



## Renfrewshire Council

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**To:** Council

**On:** 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018

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**Report by:** Chief Executive

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**Heading:** Review of Community Level Governance Arrangements

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### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The aim of the review of Community Level Governance arrangements is to assess the Local Area Committees as a model of community level governance, and make recommendations for future models.
- 1.2 In December 2017 Council approved a consultation to take place early in 2018, which took place between 22 January and 15 April 2018. The consultation was based on a set of nine proposals for a new model, which were developed following an engagement exercise around the existing model of Local Area Committees in late 2017.
- 1.3 Responses to the nine proposals were sought through electronic and paper-based surveys, meetings of Local Area Committees, public meetings and drop-in sessions, facilitated sessions and attendance at meetings of community organisations.
- 1.4 This paper outlines a summary of key findings of the consultation, with a more detailed report attached at Appendix A.
- 1.5 The full set of finalised proposals and supporting processes will be presented to Renfrewshire Council on 28 June 2018 for approval.

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## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 It is recommended that members:

- Note the results of the consultation on the review of community level governance arrangements outlined at Section 4 of the report
  - Agree that further development of proposals can be carried out, to be brought back to Council in June 2018.
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## **3. Background**

3.1 In 2016, Council agreed changes to the governance arrangements for the Community Planning Partnership, and as part of this work it was agreed that a review of the Local Area Committees (LACs) would be carried out.

3.2 The aim of the review is to assess the Local Area Committees as a model of community level governance, and make recommendations for a future model. The review included the form and function of Local Area Committees, along with the Local Area Committee grant funding.

3.3 In December 2017, Council noted the findings of the Local Area Committee review, and approved a consultation exercise could commence based on 9 proposals developed from the findings of the review.

3.4 The consultation took place over a 12 week period between 22 January and 15 April 2018. A range of opportunities was put in place inviting comment on the nine proposals:

- Paper consultation document
- Online survey
- Public events in Johnstone and Paisley
- Drop in events in Lochwinnoch, Bishopton, Erskine, Renfrew and Linwood.
- Facilitated sessions with STAR Project, Renfrewshire Effort To Empower Minorities, ROAR Connections For Life, Erskine Music and Media, CREATE Paisley, Street Stuff and Active Communities.
- Presentations at all five Local Area Committees
- Invited attendance at meetings of Renfrewshire Youth Voice, Hawkhead and Lochfield Community Council, Elderslie Community Council and Ralston Community Council.

3.5 173 survey responses were received, with 274 attendees at various events. This does not include stakeholders who were updated at formal Local Area Committee meetings.

#### 4. Summary of findings

4.1 **Aims:** Proposals within the consultation paper detailed a renewed set of aims, and a specific proposal for a primary aim of the new arrangements to be identifying, setting and sharing local priorities. The consultation also sought views on ‘rebranding’ Local Area Committees, moving the focus from a committee function to a partnership function. Key themes emerging from the consultation included:

- 78% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that aims of community level governance arrangements should be refreshed
- Supportive that new arrangements should promote better connections and networks
- Support for local priority setting
- More meaningful discussion between communities and public services and active encouragement of community participation identified as important to achieve better partnership working
- Identified potential for a more meaningful agenda across the year
- Broad support for moving to partnership model from committee model (61% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed), but recognition there is a need for a sound structure for meetings
- Quality facilitation at meetings and conditions for genuine community participation identified as key to culture change
- New model should not duplicate or diminish the role of community councils

4.2 **Membership:** Proposals within the consultation paper included widening voting rights within the new partnership arrangements, and a greater role for relevant partner organisations. The consultation sought views on proposals to move from formal committees of the Council to part of the Community Planning Partnership structures. Key themes emerging from the consultation included:

- Strong support for extending voting rights (77% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed)
- Areas without Community Councils should be effectively represented

- Clarity needed around roles and responsibilities from the outset
- There was broad consensus that partnerships should not be party political in nature when voting
- Strong support for an increased role for other public services playing a greater role (86% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed)
- Scope for more meaningful discussion about issues and developments, rather than presentation of statistical reports
- Key is quality of reports and presentations, rather than number of partners round the table
- Strong support for engagement with the wider community beyond those attending meetings (87% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed)
- Community Councils and Community Development Trusts were named as organisations that would play a key role in facilitating this
- Other communication channels should be used to support communication, including social media, with recognition that some people do not use digital channels
- Young people felt youth activities funded could be promoted through schools

4.3

**Boundaries:** Proposals within the consultation paper detailed a proposal to move from using Ward boundaries to Community Council boundaries, and sought views on a proposed model which moves to 7 areas instead of 5. Key themes emerging from the consultation included:

- 56% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that boundaries should be based on Community Council boundaries rather than Ward boundaries, and 56% agreed with the proposed groupings.
- Recognising different issues in villages and towns was supported and endorsed, particularly the grouping of villages
- Support for the realignment of the Gallowhill area with Paisley, as opposed to Renfrew in the current arrangements
- Support for Linwood being aligned with Johnstone
- Some concerns about the practicality of resourcing seven areas
- A number of concerns raised by Elderslie residents, who had preference to be part of the village grouping due to common interests

- There were also some concerns raised from Paisley East residents about the grouping of Community Council areas in the east of the town and its relationship to the town centre

4.4

**Meetings:** Proposals within the consultation paper focused on how meetings can become more accessible and participative, and the consultation sought views on how this could be best achieved. Key themes emerging from the consultation included:

- 86% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed meetings should become more accessible and participative
- Broad support for changes in meeting style, with less formal meetings in surroundings more comfortable, and an emphasis on accessibility issues supporting a change of culture
- Greater opportunity for discussion and a reduction in paperwork would be a positive change
- Agenda still needs to be shaped and managed to ensure meaningful business is conducted
- Welcoming environment for new members raised as an important factor for positive partnership culture

4.5

**Grants:** Proposals within the consultation paper focused on refocusing locally distributed grants on local projects (and aligned to local priorities), and providing an alternative process administered by officers for Renfrewshire wide proposals (which is aligned to Community Planning priorities). The consultation also sought views on a proposal to carry out a participatory budgeting exercise with money allocated to the Youth Challenge fund. Key themes emerging from the consultation included:

