

Notice of Meeting and Agenda Cross Party Sounding Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 12 September 2019	12:30	Corporate Meeting Room 1, Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

KENNETH GRAHAM
Head of Corporate Governance

Membership

Councillor Tom Begg: Councillor Paul Mack: Councillor Eileen McCartin: Councillor Kevin Montgomery:
Councillor Iain Nicolson (Convener): Councillor Jim Paterson (Depute Convener):

Further Information

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

A copy of the agenda and reports for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the Customer Service Centre, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley and online at <http://renfrewshire.cmis.uk.com/renfrewshire/CouncilandBoards.aspx>
For further information, please either email democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk or telephone 0141 618 7112.

Members of the Press and Public

Members of the press and public wishing to attend the meeting should report to the customer service centre where they will be met and directed to the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies from members.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare an interest in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest.

Items of business

- | | | |
|----------|---|----------------|
| 1 | Exempt Items | 3 - 8 |
| | Report by Director of Finance & Resources | |
| 2 | Participatory Budgeting | 9 - 26 |
| | Report by Chief Executive | |
| 3 | Climate Change Emergency | 27 - 32 |
| | Report by Chief Executive | |



To: Cross Party Sounding Board

On: 12 September 2019

Report by: Director of Finance & Resources

Heading: Exempt Items

1. Summary

- 1.1 In 2019 there have been three incidents of “exempt” reports being released to the local press.
 - 1.2 This report sets out the reasons why exempt reports are used, why it is important that they are protected from publication and proposes to restrict the potential for exempt reports to be published.
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2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That members consider the proposed change to distribution of exempt reports as detailed in paragraph 3.13 of the report.
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3. Background

- 3.1 The Council and its Boards can decide that any of the reports submitted on an agenda should be exempt from the over-riding requirement that all Council and Board meetings and the consideration of any items at a meeting are held in public.
- 3.2 The grounds on which such a decision can be taken are limited to the 15 categories set out in Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act

1973 (see attached appendix). In practice, the grounds used to exempt reports in Renfrewshire tend to be those to protect information relating to the business affairs of any person (paragraph 6), the amount of expenditure for the acquisition of property (paragraph 8) and the terms of any negotiations for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services (paragraph 9).

- 3.3 It will usually be officers who suggest to the relevant convener that a report should be exempt and who will set out the appropriate grounds for exemption to be used.
- 3.4 If the convener agrees that the report should be classified as exempt, it will be referred to on the agenda but will not be included in the papers published in hard copy or published in the publicly accessible part of the CMIS system on the Council's website. However, the report will be issued on pink paper and attached to the hard copy agendas issued to all elected members and to all officers who are entitled to receive them. It is the Head of Corporate Governance who is the 'proper officer' in terms of the Act to exclude such documents. The exempt reports are also available electronically to all officers and elected members with the necessary access privileges on the CMIS system. The only exemption to this level of distribution is for appeals in respect of which only those members who are serving on the panel and a limited number of officers involved in supporting the appeals process.
- 3.5 The first page of an exempt report will have a stamp stating that it is not for publication and stating the paragraphs in Schedule 7A to the Act that are being relied on to justify exemption. Each page of the report will be clearly marked "Not for Publication."
- 3.6 Any elected member at a meeting can challenge the exempt status of a report and if supported by a seconder can move against the report being exempted. If that motion was successful, the report would be discussed in the normal way in the public domain.
- 3.7 In addition, the Council or any Board also has the power to exclude the public during any meeting, regardless of whether a report has been designated as exempt. This can be done whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, confidential information could be disclosed in breach of an obligation of confidence. This might happen for example where an amendment has been submitted that involves the discussion of certain types of confidential information that hadn't been anticipated in advance of the meeting.
- 3.8 The number of reports that are exempt is relatively small. The recommendation from officers that a report should be exempt will be made based on risk to the Council but also in some circumstances to the business affairs of a person or organisation which wishes to undertake business with the Council. As an additional procedural step, it is intended that all

recommendations for reports to be exempt are approved by the Head of Corporate Governance prior to the reports being sent to the convener. This may have the effect of reducing the number of exempt reports.

