



Fraserburgh Your Voice, Your Choice

18 June 2016

Big Vote Day!

Evaluation Report

Introduction

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a process of involving citizens in deciding how to spend public money. At its core, it is about community members shaping local services to meet local priorities more effectively.

PB is being promoted and supported as a priority by the Scottish Government. There is funding available through the Community Choices Fund to support PB exercises in 2016/17. Targeted particularly at work in deprived areas, the fund aims to build on the support provided by the Scottish Government since June 2014 and is part of a broader agenda around democratic innovation and engaged citizenship.

Long term benefits of participatory budgeting include:

- Increased participation in local democracy, including an upturn in volunteering, turnout at local elections and involvement in local campaigns.
- Improved relations between local communities and Community Planning Partners, resulting in stronger communities themselves.
- Communities learn about making difficult choices in challenging economic times, building a foundation for future conversations.
- Communities share knowledge, expertise and skills and identify potential opportunities for partnership working.

Background to Your Voice, Your Choice

Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (a partnership of NHS Grampian, Aberdeenshire Council and voluntary organisations delivering Health and Social Care services) allocated a budget of £100,000 to fund local initiatives to improve health and wellbeing in specific areas of the North of Fraserburgh which had been identified as having poor health outcomes.

You can apply if you are a local community group, voluntary or non-profit organisation, or you could be an informal group seeking support to apply for funding to put an idea into action. The proposed activities must benefit people living within the area shown in the map.

What can you apply for?

- Funding for projects and activities which will help to improve the health and wellbeing of members of your community.
- Funding applications can range from a £200 - £10,000
- More than one application can be submitted by a group but must not exceed £10,000 in total.

Consultancy support to carry out this project was provided by Alan Budge from PB Partners, funded by the Scottish Government.

The Scottish Government has set 9 national health and wellbeing outcomes:

- *People will look after their own health and wellbeing longer in good health*
- *People who are frail, have a disability or long term conditions are supported to live at home or in a homely place in their own community.*
- *People using health and social care services have a positive experience and their dignity is respected.*
- *Reduce health inequalities in our community*
- *Supports health and social care services to improve the quality of life in the local community.*
- *Offers support to people who do unpaid care to look after their own health and wellbeing.*
- *Keeps people who use health and social care safe from harm.*
- *Support staff who work in health and social care to improve the information, support, care and treatment provided.*
- *Helps health and social care services to run more effectively and efficiently.*

As long as the application fits with any of these outcomes and benefits local residents in the North of Fraserburgh, the application was progressed to the Fraserburgh Your Voice, Your Choice Big Vote day which took place on Saturday 18 June.

Process

A steering group of 12 was formed to facilitate the process. These groups were led by the Local Community Planning Officer.

The application form itself was designed to be straightforward and simple to fill in. Support was available for individuals and groups who applied – special drop in sessions were organised at various times and locations and were facilitated by the working group.

Applications were rechecked to ensure they were eligible and any additional information was requested from the applicant. 32 applications went forward to the Big Vote Day totaling £191,906.98.

Partners involved in Your Voice, Your Choice:

- *Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership*
- *Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership*
- *Aberdeenshire Council*
- *NHS Grampian*
- *Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action*
- *Fraserburgh Development Trust*
- *Aberdeen Foyer*
- *Police Scotland Youth Volunteers*
- *Reach Project*
- *PB Partnership*
- *Community Payback*

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The Event

In total 40 applications were received by the closing date of 29 April, 35 of these applications met the criteria and were put through to the Big Vote Day. 2 Applications were withdrawn before the event, which left 33 to present on the day.

32 Groups presented their project proposal on the day, each getting 2 minutes to present with a 2 minute questions and answers.

Presenters and Public Registration	153
Eligible to Vote (Aged 12 and over and stay in North of Fraserburgh)	103
Volunteers at event	20

Quotes from Big Vote Day:

"Excellent way of getting the community to participate"

"Far better the community has a say"

Quote from Alan Budge, PB Partnership on the event:

"Having worked on supporting PB events across the UK for the past 10 years, the voting days held in June at Fraserburgh and Peterhead were among the best organised I've ever attended. There was a great sense of the local community coming together for a positive purpose - it almost felt like 'a great community event with some voting attached'. A range of worthwhile projects were funded, demonstrating the fantastic (and often unacknowledged) levels of resource and commitment available within these communities. Another great success for PB! "

Voting

Minimum voting age was 12 years of age, who lived in the targeted areas and who registered to vote at the beginning of the session were eligible to vote. Participants were invited to cast a total of 10 votes for their preferred projects. This was to ensure voters considered funding other projects and not just one specific group or initiative. Papers with more or less than 10 votes were declared void

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Spreading the Word ...