- Support for grants to be focussed on local projects rather than Renfrewshire wide projects (84% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed funding should be focussed locally, with 67% strongly agreeing or agreeing with ‘multi-LAC’ applications being administered centrally)
- Recognition that removing a percentage of resource from the local budget would result in less to allocate, and keenness to see the detail of this proposal
- Transparency and accountability should be guiding principles for grant allocations
- Eligibility criteria should be revised, with difference on what people felt this should focus on

- Organisations should be supported to become more sustainable
- Support for participatory budgeting processes (81% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed new arrangements should give choice for participatory budgeting), with assurance on actual mechanisms selected and whether these are fair and transparent
- Considerable interest among young people about being involved in a participatory budgeting process (77% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed young people should decide on the allocation of the Youth Challenge Fund through a participatory budgeting exercise), recognising the method chosen would be key to encouraging participation

## 5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The proposals outlined within the consultation paper will now be developed in more detail, taking into consideration the feedback received during the consultation period.
- 5.2 These detailed proposals and processes will be submitted to Council in June for consideration, including a timeline for the implementation of the new model.
- 5.3 The development of the future grants processes will also be aligned to the new approach outlined in the ‘Support to Community Organisations’ paper submitted to Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018, and to the development of the Community Empowerment Fund which will be brought to Council for consideration at Council in June 2018. It should be noted that this represents a significant opportunity to simplify and align the support provided to community organisations.

## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - It is possible that the administration of new arrangements could have financial implications for the Council. These will be developed and presented as part of any changed proposals presented to future Council meeting.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - There are no HR implications arising from this report. There may be organisational development implications for a future model, as it is possible that there will be training requirements for officers as part of the transition to any new model.

**3. Community/Council Planning –**

Community Plan - Our Renfrewshire is well – This priority of the Community Plan explicitly refers to the review of community level governance, and in particular that communities are best place to support themselves and articulate their own needs.

Council Plan - Building strong, safe and resilient communities – A key priority within the Council plan is to ‘Strengthen existing community networks and empowering local people to become more involved in their area and the services delivered there.’

**4. Legal** - Any future change to Local Area Committee arrangements would be likely to have governance implications for the Council. These will be developed and presented as part of any changed proposals presented to future Council meeting.

**5. Property/Assets** - Not applicable .

**6. Information Technology** - Not applicable

**7. Equality & Human Rights** - The proposals discussed within the paper should improve participation and representation of communities and enable groups to have more voice and influence in the shaping and scrutiny of public services.

**8. Health & Safety** - Any health and safety implications would be considered in the delivery of the consultation, and moving forward in any new arrangements developed.

**9. Procurement** – Not applicable

**10. Risk** – Not applicable

**11. Privacy Impact** – Not applicable

**12. Cosla Policy Position** – The review of Community Level Governance has potential links to the review of Local Governance being taken forward by Scottish Government and COSLA jointly. It is anticipated that this will launch throughout 2018.

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**List of Background Papers**

- (a)      Background Paper 1
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2018

# Review of Community Level Governance

CONSULTATION REPORT

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## About this report

The report provides an overview of consultation responses as part of Renfrewshire Council’s review of community level governance arrangements. It gives a summary of how the consultation was carried out and key themes that emerged from the consultation. It includes information and a breakdown of how people responded to the survey, and examples of comments that were shared in survey responses and at events people participated in.

## About the consultation

The consultation took place between 22 January and 15 April 2018. This consultation built on information emerging from the initial consultation period that took place in autumn 2017. The subject of the consultation was a set of nine proposals, grouped under the five thematic headings of Function, Membership, Boundaries, Meetings and Grants.

The survey was available to be completed either on-line via survey monkey or in paper format. A total of 173 surveys were completed and returned. Most of the surveys were completed by individuals, with eleven submitted on behalf of community organisations and nine by sporting and cultural organisations.

In addition to the survey format, a series of events were held in communities throughout Renfrewshire to generate discussion on the proposed changes to Community Level Governance Arrangements, gauge the level of support and capture any other comments. A total of 274 people attended these events, excluding attendance at Local Area Committees.

- Public events in Johnstone and Paisley
- Drop in events in Lochwinnoch, Bishopton, Erskine, Renfrew and Linwood.
- Facilitated sessions with community led organisations
- Presentations at all five Local Area Committees
- Invited attendance at meetings of Renfrewshire Youth Voice, Hawkhead and Lochfield Community Council, Elderslie Community Council and Ralston Community Council.

Two public events were held in Johnstone Town Hall and Paisley Town Hall. At these events, speakers set out the proposals, before group discussions took place in a workshop format. Feedback on each of the proposals was captured on flipchart paper.

Smaller-scale open drop-in sessions were held in a number of locations in communities across Renfrewshire to enable people to take part in discussion about the proposals and have their views recorded. These were held in Renfrew, Linwood, Bishopton, Lochwinnoch and Erskine.

A number of community groups led their own drop-in sessions, supported by Renfrewshire Council staff. These sessions focused on speaking to groups with members who would be less likely to attend events for the general public. Discussions at these sessions were framed around the proposals, but tailored to reflect the interests of the particular group. These were facilitated by ROAR, Renfrewshire Effort to Empower Minorities, Erskine Music and Media, Active Communities, STAR Project, Street Stuff and CREATE Paisley.

Presentations on the nine proposals of the Review of Community Level Governance were made at all five Local Area Committee meetings in February/March 2018 and also at the meetings of Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering Communities and Renfrewshire Community Councils Forum. Each of these sessions provided opportunities for individuals and organisations to make comments on the proposals and ask questions about the process.

At all events, an open invitation was extended to attend any other meetings as requested by organisations to discuss the proposals. As a result of this offer, presentations were also given at meetings of Hawkhead and Lochfield Community Council, Elderslie Community Council and Ralston Community Council.

## Function

### Proposal 1: Refresh the aims

Respondents were asked if they agree with the proposed aims of new arrangements and for any additional comments.

