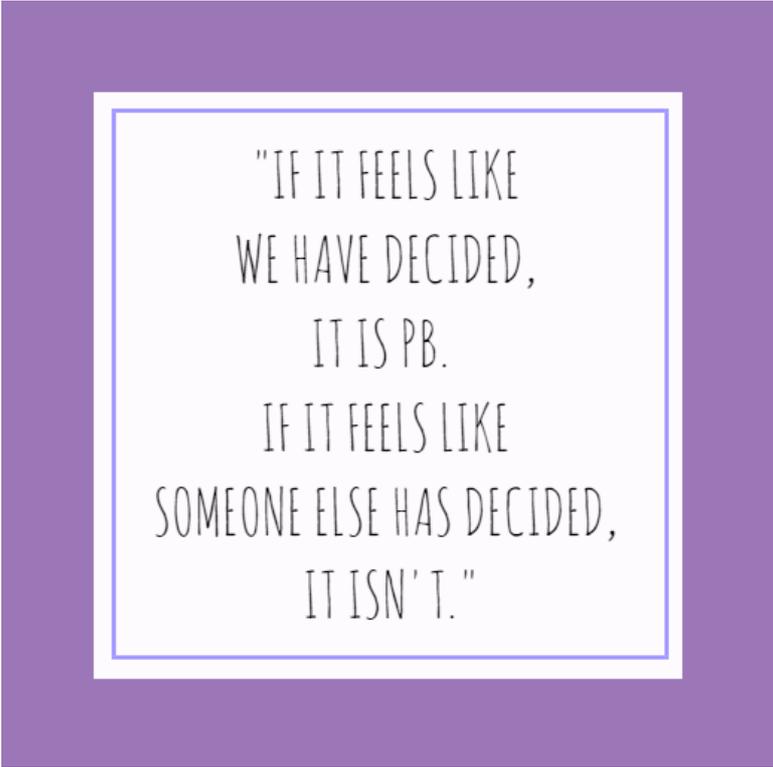

Participatory Budgeting in Fife



"IF IT FEELS LIKE
WE HAVE DECIDED,
IT IS PB.
IF IT FEELS LIKE
SOMEONE ELSE HAS DECIDED,
IT ISN' T."

Summary

Participatory budgeting (PB) can be defined, in simple terms, as **local people deciding on how to allocate part of a public budget**. It is therefore more than consultation.

Between 2010 and 2017 Fife has undertaken 25 separate Participatory Budgeting processes, distributing a total of £850,460 to local groups and projects. Through this we have developed experience and capacity in and with local communities in using PB as a method of engagement.

Participatory Budgeting in Fife, as with many other areas in Scotland, has mainly focused on small grant giving rather than involving the public in decisions on mainstream budgets. There is an aspiration in Scotland for 1% of a local authority's budget to be allocated through PB.

Through use of online methods we have demonstrated that it is possible to deliver PB at scale, but an approach like this would need to be resourced. In looking to scale up PB in Fife, there are a number of areas of mainstream budgets - aspects of the Transportation, Education and Capital budgets - which could fit well with a PB approach. Some suggestions are given as to how this approach could be further developed to support decentralisation and community empowerment ambitions.

There is a need for high level buy in and acceptance of PB as a way of working. There needs to be a commitment to resource such an approach, and this does require continuing to build capacity and provide the leadership and direction needed.

There is a need to develop a framework for a coordinated approach to the expansion of Participatory Budgeting in Fife, and outline a realistic timeline for scaling up Participatory Budgeting across Fife.

Participatory Budgeting in Fife

2010 to 2017

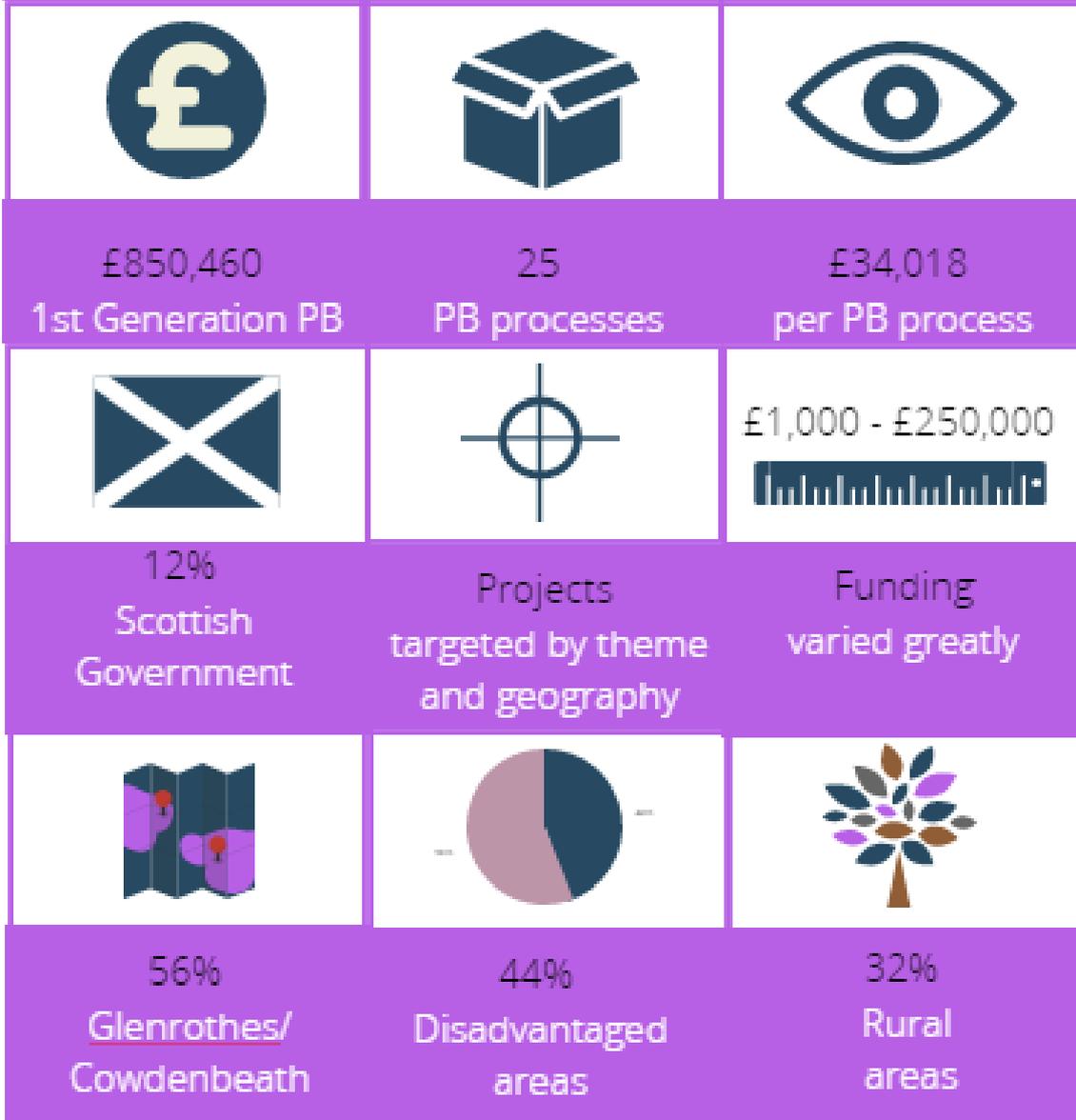


Figure 1 – Key figures on Participatory Budgeting in Fife 2010 to 2017

Involving the public in the design and delivery of services

Involving the public in the design and delivery of services is essential to transforming our public services, according to the Christie Commission on the future delivery of public services, and the Commission on Local Democracy.

