard to reach' groups like those who are less engaged – and enlist them to act as catalysts for wider participation.

Whatever your approach, you must ensure that you support young people at every stage of the project.

Depending on the organisation, young people in hard to reach groups should already form part of your planning. This may include strategies to reach out to them directly. It may also include ways that they can in turn help you to reach family members and other adults in their group or community.

The final section of this toolkit provides activity ideas to help you involve young people in each stage of the participatory budgeting process. But before taking action, it's important to reflect on what you need to achieve in each of the main stages in the process.

Your ideas for communicating may already form part of this process.

Reflect:

- What budget areas are we aiming to allocate through participatory budgeting?
- Are we going to involve young people only, or do young people form one of a number of groups who should have a say in this budget?
- Are we going to invite young people to participate as individuals, as a way to engage with and involve their peers, and/or as a way to engage with their families and other adult members of their groups or communities?
- How do we need to involve them at each stage of the participatory budget cycle?

- What support will young people need at each stage?
- How will this vary by group? (Think back to your communication ideas.)
- How do we already work with and reach young people, and how can these be used to support participatory budgeting?

Take action:

- Use sheet number 5 in the back cover to capture your ideas. Use these to adapt the activity ideas to suit the young people whom you wish to involve, and your wider goals for participatory budgeting.

HOW CAN WE USE TECHNOLOGY TO HELP US?

Young people communicate differently to many decision-makers in organisations, so it's important you engage them in the right way.

Where access is possible, technology can help you to reach young people and create awareness and involvement, identify opportunities, share information, make decisions and share news of the outcomes. At each stage of the process technology can, when done well, present opportunities to save time and money.

To do this you will need to work with colleagues within your organisation, and with the young people themselves: they can help you understand what works and what doesn't, and how to reach them in ways to which they will be responsive.

It is best not to start with internal discussions. Talk first with young people: How do they use the web? What about social media applications, like Twitter, blogs and Facebook? Show them your ideas for how you would like them to be involved at each stage, what you need to communicate to them, and what you seek in return. What ideas can they suggest? What ideas do they think should be your priorities at each stage of the cycle?

Armed with their suggestions, discuss opportunities with your colleagues. This might include budget holders for your website and communications programmes, the education and youth service, your technical team and even your safeguarding or child protection team.

Remember that participatory budgeting will follow a cycle that may be a few weeks long, or last up to a year: anything you begin, such as a blog, Facebook page or Twitter feed, must be sustained across this time. Anything that invites feedback, interaction, postings or other user-generated content may require moderation, acknowledgement or a personal response.

Reflect:

- How do we already communicate with young people using technology?
- Is this one-way or two-way?
- Do we think this works?
- Do the young people we aim to reach think it works?
- Who should I involve when developing new ways to interact with young people using technology?
- What are the implications for resources, safeguarding and democracy?
- How can I gather young peoples' ideas for using technology to support participatory budgeting?
- How can I reach their families and other adults in their communities?
- What are the timescales for developing and implementing new ideas?

Take action:

- Use sheet number 6 in the back cover to capture your ideas. ➡

REFLECTING ON PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

How can we reflect on the success of the process for all involved?

Reflecting together, the final stage in the participatory budgeting cycle is vital. This will help you learn from your shared experience, improve your practice and effectiveness in future projects, and influence how you reach and communicate with groups in your community, including young people.

The ideas you have already captured should identify a range of internal and external stakeholder groups that will be involved technically or democratically in the project. Each group will have a different idea of what success means for the process and in the outcomes. Your reflection process needs to involve each group, capture the right feedback and share this with other groups to create a shared understanding of what went well and what could be improved. This sharing process is a core component of participatory budgeting. It is important that different groups, especially those inside your organisation, do not treat reflection as a private activity. If groups do not share ideas, you will find it hard to learn from and improve your approach in future years or budget cycles.

Reflect:

- How can I group internal and external participants into meaningful groups for reflecting and feeding back?
- What might each group's definition of success be, and why?
- How can I use reflection to improve understanding between groups?
- What existing processes for review, control and feedback can I incorporate or adapt?
- What new processes will I need and how can I integrate these?

Take action:

- List the people you will need to involve to create and deliver a meaningful feedback process.
- Create a list of key indicators that everyone involved can agree and understand.
- Use sheet number 7 in the back cover to capture your ideas for working with each group – to gather and share their ideas.
- Use these ideas to adapt the workshop sessions for gathering and sharing feedback with young people.