The proposed key aims include:

- Make connections and networks between community groups and the wider community.
- Identify, set and share local community priorities.
- Listen to, consult and represent local communities.
- Distribute grants to support local activities

78% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that aims of community level governance arrangements should be refreshed

“For some public sector organisations and frontline services, LAC's can provide important opportunities for partners to work together effectively beyond receiving grant awards.” (Survey respondent)

“Local government should work closer with communities to help them improve their areas” (Survey respondent)

Discussion at events supported the proposal that the new arrangements should promote better connections and networks between the wider communities.

“It's not just about the grants!! Real opportunity for joint working, collaborative/coproduction.” (Event attendee)

More meaningful discussion between communities and public services and active encouragement of community participation at the meetings were identified as being important to achieve better partnership working across communities.

“The structure outline puts organisations and local elected members as the key driver (and members) of the new structures when in fact it should be the community itself , residents and so on who have the greatest influence.” (Survey respondent)

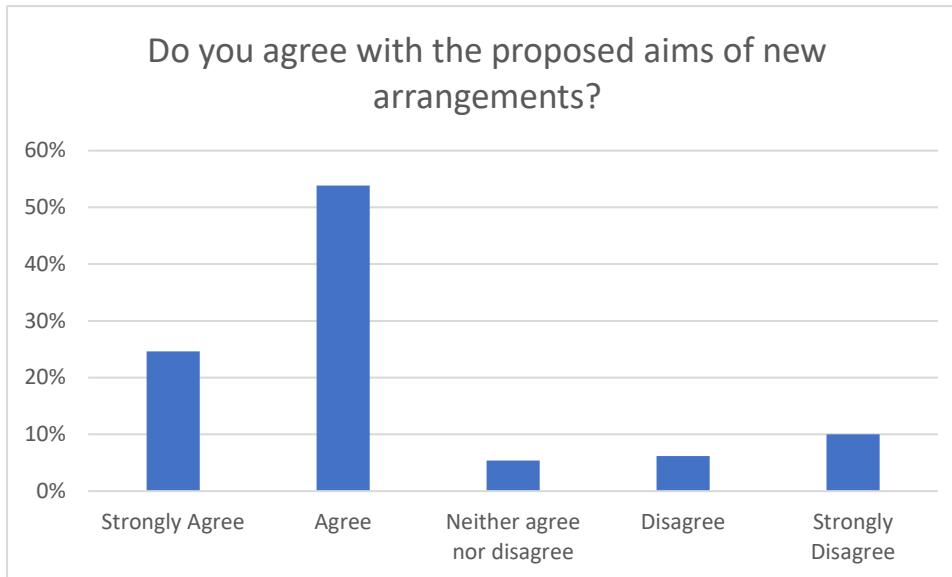
The potential for partnerships to have a meaningful agenda across the whole year, rather than focus primarily around grants, was recognised. The opportunity for local communities to be engaged in setting and sharing priorities was regarded as a positive development.

### Summary of survey responses

Do you agree with the proposed aims of new arrangements?

	No of respondents	% of respondents
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	32	18%
<b>Agree</b>	70	40%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	7	4%
<b>Disagree</b>	8	5%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	13	8%

No answer	43	25%
Total	173	100%



## Proposal 2: Move from “committees” to partnership

Respondents were asked if they agree with the proposed approach and for any additional comments.

The principle of moving from a Council committee model to a partnership model was broadly supported (61% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed), but with the caveat that there was still need for a sound structure for the meetings.

It was recognised that the key to achieving a change to an effective partnership culture would be the quality of facilitation at meetings and creating the conditions for genuine community participation. One of the ideas was for the chair to be a community participant, rather than an Elected Member, to signify the change to a community-led approach.

“I don't really see what significance it has if it's called a committee or a partnership. Again, it sounds good in theory, but in practice, I don't think it will make any difference to the current set up.”  
(Survey respondent)

“Committee feels authoritarian, whereas Partnership sounds more inclusive” (Event attendee)

One issue that was raised regarding the proposed new functions was about how this relates to business conducted through community councils. It is important that the proposed partnerships are connected to Community Council business, but does not duplicate or diminish the role of community councils.

“Needs to be good distinction from Community Councils” (Event attendee)

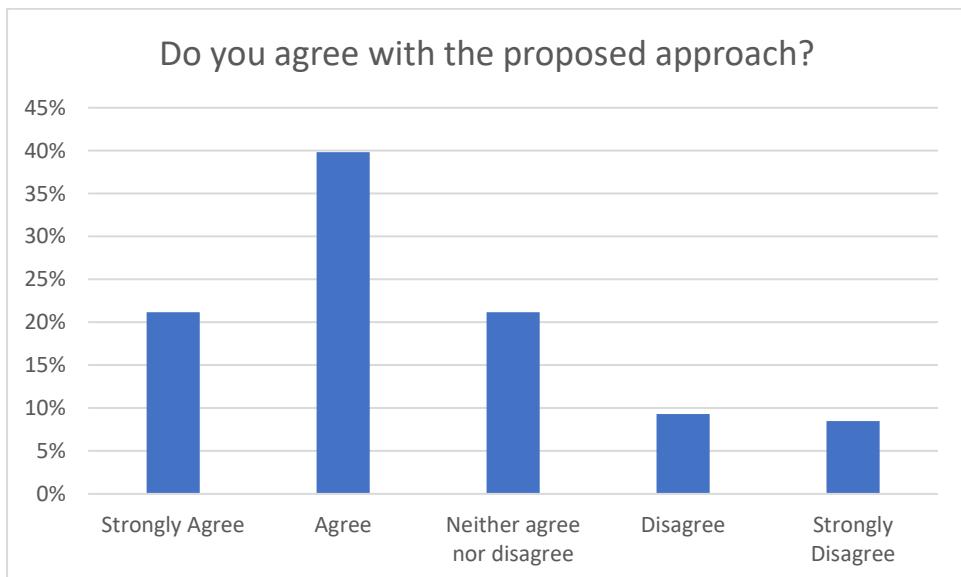
There were some concerns raised regarding scrutiny and accountability of the new partnerships, relating to the proposed move from a formal committee of the Council to part of the Community Planning Partnership governance structure.