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a method for involving the public in decisions about local budgets, and as such is part of our wider community engagement approach. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 provides a range of new powers to strengthen the voices of communities in the decisions that matter to them. It makes particular provisions on participation in public decision making, and the role that Participatory Budgeting can play in this. Aspirations in relation to PB are being raised, both locally and nationally, laying down a challenge as to the ambition and scale of Participatory Budgeting in Fife.

Fairer Fife Commission

“Fife Partnership should invest in a strong local pilot for devolution by identifying a local area to receive significant public expenditure to be devolved to locality level and use participatory budgeting to guide spending.”

Fairness Matters Report, 2015

Aspiration for PB in Scotland

“I want us to be ambitious in what we do which is why we are committed to ensuring local authorities have a target of giving at least 1% of their budget to Community Choices. This amounts to tens of millions of pounds which will be in the hands of local people to decide how best to spend that money in their communities, on their priorities.”

Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Local Government and Housing, 2016

Fife has been at the forefront of developments of PB in Scotland, both as an early adopter of PB methods, and in testing the boundaries. It was one of the first local authorities in Scotland to trial Participatory Budgeting as an approach to involving the community directly in decisions that affect their local area. Fife has recently had access to consultancy support via PB Partners - funded by the Scottish Government and to also trial digital approaches. Fife has experience of using Participatory Budgeting approaches as part of the design and delivery of local community plans and also in partnership with Coalfields Regeneration Trust / Community Futures and the Scottish Government Community Choices initiative.

Locally, a clear and shared political commitment both to decentralisation and to participatory Budgeting has been articulated:

Programme for Administration 2017

Further develop local community planning and community participation in the council's budget setting process through a wider participatory budgeting approach
Devolve further decision making and budgets to Area Committee

It is timely to take stock and reflect on our experience of PB, what our aspirations are in the context of new duties around community empowerment, and the direction that Fife may wish to take going forward.

Participatory Budgeting Principles

Our approach to Participatory Budgeting in Fife is based on the following principles:

1. Local Ownership	Residents should be involved in setting budget priorities and identifying projects for public spend in their area wherever possible.
2. Direct Involvement	PB should involve direct as well as representative engagement wherever possible.
3. Support for representative democracy	Participation mechanisms such as PB should be seen as supporting representative democracy rather than undermining it. Councillors hold a unique position as community advocates and champions. PB can increase citizens' trust of councillors and boost the role of ward councillors.
4. Mainstream Involvement	Over time PB processes should move towards residents being involved in decisions over mainstream budgets (as opposed to only small grants processes).
5. Accessibility	Participants must have good and clear access to PB processes.
6. Transparency	PB 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.
7. Deliberation	PB processes should take citizens beyond personal choice and involve real deliberation around budget decisions
8. Empowerment	PB 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. Citizens, officers, councillors and partners should plan and lead PB events together, demonstrating local people's empowerment. Evaluation should explore how well PB has empowered people. Good capacity-building is essential for good community empowerment and should always be used in PB processes.
9. Shared responsibility	PB should build common purpose and a commitment from all stakeholders.

Source: Sayer, 2015

How Participatory Budgeting in Fife has developed

PB in Fife has developed organically over time, starting with small scale pilot processes such as Community Gains, Glenrothes, to more recently, large scale piloting of online tools for democratic engagement through Oor Bit, Cowdenbeath.

Fife has a decentralised structure, based on seven areas. PB as a method has developed very much in this context, rather than as a centralised or Fife-wide approach. Over time, there has been increasing take-up of PB across areas. There have been 25 processes across five of the seven areas of Fife. In particular, PB has become an accepted method of engagement on aspects of Area Budgets.

Individual PB processes have tended to focus on encouraging the local community to propose projects relating to a particular theme. The main themes have been Community Engagement, Community Safety, Futures, Local environment and Young People. Minor themes have included The Arts, Heritage, Tourism, Local economy and Access to services.



Figure 2 – Word cloud of Themes from Fife Participatory Budgeting Initiatives

Looking across the 25 different PB initiatives in Fife over the last seven years, the scale of funding has varied from £1,000: PB in Aberdour to £250,000: Oor Bit, Cowdenbeath (an average of £34,018 per initiative).

A timeline of the development of PB in Fife by area is shown in Figure 3 overleaf. A full list of PB processes can be found in Appendix 1.