DELIVERING PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

The preceding sections of this Toolkit have:

- introduced and explained participatory budgeting
- set out a rationale for a rights-based approach to participatory budgeting in Wales
- identified success factors: prior conditions, guiding principles and key factors that can indicate successful projects
- used reflection points and tables to help introduce participatory budgeting in your community, identify the right model to use and plan your participatory budgeting projects.

The ideas that follow are practical activities that you can carry out with young people at relevant stages of your participatory budgeting cycle. They include an example of how to deliver a one-day project.

Your project might be as simple as helping young people to allocate part of their school or youth centre budget. Or it might be as complex as involving them in major decisions about regeneration and developing public spaces or facilities. Depending on your approach, these stages, and the activities that support them, may take place in a single day or be spread out over up to a year.

If you are involving young people in a wider project that reaches across your community, you may wish to include these activities in larger events at each stage. But if your project consists of a one-day workshop to agree how a budget is spent, voting on a range of pre-costed ideas, you will need to consider how to attract and engage them first, and then how you might come together again to reflect – or do this using technology – once their decisions are put into action.

Remember that you will have a range of partners through which to deliver these activities, including schools, youth groups and other community or group settings that can include faith groups and the voluntary sector. Develop your approach together. The ideas that follow are frameworks on which to build your own approach:

- Use your notes from earlier sections to adapt each one to suit your project.
- Identify how you will manage and support young people in each activity and stage.
- Again, take what is relevant and will work for you.
- Use the ideas as starting points to develop your own, more detailed plans and timings. →



STAGE 1: PROJECT DESIGN AND IDENTIFY PRIORITIES

HOW CAN YOUNG PEOPLE HELP TO DESIGN THE PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROJECT AND IDENTIFY PRIORITIES?

Workshop: 2 hours / half day / evening

A workshop is an ideal way to introduce the concept of participatory budgeting and include young people in how you plan each stage of your project.

Prepare

- Identify which groups of young people you want to attend and how many you aim to reach.
- Choose the right setting, location and time for your workshop.
- Identify the best ways in which to publicise the workshop and encourage attendance.
- Ensure you support hard to reach groups so they can be included.
- Prepare appropriate materials to use during your workshop, including slides, information and materials to gather ideas and feedback or to take home and share.

Deliver

- Welcome the young people to the workshop. Explain that you want to include them in your budget decisions because they can bring knowledge and experience that can help to make the best decision.
- Briefly explain the idea of participatory budgeting and, if appropriate, outline the seven stages.
- Introduce the budget you want to allocate and explain what it is used for, why it has been chosen for a participatory approach, and your organisation's goals in spending this budget.
- Split the young people into smaller groups, ideally that mix up young people from different sectors of your community.
- If you wish, use a short icebreaker activity to help the young people get to know one another in their groups.

- Ask groups to discuss what might be most important to them when this budget is spent. Circulate and facilitate/manage their discussions. What would they most like to improve, and why? How could success be measured? Groups share their ideas, for example by providing a list of five things they would like to improve or make happen, and a list of success criteria.
- Combine ideas to create shared lists of priorities and criteria. Explain that these will be used to generate costed ideas from which young people will be able to choose which ones are implemented, up to the limit of the budget available.
- Mix the groups up again. For this activity, you may want to allow young people to work in natural groups that reflect their sector of your community. Show the stages of participatory budgeting. In their groups, the young people come up with ideas for how to reach and include their peers and/or their wider community at each stage, including using technology. Groups share their ideas. This time, identify lists of ideas that are shared across different groups, and ideas that appear to be preferred by just one or two groups.
- As a whole group, discuss how each idea might work (for example, Tweeting, face-to-face visits, leaflets, news items etc.).
- Share the main points that you have learned, identified or agreed, including their priorities, success criteria and ideas for communication.
- Encourage the young people to provide feedback on how useful they found the workshop, using an appropriate, informal method.
- Explain the next steps in your project, the timescale and how you might want the young people to stay involved, and how you will share with them what you have learned in the workshop.
- Congratulate the young people on their contribution and thank them for attending.

Follow-up

- Share the results of your workshop in the ways suggested by the young people.
- Share them internally across your organisation.
- Encourage the young people to communicate these with their peers and wider community (see next).