“Concern that this will reduce the scrutiny and democratic accountability of these new partnerships and that there is no formal or statutory code of conduct for community members” (Survey respondent)

### **Summary of survey responses**

Do you agree with the proposed approach?

	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	25	14%
<b>Agree</b>	47	27%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	25	14%
<b>Disagree</b>	11	6%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	10	6%
<b>No answer</b>	55	32%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%



## Membership

### Proposal 3: Voting rights extended

Respondents were asked if they agree that voting rights should be extended and for any additional comments.

There was strong support for extending voting rights within the survey (77% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed), with the proposed extension of voting rights to community members to create a balance between community and Elected Member votes supported in principle by event attendees.

“Current arrangements re voting are disenfranchising and need to be changed to get better community involvement.” (Survey respondent)

“Extending voting and giving wider voice and listening to non biased points of view can only be a positive step.” (Survey respondent)

Some issues were raised with regard to ensuring that areas that do not currently have active Community Councils are effectively represented and ensuring that there is clarity from the outset regarding roles and responsibilities.

“The criteria for deciding on community members has to be carefully considered.” (Event attendee)

“I would only see this being good if there were equal number of representatives from each village/town regardless of the size of the population in those areas, otherwise smaller villages would never get heard” (Survey respondent)

There was broad consensus that local partnerships should not be party political in nature when voting is required. However, some concerns were raised about extending decision making powers beyond elected members to community representatives with no democratic mandate.

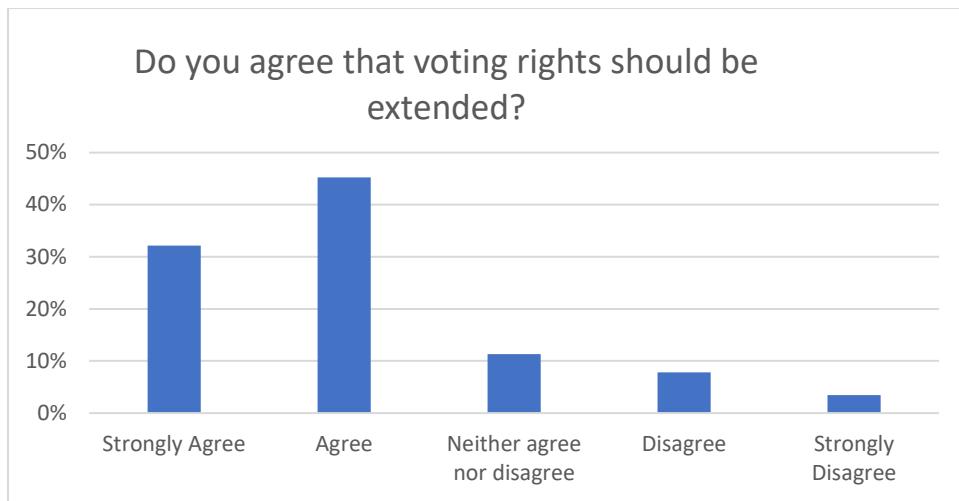
“It would be good to de politicise the meetings and have an equal balance of votes between elected members and community representatives” (Event attendee)

“How can someone without an elected mandate be given an equal vote to someone who has?” (Event attendee)

### Summary of survey responses

Do you agree that voting rights should be extended?

	No of respondents	% of respondents
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	37	21%
<b>Agree</b>	52	30%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	13	8%
<b>Disagree</b>	9	5%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	4	2%
<b>No answer</b>	58	34%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%



#### Proposal 4: Other public services play a greater role

Respondents were asked if partners should play a greater role and for any additional comments.

There was strong support for an increased role for other public services playing a greater role (86% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed).

*“I think it would be useful for their attendance at meetings as their organisations affect communities.” (Survey respondent)*

*“Yes... it will be a challenge for one Individual to represent whole organisations and this should be considered when considering the role of these representatives” (Survey respondent)*

A shared partnership approach was supported by people attending face to face events. People felt that there was scope for more meaningful discussion about issues and developments, rather than presentation of statistical reports.

*“I would not want the meetings to be strangled by a series of bureaucratic reports.” (Survey respondent)*

The key to public service input to local community governance was seen as being the quality of reports, presentations and relationship to the partnership, rather than the number of partners round the table.

*“Yes and be answerable by reporting back with decisions” (Event attendee)*

Renfrewshire Leisure Limited was identified as a partner that could have an enhanced role in the local governance in order to engage about both facilities and activities to encourage health and sport within Renfrewshire. Increased awareness of the role of Engage Renfrewshire in supporting community capacity building was also identified as an area for development.

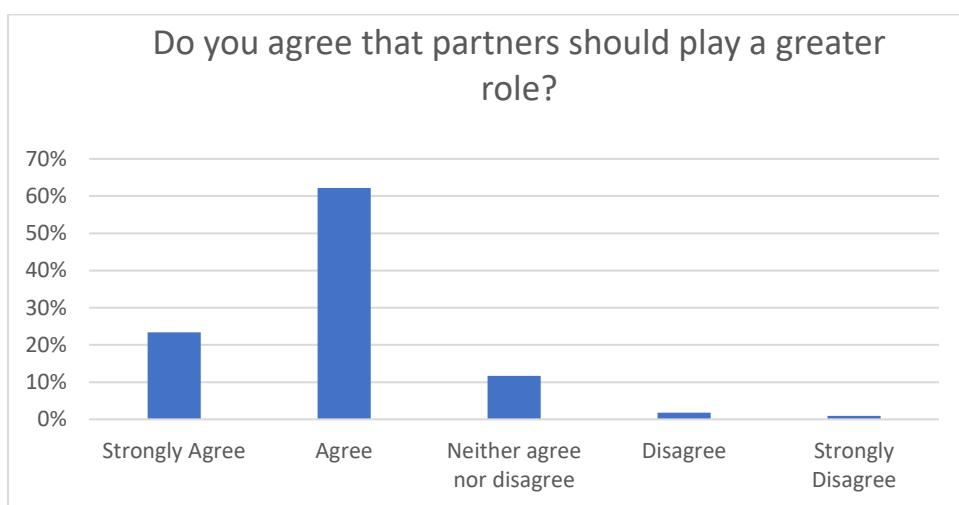
There were a number of suggestions regarding further partner organisations which people felt should have a presence at the partnerships, for example, the ambulance service and fire service. It was recognised that many public sector organisations may not have the capacity to attend the partnerships.