Timeline for development of Participatory Budgeting in Fife

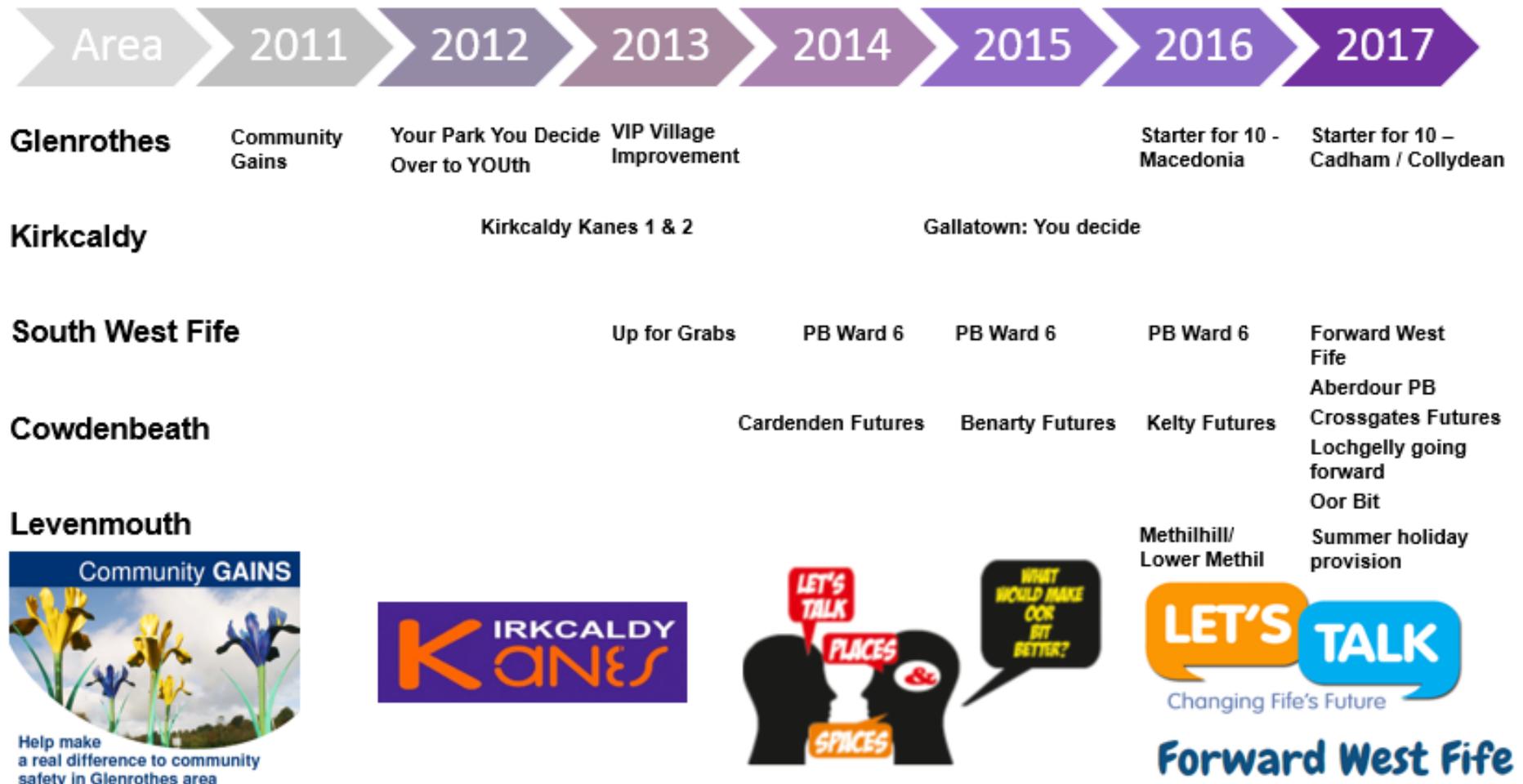


Figure 3 – Timeline for development of Participatory Budgeting in Fife, 2010 to 2017

Since 2010, more than £850,000 has been decided in Fife through Participatory Budgeting, an average of £121,520 per year. This has mainly taken the form of small grant giving to community groups to develop or design local services.

The bulk of the funding for PB in Fife has come from Area Budgets, with some funding coming from external sources such as the Scottish Government (ie Community Choices Fund) and the Coalfields Regeneration Trust. Cowdenbeath and Glenrothes Areas have been most active in adopting PB, accounting for 56% of all PB activity in Fife, and 70% of total funding to date.

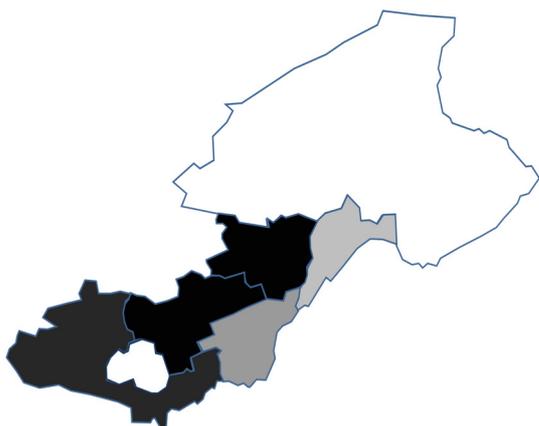


Figure 4 – Area Distribution of individual PB processes in Fife 2010-17

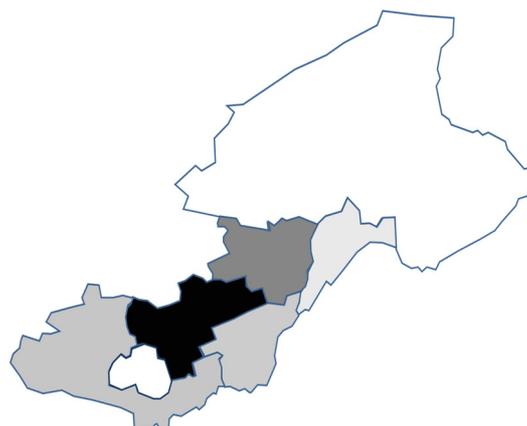


Figure 5 – Area Distribution of Total funds allocated through PB in Fife 2010-17

Table 1 – Evolution of PB in Fife over time by Area

Area	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Total
Glenrothes	£30,000	£90,000	£50,000			£10,000	£20,000	£200,000
Kirkcaldy		£30,000	£50,000			£15,000		£95,000
South West Fife			£12,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£61,000	£103,000
Cowdenbeath				£20,000	£30,000	£30,000	£320,000	£400,000
Levenmouth						£40,000	£12,460	£52,460
Dunfermline								£0
North East Fife								£0
Fife Total	£30,000	£120,000	£112,000	£30,000	£40,000	£105,000	£413,460	£850,460

Table 2 – Annual average allocation via PB by Area, and how this relates to Total Area Budget

Area	Nº of PB processes	Area Total	Annual average (2010-2017)	Estimated proportion of Total Annual Area Budget
Glenrothes	7	£200,000	£28,571	1.8%
Kirkcaldy	3	£95,000	£13,571	0.9%
South West Fife	6	£103,000	£14,714	0.9%
Cowdenbeath	7	£400,000	£57,143	3.6%
Levenmouth	2	£52,460	£7,494	0.5%
Dunfermline	0	£0	£0	0.0%
North East Fife	0	£0	£0	0.0%
Fife Total	25	£850,460	£121,494	7.7%
				£1,570,000

Case Study - Oor Bit, Cowdenbeath

£250,000

Through Oor Bit, Fife was able to evaluate and pilot online tools to support local democracy. A total of 1,406 votes were cast for locally-suggested projects and the process was supported by 21 community activists as well as Council staff and a worker from Coalfields Regeneration Trust. The idea generation phase of the exercise was open for public participation from 18th June to 4th September 2016.

Lessons learned:

- More ideas generated than we would expect from a traditional PB exercise.
- Ideas reflected support for and endorsed projects which were already underway.
- On-line platform was attractive to look at and (relatively) user-friendly.
- Ideas could be posted anonymously so not always able to identify individuals
- It is difficult to promote through other events, ie Galas, Civic weeks
- A relatively small volume of visitors to the website.
- Central support to publicise this phase of the activity but a clearer remit should have been provided to the Communications team in terms of targeting and reach.