STAGE 2: ENGAGING (AND THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT)

HOW CAN YOUNG PEOPLE HELP YOU TO ENGAGE WITH THEIR PEERS AND WIDER COMMUNITY AT EACH STAGE OF THE PROJECT – AND HOW CAN YOU ENGAGE WITH THEM?

Adult and youth-led activity ideas

Use these ideas to support youth-led activities in your project. While 'engaging' is a specific stage in participatory budgeting, it also needs to be continuous so that participation is sustained throughout the process.

Step 1: Engaging

- Create a web page for the project to share news, information and allow young people to register and become involved, for example to send in ideas and vote online.
- Use social media: create a Facebook page, Twitter feed or blog.
- Interview young people and use their ideas in news releases for your local media. Encourage interviews for TV and radio.
- Invite young people to act as ambassadors in their school, youth group or community, or ask each group to elect a representative. Bring ambassadors together to build team spirit. Challenge them to get their peers involved using their own materials, give them leaflets and posters to share and put up, and invite them to contribute to your social media activity.

Step 2: Identifying priorities

- Train or otherwise help ambassadors or elected young people to work alongside adults to explain the budget area and value, gather ideas for spending priorities and feed their findings back to the project team or leader.
- Put options online and encourage young people to vote on them via traditional communication channels and social media.
- Invite selected young people to report back face to face, for example attending a meeting at your organisation. Help them to feed back their experiences to their peers.



Step 3: Generating ideas

- Invite young people to attend a workshop (see later stage) where they can work alongside your technical staff to draft proposals that you can then cost and present back.
- Hold a competition to come up with ideas for you to cost. Involve local media, your community partners and your social media activities to promote this. Entries could be written, drawings, or videos that interview their peers and are filmed on location.
- Invite young people to comment on your Facebook page or tweet you with ideas.
- Create 'idea walls' for your project in youth clubs and other settings, on which young people write their ideas or add sticky notes etc.

Step 4: Deciding

- Invite selected young people to a session where you explain your costed proposals and provide a display or information sheet on each one. Young people return to their settings and share the ideas with their peers.
- Ask young people to explain each proposal in their own words and use these to create a web page, Facebook page and Twitter account for each idea.
- Ask young people to vote online, 'like' their preferred idea on Facebook or tweet at it on Twitter.
- Consider voting by text using a standard rate number for each option.
- Publicise a 'have your say' day to create an event around deciding (see later). Young people can organise a polling day in their setting, with each option being promoted by its supporters, and a paper voting system, or encourage peers to vote online or using other technology-led methods.
- Invite young people to work alongside your colleagues to count votes from each source and to publicise the outcome using the different channels and media you are using, including local media. →

Step 5: Monitoring delivery

- Ask selected young people (ambassadors, or elected) to gather informal feedback from their peers as each proposal is delivered or implemented, to scrutinise what is happening as a result of their decisions – including when there is no progress.
- Encourage ongoing feedback via your social media activities and the web.

Step 6: Reflecting and learning

- Using the success criteria they first identified, ask selected young people to canvass their peers on the outcomes of their decisions.
- Invite them to present their views directly to your organisation, for example at a council or committee meeting.
- Invite feedback via a form on your web page, a multiple-choice vote, and through your social media activities.
- Share the results by asking young people to report back, and feed back via the web etc.



STAGE 3: GENERATING IDEAS

HOW CAN YOUNG PEOPLE GENERATE IDEAS FOR PROJECTS?

Workshop: 2 hours / half day / evening

A workshop can allow young people to meet and work with your technical staff to generate and refine ideas for you to turn into costed proposals. This could be to refine your ideas, or as below, to generate them together.

Prepare

- Use the previous activity ideas to identify priorities for action in your chosen budget area and optionally, to gather young peoples' ideas for proposals that address them.
- Identify which groups of young people you want to attend and how many you aim to reach.
- Identify technical staff (finance, engineering, delivery managers etc.) who are relevant to your chosen budget area and who can help young people to focus and refine their ideas, and any training or preparation requirements. Ideally, you will need one person per small group of young people, although not all need to be there in a technical capacity – some can be youth workers etc.
- Choose the right setting, location and time for your workshop.
- Identify the best ways in which to publicise the workshop and encourage attendance.
- Ensure you support hard to reach groups so they can be included.
- Prepare appropriate materials to use during your workshop, including slides, information and materials on which young people can draw and write down their ideas and provide feedback.