*“What about the private sector? And involvement should not mean attendance at meetings - e.g. Police Scotland don’t have the resources for this” (Survey respondent)*

## Summary of survey responses

Do you agree that partners should play a greater role?

	No of respondents	% of respondents
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	26	15%
<b>Agree</b>	69	40%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	13	8%
<b>Disagree</b>	2	1%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	1	1%
<b>No answer</b>	62	36%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%



## Proposal 5: Wider engagement with the community

Respondents were asked if partnerships should engage with the wider community, how this would be best achieved and for any other comments.

There was strong support for engagement with the wider community beyond those attending meetings (87% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed). The principle of engagement with the wider community beyond those attending meetings was also supported at the face to face meetings.

*"I agree wider engagement is essential as many people don't even know Local Area Committees exist." (Survey respondent)*

The role that Community Councils and other community groups can play in gathering information on community views and communicating information from partnerships was discussed and was broadly supported. In particular, Community Development Trusts were mentioned as organisations that could particularly play an enhanced role in being information conduits to and from the local community governance arrangements.

It was also felt that other communication channels such as social media and the Well In Renfrewshire portal could be used to support communication. However, there were some concerns

about over-use of social media and digital channels and how this might exclude people who are not online.

“I think you will have to try a number of different methods so that you reach the maximum no of partners. Be open about agendas , minutes where possible, Use social media, websites” (Survey respondent)

“Widening access should not solely rely on social media and digital channels - this will exclude many groups of people and defeat the purpose of widening engagement” (Survey respondent)

There were a number of comments about hosting occasional ‘event style’ meetings, and how this might be an effective way of engaging with parts of the community unlikely to attend more formal community meetings.

“Event style meetings can bring meaningful conversations enabling people to learn different perspectives.” (Survey respondent)

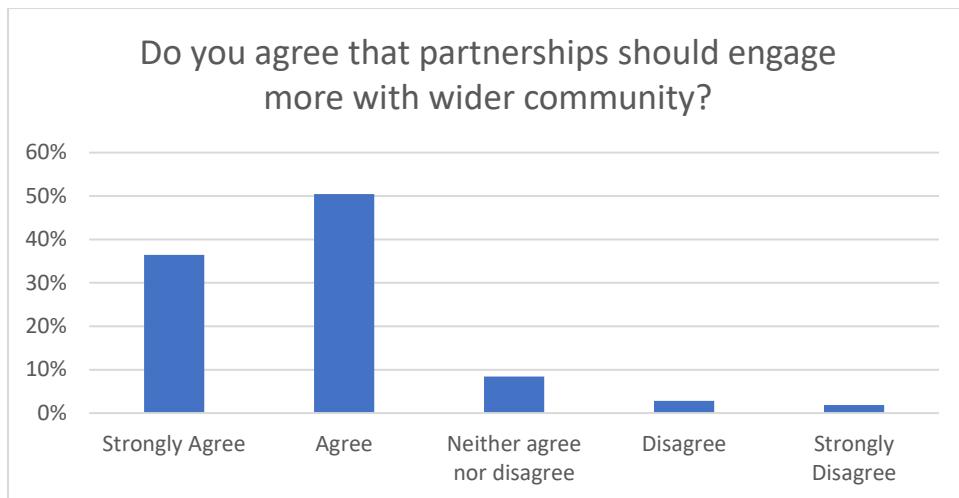
“Hold more social events, family friendly, generation friendly where you engage with people by hosting something engaging and have the community angle as a secondary reason to attend” (Survey respondent)

A particular idea identified by young people was about communicating the availability of activity for young people funded through the local community governance structures through schools. This would both widen the awareness of the important role of local community governance arrangements in funding local activity and also ensure that young people know about the activities available to them.

### **Summary of survey responses**

Do you agree that partnerships should engage more with wider community?

	No of respondents	% of respondents
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	39	23%
<b>Agree</b>	54	31%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	9	5%
<b>Disagree</b>	3	2%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	2	1%
<b>No answer</b>	66	38%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%



## Boundaries

Proposal 6: Move from 5 areas based on ward boundaries to 7 based on community council boundaries

Respondents were asked if they agree with the proposed move from ward boundaries to Community Council boundaries and the proposed groupings. Respondents were also asked about the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed groupings in relation to specific areas.

56% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that boundaries should be based on Community Council boundaries rather than Ward boundaries, and 56% agreed with the proposed groupings.

*“The changes will make the committees more community focused.” (Survey respondent)*

*“More responsive to local needs, interests and population distribution” (Survey respondent)*

This was the proposal with least consensus, but analysis of survey responses shows the vast majority of dissent about the proposed boundaries was specifically around the placement of Elderslie with Johnstone and Linwood. The principle of recognising the different interests and issues in village and town areas was supported.

*“More consideration will be given to the needs of our rural villages which are somewhat different from the needs of Renfrewshire towns.” (Survey respondent)*

*“I agree with move to CC boundaries, however localities need to be right fit” (Event attendee)*

However, some concerns were expressed regarding the practicality of resourcing seven areas. It was also recognised that the proposed new arrangements would result in Elected Members potentially having to attend two different partnership areas. While the move towards more local groupings was broadly welcomed, there was concern that the impact on the size of the budget for each grouping could lead to less engagement.

*“No advantage to increasing bureaucracy” (Survey respondent)*

*“Would that then change the councillors who attend?” (Event attendee)*

Regarding the proposed groupings, the following proposals were supported:

- Gallowhill aligned to a Paisley grouping, rather than Renfrew as is currently the arrangement.
- Villages in West Renfrewshire forming a grouping separate from Johnstone.
- Linwood being aligned with Johnstone.