Lessons learned from the engagement and voting phases included

- Limited ownership of ideas – with traditional PB, people believe in their ideas and encourage family members to attend PB voting events.
- The lack of a verification process made it difficult to get feedback from voters and also to keep idea-generators and voters up to date with progress and outcomes.
- Turn-out varied widely across the Area – it was best where community representatives went to where people were (whether at home or in a group meeting) rather than expecting people to turn out to an event.
- On-line voting was patchy. It needs regular and targeted marketing and more support than we were able to muster.
- Drop-in events generated more feedback on the other Area issues (Play Parks and Transportation) than the door-to-door exercises.
- The timing of this phase needs to be considered – avoid school holidays and times when community groups are under pressure.
- Record level of engagement of this type in Fife, 1406 vs 867 individual responses for 2015 budget consultation.

Overall

- The issue of 'presentism' needs to be resolved. People going to PB events can see the ideas and talk to the people who are behind those ideas before casting their vote. They also have the opportunity to share experiences and to learn about what is going on locally. That doesn't happen in the same way on-line.
- The engagement of a group of 21 local activists with this process was heartening, but it places additional burdens on already busy people. No praise is high enough for their contribution.
- The group were able to share experience and to learn from each other helping to build a sense of solidarity across the Area.
- The decision not to ask for verification nor to register people attending events means that the opportunity to have a contact list of people who we could seek to engage in future events was lost.
- The support from Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Democratic Scotland and the two on-line providers was exemplary and they will be a useful source to draw on for any future Area or Fife-wide exercises.

Case Study – Forward West Fife

£60,000

As part of a response to the closure of Longannet Power Station, a small grant fund of £60,000 was used to generate ideas with local communities in the West Fife Villages (Kincardine, Saline & Steelend, Culross, Low Valleyfield, High Valleyfield, Newmills and Torryburn). This built on consultation undertaken by The Coalfields Regeneration Trust about community priorities for the area going forward, identified as: 1) Access to Services, 2) Heritage and Tourism, and 3) the Local Economy. The process was led by a Steering Group made up of 16 community representatives from the 8 villages and the 4 Ward Councillors who oversaw the design, application, voting and governance arrangements of the project. £30,000 was secured from the Scottish Government Community Choices Fund and the same amount matched by the South West Fife Area Committee. Following promotion of the Forward West Fife grant opportunity, 23 applications were received seeking over £140,000. 20 applications went forward to the Community Gathering Decision Day event in March 2017 at Scottish Police College, Kincardine. Almost 60 people representing 19 projects from the target communities attended to pitch their projects to each other, and then re-convened back in their groups to discuss and agree as a group, how to distribute their votes across the various projects. The outcome from the voting exercise produced 11 winning projects, with funding support and advice provided to unsuccessful projects. 71% of respondents said this was a good way to make decisions with 83% indicating that they would like to see more decision-making events like this. The main lessons learned from the Forward West Fife PB experience are:

- recognise and plan for, the additional time and resource required to do PB
- draw down any specialist support available e.g. communications, marketing
- participants welcomed a quick process from project inception, development, application stage, decision-making and grant award to project delivery,
- the 'speed dating' format was less intimidating and interactive
- Some respondents expressed discomfort in making the difficult decisions about which community projects to support over others.
- to allow sufficient time to debate/discuss potential voting systems/rules
- keep 'steering group' involved throughout the project and keep everyone updated



Picture: Successful projects celebrate their success at the Forward West Fife voting event

What we have learned from PB in Fife

To date, we have piloted PB on a relatively small scale primarily related to small community grant investment decisions at area and neighbourhood level but recognising that it is a useful tool in wider service design, commissioning, policy and budget priority setting. It has proved to be a useful method for involving young people in decisions on local budgets, for example, purchasing play park equipment, or shaping a programme for summer holiday provision within an area.

We have learned that PB approaches need to be tailored to local community contexts and priorities, reflecting our approach to decentralisation. PB can sometimes be seen as a challenge to representative democracy, and where PB processes have had greater traction it has been because local elected members have been supportive of this as a method of involving local people in decisions about their local area.

Our capacity to deliver PB has developed year on year, sharing learning between areas, and cascading PB from one area to another, highlighting the potential of PB for engaging people in decisions about their local area. You could say that it has developed virally, and has spread through a network of champions, advocating PB as an approach that supports public involvement in decision making at a local level. As key staff have moved between areas, PB has gone with them as part of their toolbox. It is important to note that experience of supporting and running a PB process is still restricted to a relatively small group of staff and local people.

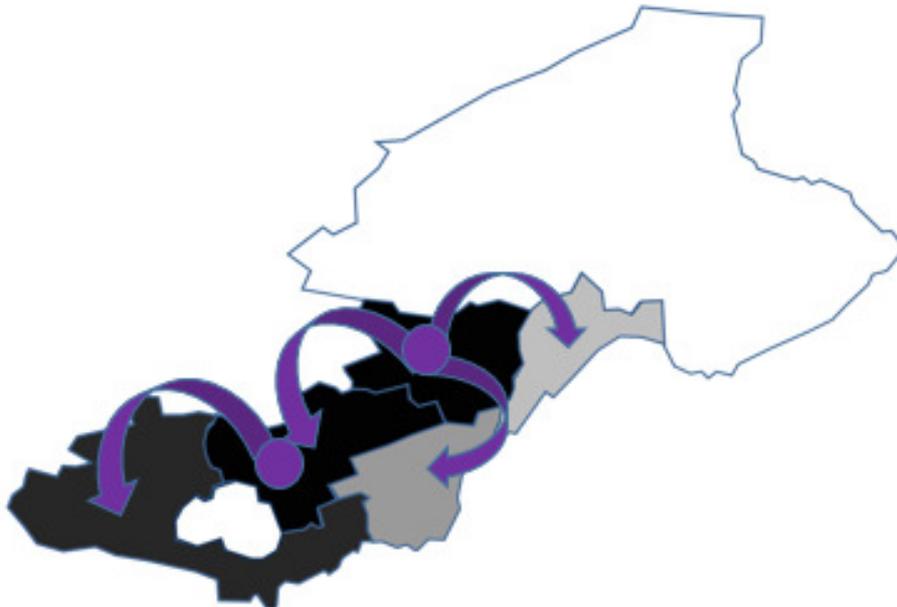


Figure 6 – Viral spread of PB in Fife through key advocates and movement of staff

PB is an intensive but rewarding process. There has been a learning curve as we have considered how to utilise and implement PB as a method, and through this develop an approach that suits the Fife context.

PB in Fife has delivered good examples of strong partnership working between agencies and with local communities. Through PB, communities have developed a greater appreciation of what is going on in their area and a greater understanding of the role that they can play in influencing decisions that affect their local area. They are empowered to take action on areas that matter to them in their day to day lives.