- 3.9 The risks to the Council are that anybody suffering a loss as a result of a deliberate release of confidential or commercially sensitive information into the public domain could seek to recover compensation for their loss from the Council; there is reputational risk to the Council which may result in the loss of future opportunities if the Council is not seen as a reputable body with whom to do business; and any unlawful publication of personal data could result in sanctions, including financial penalties, being imposed on the Council by the Information Commissioner.
- 3.10 The risks to any elected member putting the confidential information into the public domain are a breach of the Councillors' Code of Conduct (paragraphs 3.16 and 3.17). The sanctions available to the Standards Commission for Scotland were a breach of the Code to be established, range from censure to disqualification; breach of the Data Protection (Scotland) Act 2018. Any breach caused by the release of personal data into the public domain by any person might lead to criminal prosecution, civil liability or a fine by the Information Commissioner. In addition, if the information has been released by a Council officer, they would be subject to a disciplinary investigation and could be dismissed for gross misconduct.
- 3.11 Whilst it is not possible to eliminate totally the risk of exempt information being released into the public domain, the measures below are aimed at reducing the risk of exempt information being released
- 3.12 The most significant of these measures would be to reduce the distribution of exempt reports. Clearly all members of a Board should have access to an exempt report on that Board's agenda. However, there may be no reason for any other member to have access to the report. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to let members of the ward where the subject matter of the report is located have access to the report. It is also appropriate that the Leader and Depute Leader of the Council have access to all exempt reports, otherwise it should be for elected members who are not on the relevant Board to justify why they should have access to an exempt report. A further measure to restrict the possibility of a copy of an exempt report being accidentally misplaced would be to restrict distribution to those members and officers having the appropriate permissions on the CMIS system. In effect, this would mean that there would no longer be any pink reports added to the end of agendas.
- 3.13 It is proposed therefore that
- Any proposal to have a report classified as exempt be agreed with the Head of Corporate Governance in the first instance, prior to the report being discussed with the relevant convener;

- access to exempt reports is given only to Board members and the Leader and Depute Leader of the Council and appropriate officers;
 - that these be available on an electronic basis only; and
 - that any elected member who is not on the Board and who wishes access to the relevant report be required to justify to the Head of Corporate Governance why they should have access.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – none
4. **Legal** – as detailed in the report
5. **Property/Assets** - none.
6. **Information Technology** – none
7. **Equality & Human Rights**

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – none
 9. **Procurement** – none
 10. **Risk** – none
 11. **Privacy Impact** – none
 12. **CoSLA Policy Position** – not applicable
 13. **Climate Risk** – the number of paper copies of reports will be reduced.
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List of Background Papers – none

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**SCHEDULE 7A - ACCESS TO INFORMATION : EXEMPT INFORMATION -
PART 1 - DESCRIPTION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION**

- 1 Information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee of, or a particular office holder, former office-holder or applicant to become an office holder under the authority.
- * 2 Information relating to any particular occupier or former occupier of or applicant for accommodation provided by or at the expense of the authority.
- * 3 Information relating to any particular applicant for, or recipient or former recipient of, any service provided by the authority.
- 4 Information relating to any particular applicant for, or recipient or former recipient of any financial assistance provided by the authority.
- 5 Information relating to the adoption, care, fostering or education of any particular child or relating to the supervision or residence of any particular child in accordance with a supervision requirement made in respect of that child under the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.
- 6 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (other than the authority).
- 7 Information relating to anything done or to be done in respect of any particular person for the purposes of any of the matters referred to in section 27(1) of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 (providing reports on and supervision of certain persons).
- 8 The amount of any expenditure proposed to be incurred by the authority under any particular contract for the acquisition of property or the supply of goods or services.
- 9 Any term proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.
- 10 The identity of the authority (as well as of any other person by virtue of paragraph 6 above) as the person offering any particular tender for a contract for the supply of goods or services.
- 11 Information relating to any consultations or negotiations or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of or office-holders under, the authority.
Page 7 of 32
- 12 Any instructions to counsel and any opinion of counsel (whether or not in connection with any proceedings) and any advice received, information obtained or action to be taken in connection with
 - (a) any legal proceedings
 - (b) the determination of any matter affecting the authority, (whether, in either case, proceedings have been commenced or are in contemplation).
- 13 Information which, if disclosed to the public, would reveal that the authority proposes
 - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment
- 14 Any action taken or to be in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.
- 15 The identity of a protected informant.



To: Cross Party Sounding Board

On: 12 September 2019

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Participatory Budgeting

1. Summary

- 1.1 COSLA and Scottish Government have worked together to develop and agree a framework that at least 1% of local government budgets will be subject to participatory budgeting by the end of 2021. This is calculated from the revenue budget, less council tax intake, which is estimated to be approximately £3.2million in Renfrewshire.
- 1.2 Grant Making Participatory Budgeting is the distribution of small grants to community and voluntary organisations via community voting events. Mainstream Participatory Budgeting enables local people to directly influence the spending of mainstream council budgets.
- 1.3 In Renfrewshire, a pilot participatory budgeting exercise is currently underway with the Youth Challenge Fund grants, formerly distributed by Local Area Committees. This will be completed by the Autumn and evaluation will be available by the end of the year.
- 1.4 Officers are undertaking work to develop an approach for Mainstream Participatory Budgeting within the Council, in order to meet the 1% requirement by the end of the March 2021.
- 1.5 Members of the board are asked to consider the most suitable methods for raising awareness of Participatory Budgeting amongst elected members, in order that suitable training arrangements can be made.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the board:

- Note the requirement that at least 1% of local government budgets will be subject to participatory budgeting by the end of 2021, as per the framework developed by COSLA and Scottish Government
- Consider the most suitable methods for raising awareness of Participatory Budgeting for elected members.