A number of engagement opportunities and workshops took place within the North of Fraserburgh to engage and inform the local community of what the funding was for and who could apply:

- 'Grow Your Group' workshop facilitated by AVA (Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action), 30 delegates attended from a wide range of local groups and organisations in the Fraserburgh area, the aim of the workshop was to raise awareness of your voice, your choice funding opportunity, gain a better understanding on how to develop a project or group, learn about what support is available from AVA and general project guidance.
- 6 drop in sessions in the North of Fraserburgh, facilitated by the PB Steering Group in the period leading up to the deadline for applications, with over 30 members of potential applicants attending.
- Fraserburgh Academy Assemblies, engaged with years 1-6 pupils and teachers at Fraserburgh Academy.
- Fraserburgh North Primary School, St Andrew's Primary School, Lochpots Primary School postcards and Westfield Primary School advertising event sent home in pupils school bags to parents.
- Waves Radio, interview on the launch of the funding opportunity along with the criteria of the funding.
- 'Fraserburgh Super Saturday' attended May and June events in partnership with Health point to promote the successful groups who were through to the 'Big Vote Day' on Saturday June 18.
- Presentation Skills Workshops – 4 workshop facilitated by AVA to help provide advice and support to the groups who were bidding on the Big Vote Day.
- Fraserburgh Your Voice, Your Choice Facebook and website page developed.
- Local Press
- Mail drop and posters distributed to residential and business addresses in the focus area facilitated by Police Youth Volunteers.

Quotes from engagement events

"Super Saturday was very helpful, I was able to get my questions answered"

"Drop in sessions was very helpful and informative"

"Very useful good advice on what to put on the application form"

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What worked well?

- Sharing Best practice, visit by officers to the Rothes Big Vote Day in Moray to learn about the voting process.
- Banff and Buchan and Buchan Community Planning Officers attended Holyrood Conference on Participatory Budgeting in Edinburgh.
- Feedback from the day indicated that people felt the event was well organised.
- Raised awareness to the local community of local groups and projects
- Local community felt empowered to decide which projects got funded.

What could be better?

- The venue could have been bigger.
- Voting registration process to be made clearer.
- Open the funding to all of Fraserburgh.
- Use digital voting tools online to reach a wider audience.

Facts and figures –

- 17 out of 32 projects funded.
- A total of 935 votes cast on the day.
- Diverse range of bids from baby and toddler groups to Older People's forum
- AVA providing support to groups who were unsuccessful in receiving funding on the day.
- 16 members of community expressed an interest in getting involved in future events.
- Over 67% of attendees were eligible to vote on the day.

Next Steps:

- Steering Group will reconvene to look at providing support and advice to enable projects to be delivered.
- Regular updates on how the successful projects are progressing on Social Media and bulletins
- Provide ongoing support and advice to groups who were unsuccessful in receiving funding.
- Regular updates provided to the local community to keep the momentum and awareness raised of PB
- Attend North Alliance Conference in October to facilitate a workshop on the PB process in partnership with Moray Council.

Postitive Outcomes:

- Foyer REACH Group have reached Level 3 Accreditation for their involvement in the Big Vote, they supplied, prepared and served food at the event, which received a very well deserved positive feedback from the participants.
- Police Youth Volunteers – Participation in the lead up and during the event has helped the volunteers to get their Saltire award.

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- Fraserburgh Sea Cadets, received funding for a mini bus and have offered the use of the bus while not in use for the group to community organisations (subject to insurance being in place)
- Fraserburgh Sea Cadets secured match funding of £8000 from Children in Need as a result of securing funding from Fraserburgh Your Choice, Your Voice, with outcome they now can buy a more equipped and newer mini-bus.
- West End Bowling Club, received funding towards a new kitchen. Use of the kitchen has been extended to the wider community to help support community events.
- Fraserburgh Community Safety Group have joined up with Fraserburgh First Responders, both groups successfully received funding to buy 3 defibrillators and provide First Responder training in the community respectively these groups will work collaboratively to take their respective projects forward.
- 16 members of public expressed an interest in becoming involved in future PB events.

Links to social media pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/yourvoiceyourchoicefraserburgh/>

<http://www.pbpartners.org.uk/>

You can watch a short video clip of the event by following this link:

<https://youtu.be/Cncfzd5uITs>