Involving communities in the identification and implementation of local projects has been a key component of both a Fife and Scottish approach to PB. This is different from some approaches in other areas which focus on communities identifying projects for public services to deliver, such as is the case in Paris.

PB in Fife has developed organically as part of a decentralised approach to local decision-making that responds to the different needs of local areas. Glenrothes and Cowdenbeath have been most active in using PB to engage local communities in decision-making. South West Fife, Kirkcaldy and Levenmouth have also used PB methods in a number of different contexts. To date, there has been no PB activity in the City of Dunfermline or North East Fife Areas.

Participatory Budgeting should not be a one-off exercise, but a way of working, that builds momentum over time through greater engagement of local people in decision making about a local area. The picture in Fife so far has been mixed. Some PB processes connect through a common theme, such as Starter for 10, or Community Futures (with Coalfields Regeneration Trust, but applied to different geographic areas). It is only with Kirkcaldy Kanes, and PB in Ward 6 (latterly Aberdour only) that a PB process has been sustained in an area over a number of years. In the case of Kirkcaldy, this has evolved from an area wide approach, to a more targeted approach to neighbourhood development and improvement. This is consistent with using PB as a method to engage local communities in tackling inequalities which is an important aspect of PB in Fife, and may help to explain why the reach of PB has not been Fife-wide.

Over the 25 individual PB processes in Fife, a range of different branding has been used to promote the process and reflect local circumstances. More recent PB processes in Fife have used the Let's Talk / Community Choices banner. A strong brand has been a central component to the rollout of Participatory Budgeting at scale in other areas, such as Newcastle UDecide. A coherent, consistent and continuing branding for PB in Fife would help to build public awareness and engagement in participatory budgeting and establish this as part of a regular cycle of decision-making. However, it is important that this still has sufficient local flexibility to enable it to be tailored to the needs of local communities.

Although the total amount distributed through participatory budgeting appears substantial, it is a relatively small amount compared to the total budget for areas - £1.57million per year – and an even smaller amount in the context of the total budget for Fife Council – £832.3 million (15/16). There is scope to consider how the deliberative and participative nature of PB could be extended to mainstream service and budget decisions. It is clear that we are currently some distance from the aspiration of 1% of a local authority budget allocated in this manner. It is likely that there will be a need for incremental change as part of a coordinated approach to delivering participatory budgeting at scale to meet local aspiration/ambition.

Online Methods

Across Scotland there has been little use of digital engagement platforms to support PB processes. An online platform has been key to the implementation of PB at scale in Paris, and Glasgow are seeking to emulate this. Fife, with support of the Democratic Society, has recently been involved in testing out a number of online tools, including Your Priorities (yrpri.org) as a platform for ideas, and D21 for voting.

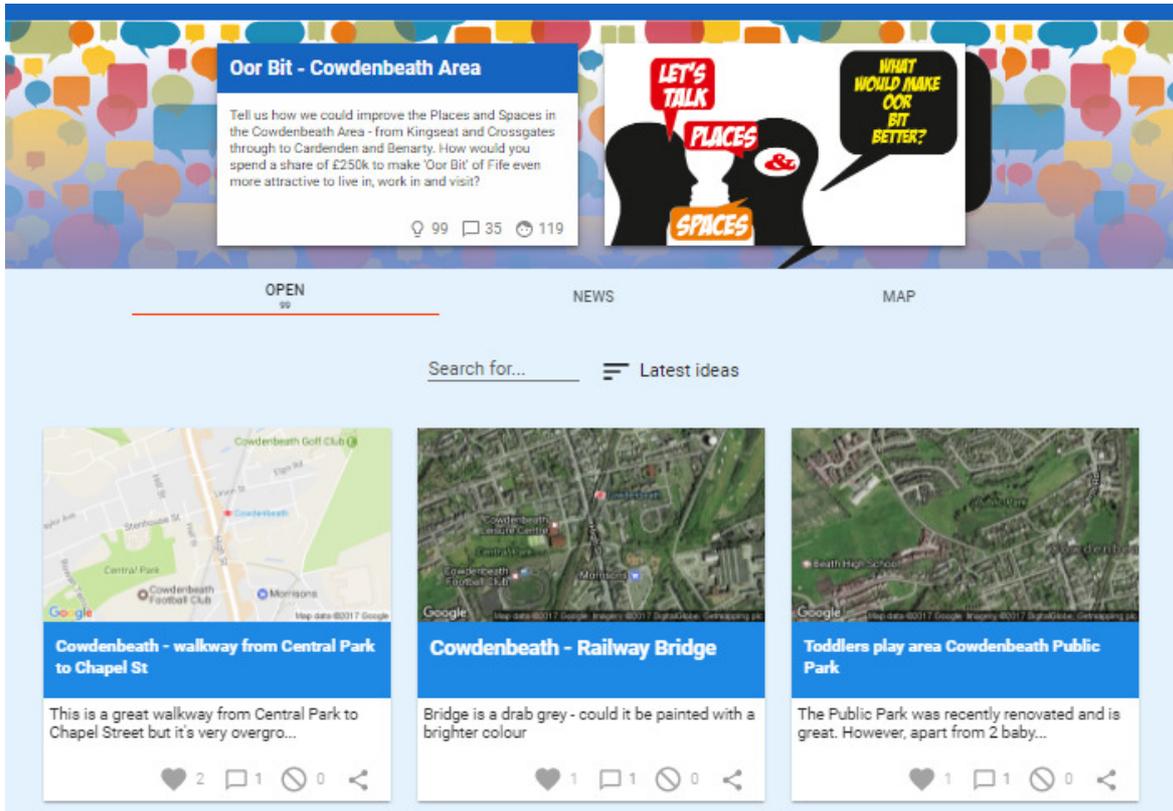


Figure 7 – Oor Bit Cowdenbeath Online Platform, based on Your Priorities tool: yrpri.org