Concern was expressed about the following proposals:

- Elderslie aligned with Johnstone and Linwood rather than the other villages. There was strong feedback from Elderslie that the area should be part of the village grouping, due to common interests.
- Paisley East aligned with other areas to the Eastern boundary of Paisley, rather than with the community council areas to its west.

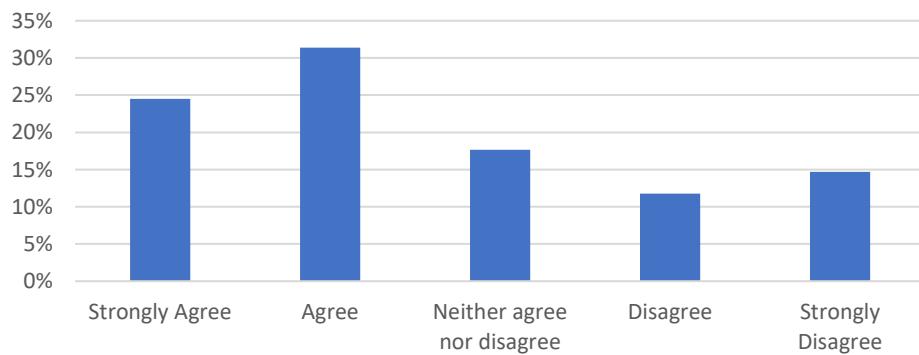
*"I think Elderslie will be at a disadvantage as it is much smaller than the other 2 areas and has different priorities. Would prefer it stays with other villages the same size with similar issues"*  
*(Survey respondent)*

#### **Summary of survey responses**

Do you agree with the proposed move from ward boundaries to Community Council boundaries?

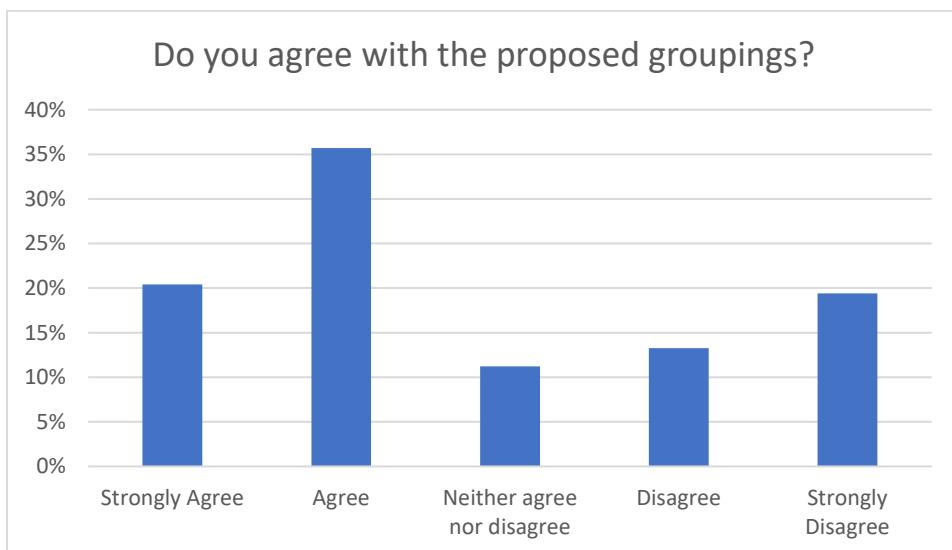
	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	25	14%
<b>Agree</b>	32	18%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	18	10%
<b>Disagree</b>	12	7%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	15	9%
<b>No answer</b>	71	41%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%

Do you agree with the proposed move from ward boundaries to Community Council boundaries?



Do you agree with the proposed groupings?

	No of respondents	% of respondents
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	20	12%
<b>Agree</b>	35	20%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	11	6%
<b>Disagree</b>	13	8%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	19	11%
<b>No answer</b>	75	43%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%



## Meetings

Proposal 7: Meetings should become more accessible and participative

Respondents were asked if they agree with the proposals about meetings and what else could be done to support more accessible and participative meetings.

86% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed meetings should become more accessible and participative

There was broad support for the proposed changes in meeting style. It was considered that a less formal meeting style in surroundings that are generally more comfortable, but with an emphasis on accessibility issues, would support a change in culture.

“More conscious effort to move away from LACs. Potential for real partnership but needs deliberate changes” (Event attendee)

In particular, it was felt that meetings with greater opportunity for discussion and a reduction in paperwork would be a positive change in the culture of local governance arrangements. It was recognised, however, that agendas still had to be shaped and managed to ensure that meaningful business is conducted.

"Good start should be reviewed and based on feedback from attendees at each meeting. Need to consider balance of setting context and getting on with business" (Survey respondent)

Creating a welcoming environment for new members was raised as an important factor in developing a positive partnership culture.

"Needs to be more casual and inviting to encourage people to speak freely" (Event attendee)

There were a number of issues raised around awareness of meetings, and how clearly and openly they are promoted.

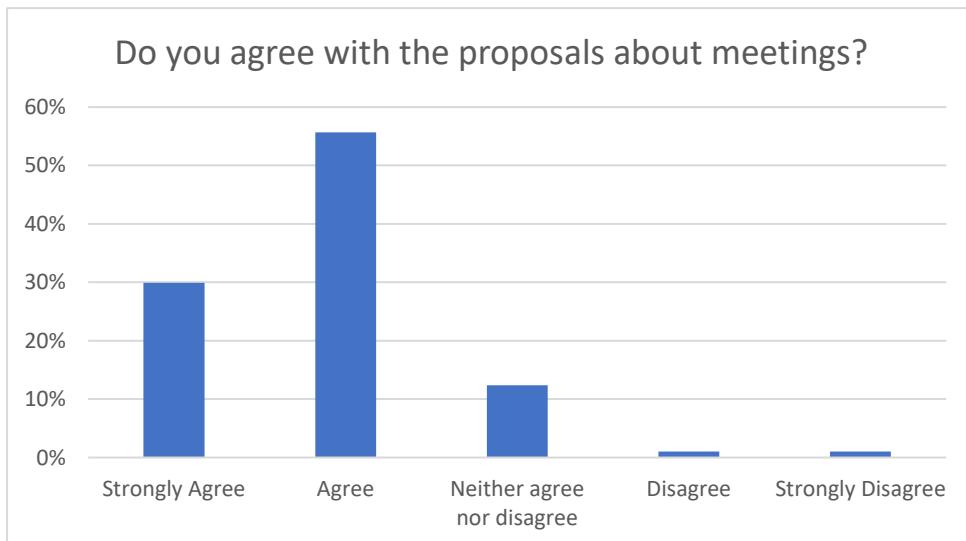
"These meetings are already open to the general public. It is the duty of local government to publicise the value of this body and invite them to meetings" (Survey respondent)