Deliver

- Welcome the young people to the workshop. Explain that young people have already helped to identify what areas of spending are most important to them, and (if appropriate) have come up with ideas for projects.
- Introduce the technical staff and other adults who will help. Explain that the purpose of the workshop is to (come up with and) refine the ideas so that following the workshop, the technical team can turn them into costed proposals. It is on these that people will then vote to choose which ones get put into practice.
- If the young people need first to come up with ideas, explain any parameters, for example that they first need to agree a certain number of ideas that they will then work in groups to refine and improve.
- Split the young people into groups that as appropriate, mix up young people from different sectors of your community. If you wish, use a short icebreaker activity to help the young people get to know one another in their groups. Ideally there should be a 1:1 ratio between staff and groups.
- If required, groups first come up with initial ideas for a project that could address each priority, or of where there are only a few priorities, a few ideas for each one. Each group agrees which ideas it will put forward and shares these.
- Group similar ideas together and create a 'master list' of ideas. Put this to the vote: each young person (or group, for simplicity) can give each idea a score of 1 – 3. Total the scores for each idea and identify the top ten (if you want people to eventually vote on ten, for example). These are the ideas that groups will now refine and improve with the help of your staff. Briefly discuss each idea to ensure everyone understands it.

- Groups choose an idea to work on, or are assigned one at random. Remind groups that they are representing their peers and must think about what's right for everyone – not simply their own preferences. Working with an adult or technical expert, they discuss the idea and find ways to improve and build on it. Adults/technical experts can feed ideas into the groups, for example on cost implications or issues of delivery, design or practicality. You may wish to ask adults to swap groups periodically so the young people can get a range of perspectives on their idea. Groups make written notes and drawings and can briefly present back their refined ideas to the whole group. At this point you might review each idea with respect to any success criteria previously identified by young people.
- Gather the ideas up!
- Explain with the help of the technical experts, the next steps in your project, the timescale and how you might want the young people to stay involved, and how you will share with them the costed proposals.
- Encourage the young people to provide feedback on how useful they found the workshop, using an appropriate, informal method.
- Congratulate the young people on their contribution and thank them for attending. Encourage them to feed back their experiences to their peers.

Follow-up

- Share the costed-up proposals in the ways suggested by the young people.
- Share them internally across your organisation.
- Encourage the young people to get their peers to vote for their favourite. →

STAGE 4: DECIDING

HOW CAN YOUNG PEOPLE DECIDE WHICH PROJECTS TO FUND?

Event – timescale to suit

Use this activity in addition to other forms of voting, such as online or via your social media activity (see previous). You could hold the event in different locations on successive days, or hold multiple events on a single day.

Prepare

- Use the previous activity ideas to create worked-up ideas that your technical experts can turn into costed proposals.
- Create display materials to illustrate each one: a diagram, model or illustration, explanatory text (including how it addresses a priority), cost and timescale.
- Identify which groups of young people you want to attend and how many you aim to reach.
- Choose the right setting, location and time for your voting event(s).



- Identify the best ways in which to publicise the event(s) and encourage attendance.
- Ensure you support hard to reach groups so they can be included.
- Prepare a way for young people to vote on their preferred proposal(s) (e.g. a favourite, or their top three), for example by providing tokens they can place in a container by each option, a voting slip, or online using an internet-enabled laptop.

Deliver

- Set up stands or displays to show each proposal, making sure each one is given equal status, and your voting system (this could have a voting opportunity next to each proposal, or in one place as they leave).
- As young people arrive, welcome them and explain how they should review each proposal, considering its cost in relation to the total budget, and then how they can vote for their preference(s).
- You may wish to have staff who can circulate to answer questions.
- Thank young people as they leave and help them to cast their vote(s) if necessary.
- Involve selected young people in counting and recording the votes cast, and in adding these to the overall total.

Follow-up

- Once all events are over and votes counted, share the winning proposals in the ways suggested by the young people.
- Share them internally across your organisation and plan your next steps for delivery/implementation.
- Encourage the young people to follow progress using your news releases, online and social media activity, and to be a part of the reflection and learning process.

STAGE 5: REFLECTION AND LEARNING

HOW CAN YOUNG PEOPLE HELP US REFLECT ON THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT AND OF THEIR CHOSEN PROPOSALS?

Workshop: one hour

Use this activity in addition to other forms of reflecting or gathering feedback, such as online or via your social media activity (see previous). You could hold more than one workshop, as appropriate.