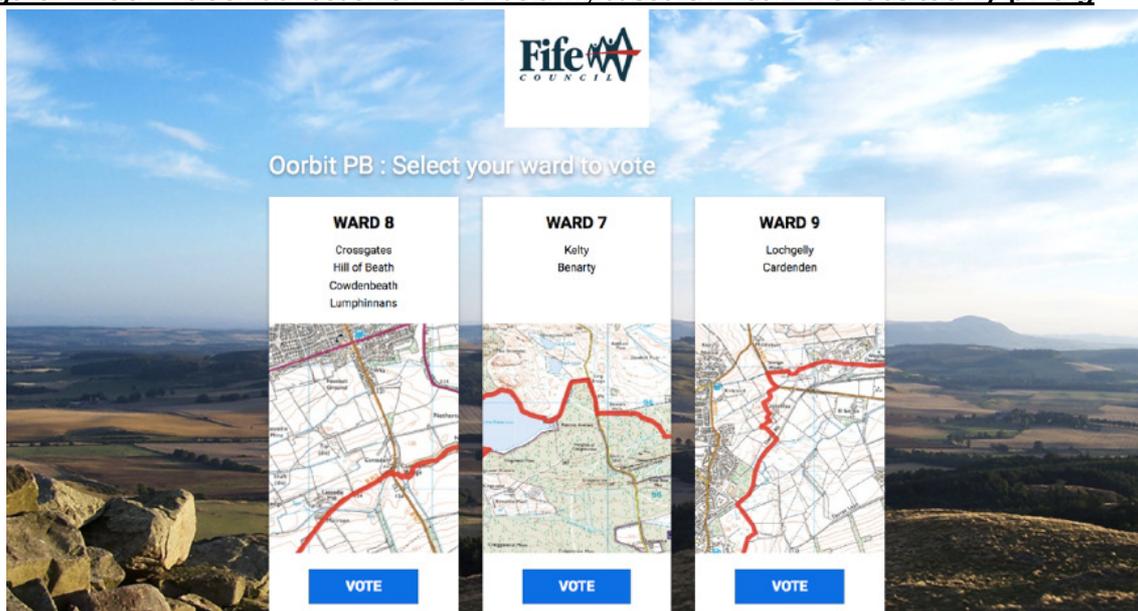


Figure 8 – Oor Bit Cowdenbeath Voting Platform, based on D21

The use of online tools for Oor Bit provides insight into the potential for implementing PB at scale, and highlights the value of these tools for achieving wider engagement. We have learned that there needs to be co-ordinated support from the centre of the organisation if on-line activity around PB is to reach a wider audience. That support needs to come from a senior officer level and across a range of Services, especially Communications and Finance. Traditional community engagement methods continue to be important, and can complement online processes.



Figure 9 – Level of Participation in Ward 8, Oor Bit, Cowdenbeath

Oor Bit makes a strong statement about Fife’s ambition for participatory budgeting, involving local people in decisions on how £250,000 should be spent across three wards. The level of participation in the process shows what can be achieved through a shift from a Service-centred focus to one based on the needs and aspirations of Areas, communities and neighbourhoods.

“The Oor Bit PB exercise was very worthwhile. It proved that we can scale up initiatives of this nature and engage with more and different people than would normally get involved. It also proved that the model could be used Fife-wide and in different types of community. If it is to be scaled up in this way then it will need a policy under-pinning and the allocation of dedicated resources – budget and staff time in the main.”

Fife Case Study, Democratic Society

What does PB offer as a community engagement tool?

Participatory Budgeting can cover a range of activity from communicating, consulting, involving, partnership and decision-making, which in and of itself can be more or less empowering.

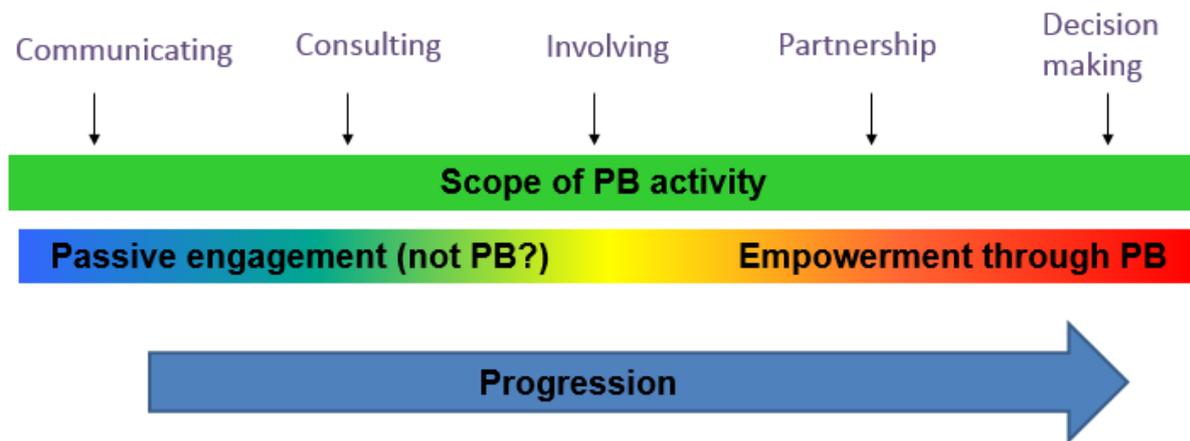


Figure 10 – Empowerment through PB (Jez Hall)

Participatory Budgeting has the potential to create a lasting shift in relationships between citizens and public services. Citizens should feel that their participation is meaningful. It is important that where PB is used as a method, it is done in an empowering way. Deliberation can and should be built into any stage of public engagement. Involving the local community in decisions about budgets can engage local people, build social capital, and deepen democracy. It also helps to improve use of public money by targeting resources more effectively at local level.

Building Capacity for Participatory Budgeting

Support from independent and experienced PB practitioners has played an important role in developing PB capacity in Fife. The PB network for Scotland are supporting a dedicated group of PB champions to build capacity, share learning, and support others in Scotland on their PB journey. PB Champions from Fife will share learning from other parts of Scotland, advocate for the use of PB, and support activity locally.

Skills required for good Participatory budgeting work include:

- Strong leadership skills to motivate others and overcome barriers.
- Good community engagement skills to engage with the public, community organisations and specific target groups
- Good capacity building skills to enable communities to participate in PB.
- Good community development approaches which support the development of local partnership work.
- Excellent planning and organisational skills, both individually and with community groups
- A wide range of methods to communicate PB and its principles to the widest possible audience.
- A good understanding of different models of PB for example, community grants pots, local authority or partnership funded PB or mainstreamed funding sources.
- Ability to use a wide range of methods to evaluate and demonstrate impact of PB work.
- I.T skills to assist with capturing, analysing and presenting PB findings to a wider audience.
- Excellent facilitation skills to promote dialogue and deliberation approaches in communities

Resources needed to deliver PB well include:

- Budgets which can be directly used in communities to support PB work. Knowing how much money is available and the nature of that money is crucial from the early stages
- Appropriate skilled staff to directly engage with communities to develop PB projects
- Using VOICE tool to ensure PB is delivered to a high standard
- Use of buildings / community meeting areas.
- Committed partnership support
- Marketing and Publicity support
- I.T support / development

Where is Participatory Budgeting going?

While it is widely recognised that there have been important social benefits for the people involved, PB in the UK has had limited impact (2014 Review). This is not surprising given the relatively low level of resources that has been put in to supporting PB in the UK, which has mainly centred on disbursing small scale community grants rather than involving mainstream budgets. Elsewhere, PB has contributed significantly to improving basic service delivery. PB projects are cheaper and better monitored because of community control and oversight.