"Advertising the agenda of the meeting locally so residents know what will be discussed beforehand." (Survey respondent)

### **Summary of survey responses**

Do you agree with the proposals about meetings?

	No of respondents	% of respondents
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	29	17%
<b>Agree</b>	54	31%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	12	7%
<b>Disagree</b>	1	1%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	1	1%
<b>No answer</b>	76	44%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%



## Grants

### Proposal 8: Local Grants For Local Projects

Respondents were asked if they agree that funding should be focused on local projects, in line with the community priorities that have been identified and agreed. Respondents were also asked if “multi-LAC” applications should be administered through a central grant fund and for any other comments.

There was strong support for grants to be focussed on local projects rather than Renfrewshire wide projects (84% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed funding should be focussed locally, with 67% strongly agreeing or agreeing with ‘multi-LAC’ applications being administered centrally)

“The partnerships need to set priorities for funding and score applications according to those priorities” (Event attendee)

“Totally agree – keep it local, fair, relevant to communities” (Event attendee)

The proposal to focus discussion at local community governance arrangements on grants for local projects was supported at events. There was agreement that discussion about applications for Renfrewshire-wide projects should not be a focus at local structures. It was recognised, however, that removing a percentage of resource from the local budget to fund Renfrewshire-wide applications would result in less resource being allocated through the local community governance arrangements.

“Funding should be fairly distributed, ensuring each area receives its fair share. This does not happen at present.” (Survey respondent)

There was general agreement of the need for transparency and consistency to be guiding principles in the allocation of resources. Views were expressed that there should be revised eligibility criteria for allocation of funds, although there were differences in what people thought the criteria should or shouldn’t focus on.

“There should be stricter funding criteria, with good follow up and evaluation, including what difference the project made” (Event attendee)

“Council departments should be excluded from applying for grants” (Survey respondent)

“There should be a sensible maximum amount (possibly £5k?) for local grants.” (Survey respondent)

There was also recognition that applicants for funding should be encouraged to seek out external sources of funding and become self-sustaining if possible to avoid recurring grant applications for the same project. Some views were expressed that grants should be available throughout the year, or at least twice per year.

“People applying for specific groups, i.e. sports grants should do it through other means such as Sports Scotland, community grants should be for the communities not for specifics.” (Survey respondent)

It was recognised that the detail regarding the size of the various budget pots would have an impact on whether people would support the proposed changes regarding grants in actuality.

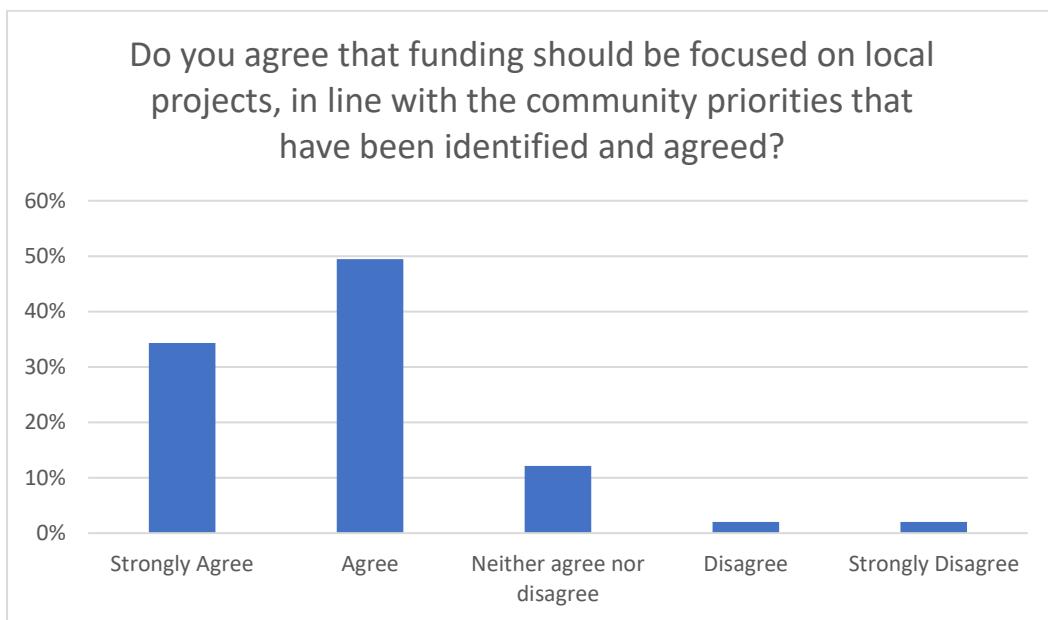
As with meetings above, there were some concerns raised that funding processes and awards of funding should be more clearly promoted within communities.

["There are many good projects \(several funded through the LAC\), but they are not well advertised."](#)  
[\(Event attendee\)](#)

### **Summary of survey responses**

Do you agree that funding should be focused on local projects, in line with the community priorities that have been identified and agreed?