3. Background

- 3.1 Participatory Budgeting (PB) enables local people to decide on the issues that matter to them. Helping them to understand public spending, put forward their own ideas and vote on them.
- 3.2 Participatory Budgeting comes in all shapes and sizes, but at its most basic it involves:
1. Ideas are generated about how a budget should be spent
 2. People vote for their priorities
 3. The priorities with the most votes get progressed
- 3.3 PB supports the principle of Public Service Reform, that people should have equal opportunity to participate and have their voice heard in decisions shaping their local community and society. As a tool for community engagement, promoting innovative ways for commissioning public services and for building trust in democracy, it underpins the objectives of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- 3.4 A key outcome of PB is to deliver services more efficiently, as service delivery programmes will be based on a clearer understanding of residents' needs and priorities. Over time the proposals emerging from communities are also likely to improve as understanding of what can be achieved matures.
- 3.5 Elected Members have an important role to play in the successful delivery of Participatory Budgeting approaches. The Elected Member briefing on Participatory Budgeting developed by the Improvement service states:

“Mainstream PB complements representative democracy and any process needs to be formally mandated by an accountable body. This means the primary role of elected members to set the authorities’ budget and hold council staff to account is largely unchanged. The role of an elected member to provide leadership and opportunity for all those living within their wards and constituencies to have their say and express their needs, is enhanced through PB. The roles and responsibilities for elected members in a PB process are:

- *To be clear the aims of the process are understood.*

- *To make sure the relevant resources to run an effective PB process are in place.*
- *To ensure the process is inclusive and local people can participate in all stages of the process.*
- *To engage with local people, to encourage and support them to participate in the process.*
- *To approve the decision made by local people in the allocation of funding, through the appropriate decision-making committee/body in the council.”*

3.6 An elected member briefing developed by the Improvement Service and PB Partners has been attached at Appendix A.

4. Framework

- 4.1 As part of the community empowerment agenda, COSLA and Scottish Government have worked together to develop and agree a framework that at least 1% of local government budgets will be subject to participatory budgeting by the end of 2021.
- 4.2 The framework defines Community Choices as the term used in Scotland for Participatory Budgeting and sets PB as the enabler for active participation of citizens in local decision making. It establishes a shared expectation that elected members, senior officers, civil society and local communities will use PB to go beyond the current arrangements for consultation and engagement. The framework sets out that, done well, and using key principles, the longer-term strategic aim of public sector reform can be achieved by applying spend to the greatest areas of need, where social cohesion can be developed or maintained.
- 4.3 Grant Making PB is the distribution of small grants to community and voluntary organisations via community voting events. This has been the most common form of PB taking place across Scotland for the past 5 years. However more recently there has been a focus on scaling up the grant making PB process and focussing more on council mainstream budgets and how best to engage communities in influencing how councils spend those budgets.
- 4.4 Grant making PB is seen as a way of introducing communities to participatory budgeting and there is strong evidence suggesting that it builds capacity and understanding of communities to, in the longer term understand and participate in mainstream PB activities.
- 4.5 Mainstream Participatory Budgeting enables local people to directly influence the spending of mainstream council budgets through deciding on the issues that matter to them. Helping them to understand public spending, put forward their own ideas and vote on them. Through participation in grant making PB programmes, communities build knowledge and capacity which enables them to be more directly involved in mainstream PB. There is a need to build on existing grant making PB programmes.

- 4.6 The 1% target for mainstream PB in Scotland is defined as 'total estimate expenditure for revenue, as per the local government finance circular, less assumed council tax intake' (Community Choices Budgeting Framework for the operation of the 1% target for local authorities) Using this guidance for Renfrewshire, 1% equates to Approx. £3.2M. This target can be made up of both revenue and capital funding.