Where PB is linked to mainstream budget setting, such as Porto Alegre, Brazil, this is done through a three stage process where a) communities determine their priorities, b) a deliberative stage assesses feasibility of projects and c) decisions are made through a public vote. To be effective, participatory budgeting needs to be seen as a long term strategy that matures over time through successive cycles. An annual process sets out when, where and how local people can participate. Benefits of the approach are typically not seen in the short term, but longer term benefits are apparent after five years, as compared with areas which have not used PB as a method.

Participatory Budgeting is being delivered at scale in cities such as Paris, which has involved its citizens in proposing projects for Capital budgets across the city and within neighbourhoods. Paris operates an annual process, facilitated through an online platform, through which €75m (5% of Capital budget) for improvement works in the city is decided through co-construction of ideas, assessing the feasibility of projects and putting eligible ideas to a public vote. Note this is limited to services that are within the control of the city of Paris. In the Scottish context, there would be a greater expectation of working with communities on the design and delivery of projects and across partner agencies to deliver for the local community.



Figure 11 – Timeline for Participatory Budgeting in Paris

While 1st Generation PB activity in Scotland has focused on small grant giving, 2nd Generation PB is now shifting to how to apply these principles to mainstream funding. Glasgow has delivered a sizeable proportion of 1st Generation PB in Scotland and has provided capacity building support for citizens and partners. A natural progression will be to mainstream PB into decision making and public service processes. It is intended that Glasgow starts by expanding PB activity in each of the 23 Local Area Partnerships across the city. If 1% of Glasgow’s budget was to be allocated through PB then this would equate to approximately £23million per year. Glasgow intend to develop a 3-5 year mainstreaming PB Plan to articulate how participatory budgeting will be scaled up across the city. This will build on existing examples of mainstreaming budget spend, for example, through the Glasgow Life Libraries pilot project. Glasgow is currently developing tools to support PB evaluation to demonstrate the impact of PB.

Participatory Budgeting is often seen as a tool for addressing inequalities in service provision and targeting the allocation of resources to communities of greater need. Of its €75m annual capital budget, Paris ensures €15m is allocated to projects in its low income neighbourhoods. It also invests in dedicated staff working with local groups and community councils within these districts to help local people to develop projects. This is similar to the local development worker model which is already in operation in Fife in neighbourhoods within Kirkcaldy Area - Gallatown, Linktown, Templehall and Burntisland Castle - and in Inverkeithing.

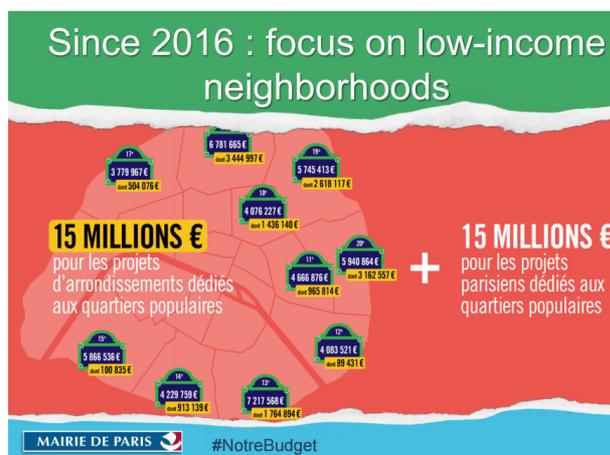


Figure 12 – Illustration of priority given to funding projects in low income neighbourhoods in the Paris model

Budget matrices are a recognised part of the PB toolkit, helping to translate community priorities and local need into a relative share of an overall or service budget. These are not a wholly new concept to us in Fife. We have used similar tools in the past to determine the level and allocation of funding to each of the seven areas, which take into account factors such as relative levels of deprivation in an area. Budget matrices can help clarify the total amount of funding that is available for a participatory budgeting approach. Local communities could play a greater role in determining local priorities through involvement in local community plans and targeting local budgets accordingly.

Commissioning Cubes are a relatively recent addition to the PB Landscape (Ritchie, 2015). These enable commissioners to engage in dialogue with service users and stakeholders about a specific budget or service area. This involves working with a defined budget (expressed as a £1) and for services within that area to be expressed as pennies. Through deliberation and dialogue it identifies the best use of that budget on commissioning different services. This follows a three stage process:

1. Internal deliberation on costs of running services,
2. Cube production, based on information gathered in stage 1, and
3. Public event to gather insight into participants' views of the commissioning decisions.

This technique has been used in a variety of settings including: commissioning of mental health services, recommissioning of youth services (Brent Council), and the provision of bus services (Western Isles).



Cube production - Faces of the cubes contain a) cost, b) what is this service, c) what benefit is there to commission this service, d) why would you not commission this service, e) quality indicators

Figure 13 – Use of Commissioning Cubes, Brent Youth Services, 2015

What is needed to support scaling up of PB in Fife?

If PB is to move into the 2nd Generation Phase in Fife - influencing the outcome of mainstream budgets and involving service users in decisions about the commissioning of services - then a number of factors need to be put in place:

1. High level buy-in

Implementing PB at scale requires high level political and organisational buy-in. There is currently commitment to PB as an approach at both national and local level. There needs to also be buy-in from senior managers.

2. Budget

The starting point is to identify the budget from across possible funding stream or particular service area where there is a need to commission goods/services. It requires those with the power to decide how public money is spent – service managers, commissioners, elected members – being willing to involve local people in decision-making about a budget, while ensuring value for money in how that resource is spent.

3. Commitment of staff time and resources

We have seen that PB is worth doing at scale and that it is possible to do it BUT operating an annual programme at a Fife-wide level will take a commitment of staff time and resources. This includes the infrastructure needed to support PB. Undertaking a PB exercise is an 'opportunity cost' – if area / community / service / partner staff and organisations are doing this then they are not doing something else. It needs to be thought through as part of a planned and considered approach to ensure that resources are used wisely.

4. PB as a way of working

PB should become the way we do things in Fife when it comes to identifying and delivering community-based projects and initiatives. As part of our decentralisation efforts, PB could enable Fife to continue conversations with our citizens regarding the shape, type and level of public services they want to see.

Fife Council remains committed to localisation of service provision. It is in this context that PB can be a means to:

- build community capacity, empower local communities
- improve transparency and accountability
- develop understanding about the difficult decisions required
- develop solutions which suit the local area
- improve services where they are needed and wanted
- increase interest / participation in community activity and also in traditional democratic processes

A range of services need to work together to ensure a successful process:

Service	Roles and responsibility
All Services	To be aware of PB as a method, when it is appropriate to use
Community/Area	Likely to lead PB process, wider community engagement
Finance	Support the process to identify and allocate relevant budgets
Communications	To support the local conversation especially at the idea generation and voting phases but also in supporting feedback on results, outcomes and project delivery
Democratic Services	To support the voting phase
Property Services	To lead on the delivery of the projects identified
Other Services	To engage in the process and/or respond to the information / assess suitability of proposals / and feedback generated as appropriate.