Prepare

- Gather evidence on each funded activity, as feedback, photos of sites etc. and by using the previous ideas.
- Identify which groups of young people you want to attend and how many you aim to reach.
- Choose the right setting, location and time for your workshop(s).
- Identify the best ways in which to publicise the workshop(s) and encourage attendance, including from young people who took part in previous stages.
- Ensure you support hard to reach groups so they can be included.
- Prepare slides or other materials to remind young people of the budget, priorities, proposals that were presented, which ones were voted for, and how this was done (workshops, publicity, social media etc.).

- Prepare a way for young people to provide their reflections and feedback, for example a simple form or way to record votes. This could include any combination of cline scales (ratings from 1 – 5, for example) emoticons, or open-ended questions, for example, as appropriate to the group.

Deliver

- Welcome the young people to the workshop. Explain that they are here to share their feedback and ideas for how together, you can all learn from taking part in a participatory budgeting project. You therefore want to know how they feel about the process they were a part of, and how successful they feel each funded project has been in meeting the criteria that they helped to identify at the start of the project.
- Remind the group of the budget and what priorities young people identified. Share also any success criteria that were drawn up.
- Show and briefly outline the full list of ideas that were costed up for people to vote on. Discuss how these were agreed and developed, for example if you held a stage 4 workshop.
- Show which ideas received the most votes and were put into practice (you may want to also link these to the budget available). Again, discuss the various ways in which young people voted and share any feedback from monitoring or scrutiny at stage 6.
- Either in small groups or together, discuss each 'winning' project and how it has turned out compared to expectations:
 - Is it addressing the right issues?
 - Is it having a positive impact?
 - What has worked?
 - What hasn't? →

- Share and gather ideas, either informally or by gathering views using a simple feedback mechanism for each project (see preparation).
- Review the process that you went through, for example discussing what happened at each stage and how young people were involved and supported. If you have data on participation and use of different media, share this. Using shows of hands or another method of your choice, gather young peoples' views on what they think worked well and what didn't, for example:
 - Your use of the web for sharing information
 - Workshops and events
 - Idea gathering
 - Voting
 - Interaction via social media
 - Working alongside adults
 - Using elected representatives or ambassadors
- Working in small groups, ask young people to come up with a list of ways to improve the process, for example to improve communication, raise participation levels or to improve decision-making. Each group could focus on a single stage or the whole process (you may need to support this with written materials). Groups share their ideas, for example as a top ten list of things to action.
- Congratulate the young people on their contribution and share the main findings of the workshop. Ask if they would be involved again, and if they would like to see greater use of participatory budgeting, and for what. Encourage them to feed back their experiences to their peers.

Follow-up

- Share feedback and what you have learned in the ways suggested by the young people.
- Share them internally across your organisation.
- Identify future projects that could benefit from participatory budgeting.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN ONE DAY

This outline shows how you can deliver the main elements of participatory budgeting in a single day, or less.

You will need to draw on the more detailed ideas in previous activities.

This approach also depends on having a pre-identified budget area and range of costed proposals on which to vote. Ideally, use the previous ideas to include young people in this preparation.

Prepare

- Identify a suitable budget area and the priorities that it should address.
- Draw up a range of costed proposals. In total, these can come to more than your budget. Consider how many proposals you want young people to vote 'into action' within your budget, and create proposals that offer a range of choices and combinations.
- Create presentation slides and other materials to explain participatory budgeting and displays or other materials to showcase each possible option.
- Plan how you will allow young people to vote on their preferred option(s).

Deliver

- Welcome the young people to the workshop. Explain that you want to include them in your budget decisions because they can bring knowledge and experience that can help to make the best decision. If appropriate, remind them that they may be representing a larger group and should make their decisions with the needs of their group in mind, not just based on their own preferences.
- Briefly explain the idea of participatory budgeting and if appropriate, outline the seven stages.
- Introduce the budget you want to allocate and explain what it is used for, why it has been chosen for a participatory approach, and your organisation's goals in spending this budget.
- Split the young people into smaller groups, ideally that mix up young people from different sectors of your community.
- If you wish, use a short icebreaker activity to help the young people get to know one another in their groups.
- Ask groups to discuss what might be most important to them when this budget is spent. Circulate and facilitate/manage their discussions. What would they most like to improve, and why? How could success be measured? Groups share their ideas, for example by providing a list of five things they would like to improve or make happen, and a list of success criteria. Ask them to bear this in mind when voting.
- Showcase each option, using a presentation or by allowing young people to circulate around an exhibition or display of each one. You may wish to have staff who can circulate to answer questions, or someone who will 'sell' each one to young people.