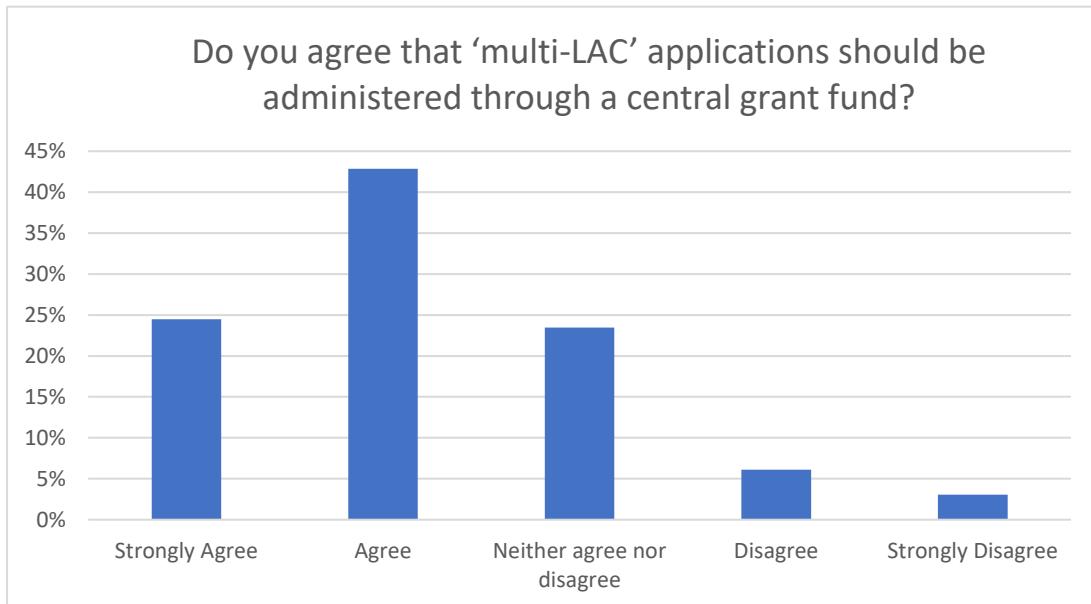
	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	34	20%
<b>Agree</b>	49	28%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	12	7%
<b>Disagree</b>	2	1%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	2	1%
<b>No answer</b>	74	43%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%



Do you agree that 'multi-LAC' applications should be administered through a central grant fund?

	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	24	14%
<b>Agree</b>	42	24%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	23	13%
<b>Disagree</b>	6	3%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	3	2%

No answer	75	43%
Total	173	100%



### Proposal 9: Participatory Budgeting

Respondents were asked if they agree that new Local Governance Arrangements should be given a choice about using participatory budgeting, whether young people should decide allocation of the Youth Challenge Fund through participatory budgeting and for any other comments on participatory budgeting.

The proposal to allocate budgets through a Participatory Budgeting process was generally agreed in principle. However, it was noted that people would need to be assured that the actual mechanism chosen was fair and transparent.

“This model has worked successfully in some local authorities” (Survey respondent)

“Participatory Budget is fairer as it has the support of local groups – it is more democratic” (Event attendee)

“It is good practice to let public to vote. Participatory budgeting also brings people together.” (Event attendee)

“The PB event should be properly advertised and organised and discharged in a professional manner” (Survey respondent)

There was strong support for a youth-led participatory budgeting process (77% of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed young people should decide on the allocation of the Youth Challenge Fund through a participatory budgeting exercise), recognising the method chosen would be key to encouraging participation.

“How will this work? Need to get a wide range of young people from different backgrounds” (Survey respondent)

Young people in particular were considerably interested in this opportunity, but felt generally that young people should be more clearly involved in the allocation of funding for youth activities.

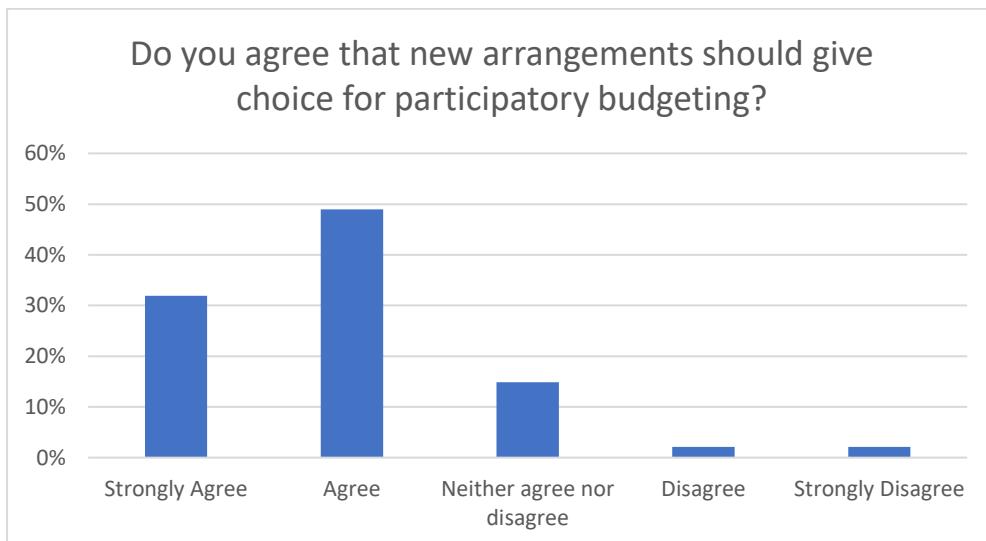
“For the youth related funding, there could be the requirement that for proof that young people are involved in the project and have been involved in the application” (Event attendee)

“I don't believe young peoples voice will actually be taken into account, other than on paper.”  
(Survey respondent)

### Summary of survey responses

Do you agree that new arrangements should give choice for participatory budgeting?

	No of respondents	% of respondents
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	30	17%
<b>Agree</b>	46	27%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	14	8%
<b>Disagree</b>	2	1%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	2	1%
<b>No answer</b>	79	46%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%



Do you agree that young people should decide on the allocation of the Youth Challenge Fund through a participatory budgeting exercise?

	No of respondents	% of respondents
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	34	20%
<b>Agree</b>	38	22%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	14	8%
<b>Disagree</b>	6	3%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	1	1%
<b>No answer</b>	80	46%
<b>Total</b>	173	100%

Do you agree that young people should decide on the allocation of the Youth Challenge Fund through a participatory budgeting exercise?