The following scenarios illustrate areas where there may be scope to involve citizens in decisions on mainstream budgets, and identify other potential opportunities:

Scenario 1 – Area Transportation Work Plan

Transportation service has long had a proportion of its budget identified for Area projects. These are brought together in the Area Transportation Work Plan where planned works are divided into Category 1 to be carried out in the current financial year and Category 2 for the next financial year or to be brought forward if other work slips or additional budget is secured. It would be a simple process to have the identification of these projects driven via a PB exercise – subject to professional advice and recommendation.

Scenario 2 – Involving Young People in Service Design and Delivery

School pupils could have a key role to play in decisions on local projects, supported by Education and Children’s Services. For example, if £20,000 is allocated to a play park in the catchment area of a Primary School then the pupils could be involved in discussions about the type of equipment to be installed within the budget allocated, promoting ownership and ensuring the equipment fits demand. Likewise elements of the Devolved School Management budget could be used to generate in-school PB exercises which would allow pupils to have a say in, for example, which bits of a school would be refurbished or what items of learning equipment would be bought. Finally, schools could encourage pupils of all ages to take part in any and all other local PB exercises. They would be able to generate and campaign for their own ideas, vote on their preferred projects and understand how decisions are reached. In this way perhaps some of the current democratic deficit could be reduced by developing an informed and empowered future electorate.

Scenario 3 – Capital Programme

PB could be used to inform the procurement of capital projects both big and small. It is possible to design a process where local people have a say (outwith the formal planning framework) on the shape, design and location of construction, regeneration and refurbishment projects. Possible arenas (some of which are already utilised to a greater or lesser extent) include new house-building; council house refurbishment; new or refurbished civic buildings; new and refurbished schools; and leisure and community facilities.

Scenario 4 – Area Capital Budget

To support local community plans, £200k has been allocated to each of the 7 areas for each of the next two years. This would be an obvious area in which to explore a PB approach. Building a deliberative aspect in to the area capital programme will give communities a greater say in decisions that affect their local area, and encourage them to be more active in their local community.

Scenario 5 – Joint Resourcing by Community Planning Partners

To date the Council has mainly led on PB in Fife, with local involvement from partner agencies in supporting the process. In other parts of the country other agencies have been proactive: Police have used community safety funding to generate ideas of how to make local communities safer (and have received 'soft' information on criminal activity as a spin-off benefit); Health providers have used PB to identify low-cost alternative treatments and therapies identified by service users. This has saved them money on expensive and ineffective treatments and also helped to drive initiatives to address health inequalities. Local community planning provides a focus for joint resourcing and involving the community in decision-making about how resources are spent in a local area.

The benefits of using PB in an expanded arena include, but are not limited to:-

- Better decisions
- Cost-effective approaches
- Local ownership
- Sustainable solutions
- Integrated services and
- An empowered citizenship

There needs to be a discussion locally about Fife's aspiration for Participatory Budgeting and how this might be achieved. A framework for a coordinated approach to the expansion of Participatory Budgeting is now needed, which should include a realistic timeline for scaling up Participatory Budgeting across Fife.

Appendix 1 – Timeline of Participatory Budgeting in Fife 2010-2017

Year	Initiative	Area	Theme	Total
2010-11	Community Gains	Glenrothes	Community Safety	£30,000
2011-12	Kirkcaldy Kanes 1	Kirkcaldy	Community Safety	£30,000
2012-13	Kirkcaldy Kanes 2	Kirkcaldy	Wider	£50,000
2011-12	Your Park, You Decide	Glenrothes	Riverside Park	£60,000
2011-12	Over to YOUth	Glenrothes	Young people	£30,000
2012-13	TIP/VIP: Town/Village Improvement Project	Glenrothes	Local environment	£50,000
2012-13	Up for Grabs - West Fife Villages	South West Fife	Safe, attractive place	£12,000
2013-14	Cardenden Futures	Cowdenbeath	Futures	£20,000
2013-14	PB in Ward 6	South West Fife	Community engagement	£10,000
2014-15	Benarty Futures	Cowdenbeath	Futures	£30,000
2014-15	PB in Ward 6	South West Fife	Community engagement	£10,000
2015-16	Gallatown: You Decide	Kirkcaldy	The Arts	£15,000
2015-16	Methilhill, Lower Methil	Levenmouth	Open to ideas	£40,000
2015-16	Kelty Futures	Cowdenbeath	Futures	£30,000
2015-16	PB in Ward 6	South West Fife	Community engagement	£10,000
2015-16	Starter for 10, Macedonia	Glenrothes	Community Engagement	£10,000
2016-17	Crossgates Futures	Cowdenbeath	Futures	£20,000
2016-17	Lochgelly Going Forward	Cowdenbeath	Futures	£30,000
2016-17	Summer Holiday Provision	Levenmouth	Young people	£12,460
2016-17	Oor Bit	Cowdenbeath	Local environment	£250,000
2016-17	Aberdour PB	South West Fife	Community engagement	£1,000
2016-17	Starter for 10, Cadham	Glenrothes	Community Engagement	£10,000
2016-17	Starter for 10, Collydean	Glenrothes	Community Engagement	£10,000
2016-17	Hill of Beath Futures	Cowdenbeath	Futures	£20,000
2016-17	Forward West Fife	South West Fife	Heritage and tourism, Access to services and Local economy	£60,000
			Total	£850,460

Further Information

Research Team Reports

Fife Council Research Team was formed by the centralization of staff who worked across Fife Council and Police Scotland in April 2016 to create a focus for research work in Fife Council. Our research remit spans all areas of public sector involvement and we would normally work in partnership with subject experts. We are not data providers but instead provide analytical and other expertise to help generate genuine insight and identify ways to make a difference. As part of our remit to generate greater insight, we produce occasional research reports on key subjects. This report is one of those. They can combine research specifically undertaken to produce the report, available statistics, modelling and other types of analysis. They are designed to give practitioners and others access to high quality insight on key subjects. Usually these will involve cross cutting themes of general interest.

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Important Notes on this Report

1. This report pulls together an overview of Participatory Budgeting activity in Fife between 2010 and 2017.
2. It draws from collaborative discussions with a group of practitioners with experience of leading and developing PB processes in Fife.
3. It takes stock of what we have learned from our experience of PB in Fife and what others have done or are doing.
4. It is intended to serve as a pathfinder for the direction that Fife may wish to take in the future in relation to Participatory Budgeting.