- Organise the young people back into groups and help them discuss each option in the light of their ideas for improvements and success. Which ones best meet their criteria?
- Using your preferred method, get the young people to vote on their preferred options(s). Invite some young people to help with vote counting.
- Share the results and discuss what the young peoples' preferences say about what is most important to them. Share any timescales for implementation and how young people can get involved in monitoring progress and outcomes.
- Encourage the young people to provide feedback on how useful they found the workshop, using an appropriate, informal method.
- Congratulate the young people on their contribution and share the main outcomes of the day. Ask if they would be involved again, and if they would like to see greater use of participatory budgeting, and for what. Encourage them to feed back their experiences to their peers.

Follow-up

- Share the decisions and feedback on the day in the ways suggested by the young people.
- Share them internally across your organisation.
- Implement and monitor each chosen project.
- Plan for and share how you will gather feedback and share learning once all projects are complete. ➡

SUGGESTED SLIDES FOR AN INTERNAL AWARENESS-RAISING POWERPOINT:

What is participatory budgeting?

Participatory budgeting enables people to make real decisions about how part of a public budget is spent.

It devolves decisions to the communities that they affect and can lead to more effective outcomes – especially for those most in need.

How is it good for our communities?

Participatory budgeting involves people in detailed conversations about what matters most to them.

Different groups can share ideas and build a common vision of their future.

This can build social cohesion, just as the outcomes can build social capital.

How is it good for us?

It can:

- enhance existing electoral democracy
- strengthen peoples' roles and understanding
- build insight, transparency and legitimacy.

How does participatory budgeting work?

Seven stages diagram as per page 4.

How can young people be involved?

Young people can:

- identify spending areas that matter to them
- tell us what would really make a difference in their lives
- help us reach their peers
- help us reach adults in their communities.

How can young people benefit?

Young people can benefit from the outcomes of participatory budgeting, and also from taking part.

They can:

- benefit from spending decisions that reflect their real needs
- experience democracy in action
- become more engaged with local politics
- build skills and confidence that will help them in learning, life and work.

What are the opportunities?

Participatory budgeting can be used at any scale, for example:

- Small grants of a few thousand pounds, from a 'pot' of £50k, to small organisations that deliver activities and services for young people.
- Involving young people in how to spend £20k in a village.
- Involving young people in how to allocate £40M of Big Lottery Grants.

Absolute amounts vary, but each represents a small percentage of the overall budget.

What are the limits?

- Internal objections may come from managers, technical staff or elected representatives.
- Communities must be willing and able to become involved.
- Internal and external support is vital for participatory budgeting to be seen as legitimate.

How do we engage and communicate with young people?

We need to go to where young people are, not wait for them to come to us:

- Use community partners, including youth service, schools and community groups.
- We also need to reach individuals.
- Communicate in their terms: involve social media and informal methods as well as traditional media and news.

Where do we start?

We need an internal conversation to:

- build support
- identify budget areas
- identify where we need to invest resources or time.

... and external conversations to:

- engage young people
- identify budget areas
- find out what will work for them.

SIGNPOSTING:

EXPLORE THE WEB LINKS BELOW FOR IDEAS OF HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR TEACHING OF PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING.

What is it Participatory Budgeting and how does it work?

- www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/about
- www.peopleandparticipation.net/display/Methods/Participatory+Budgeting
- www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/participatorybudgeting
- www.thepeoplesbudget.org.uk/what/howpbworks/

Put your questions to an expert

- www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/faq/test-ask-an-expert

Participatory Budgeting in action worldwide

- parkslope.patch.com/articles/with-participatory-budgeting-you-pick-the-projects
- www.nydailynews.com/new-york/queens/rockaway-broad-channel-residents-vote-spend-1-million-article-1.1051682?localLinksEnabled=false
- www.guardian.co.uk/local-government-network/2011/aug/12/participatory-budgeting-localism-big-society

Resources

- www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/documents/citizenship%20knows%20no%20age.pdf
- www.c-s-p.org/flyers/978-1-4438-1722-6-sample.pdf

pfeg (Personal Finance Education Group) has a host of resources to support these topics, including **Let's Get Functional | What went wrong with the prom?** You can view this resource and more at **www.pfeg.org**

WELSH GOVERNMENT

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING TOOLKIT.