5. Youth Participatory Budgeting Pilot

- 5.1 Renfrewshire Council are currently delivering their first Grant Making PB through the previously named Youth Challenge Fund. A process which encourages young people to develop ideas for their community and apply for funding for that idea is being designed by young people across Renfrewshire, with a share of £150k being available to individual young people and organisations, this process will be concluded by autumn 2019. The Celebrating Renfrewshire Fund opened for applications on Tuesday 27th July and closed on Tuesday 27th August.
- 5.2 Voting will take place from 16th September – 25th September, culminating in an event on the evening of the 25th September where winners will be announced. Young people across Renfrewshire will be supported to vote through schools and community organisations. This is being delivered in partnership with Youth Services, Renfrewshire Youth Voice and Active Schools (Renfrewshire Leisure).

6. Next steps

- 6.1 Officers are currently undertaking an exercise to identify what Renfrewshire council is currently delivering that might be considered as well as exploring budget areas that potentially lend themselves to being spent through a PB approach.
- 6.2 In preparation for mainstream participatory budgeting, it is good practice that elected members are suitably briefed on how PB processes work, and their role. It is recommended that an external organisation with experience of working with elected members would be selected to deliver any training sessions.
- 6.3 Following feedback from the Cross Party Sounding Board, officers will arrange suitable briefings, training and/or development in this area. Members may wish to consider:
- The format of any training, i.e. whether an interactive training session, briefing or written briefing would be most suitable
 - The length of any training session or briefing
 - Whether any sessions should be delivered during the day, or as twilight sessions

Implications of the Report

1. Financial – The 1% target for mainstream PB in Scotland is defined as ‘total estimate expenditure for revenue, as per the local government finance circular, less assumed council tax intake’ (Community Choices Budgeting Framework for the operation of the 1% target for local authorities) Using this guidance for Renfrewshire, 1% equates to Approx. £3.2M. This target can be made up of both revenue and capital funding.
2. HR & Organisational Development – The paper considers potential training and development required for elected members.
3. Legal – The requirement to deliver 1% of the budget by participatory budgeting is not a statutory requirement, but has been approved as a framework by both Scottish Government and COSLA
4. Property/Assets – None
5. Information Technology - None
6. Equality & Human Rights – None
7. Health & Safety - None
8. Procurement – None
9. Risk – None
10. Privacy Impact - None
11. COSLA Policy Position – As above, the requirements around Participatory Budgeting are approved as a framework by both Scottish Government and COSLA.
12. Climate Risk - None

List of Background Papers: None

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ELECTED MEMBER BRIEFING NOTE

Participatory Budgeting



What is the purpose of the briefing note series?

The Improvement Service (IS) has developed an Elected Members Briefing Series to help elected members keep pace with key issues affecting local government.

Some briefing notes will be directly produced by IS staff but we will also make available material from as wide a range of public bodies, commentators and observers of public services as possible.

We will use the IS website and elected member e-bulletin to publicise and provide access to the briefing notes. All briefing notes in the series can be accessed at www.improvementservice.org.uk/elected-members-development.

About this briefing note

COSLA and Scottish Government have agreed a framework to work together to have at least 1% of council budgets subject to participatory budgeting (PB) by 2021. This ensures local decision-making and the commitment to work together with wider public and third sector partners.

This briefing note has been developed collaboratively by the Improvement Service, Scottish Government and COSLA and aims to support elected members to better understand PB and the role of elected members in a PB process.

[PB Partners](#) was commissioned to develop this briefing in partnership with the aforementioned organisations.

What is participatory budgeting?

Participatory budgeting (PB) enables local people to decide on the issues that matter to them. Helping them to understand public spending, put forward their own ideas and vote on them.

PB is recognised internationally as a way for local people to have a direct say in how, and where, public funds can be used to address local needs. PB empowers citizens, builds trust in democracy and can improve the way public money is spent. It has been best described as: 'If it feels like we've decided, it's PB. If it feels like someone else has decided, it isn't'.

It's important to note that PB is not new in Scotland. As it's common practice to locally brand a PB process (such as community grant decision making e.g. LeithDecides in Edinburgh), you may be unaware that PB processes have been running in your local area. Many local authorities have run PB processes in recent years with support from the Scottish Government's 'Community Choices Fund' therefore the term 'Community Choices' may be more commonly recognised in Scotland.

This briefing will use the term PB as it is internationally and academically recognised.

PB comes in all shapes and sizes, but at its most basic it involves:

1. Ideas are generated about how a budget should be spent
2. People vote for their priorities
3. The priorities with the most votes get progressed

<https://pbscotland.scot/what-is-pb>

PB supports the principle of Public Service Reform, that people should have equal opportunity to participate and have their voice heard in decisions shaping their local community and society. As a tool for community engagement, promoting innovative ways for commissioning public services and for building trust in democracy, it underpins the objectives of the [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#).

A key outcome of PB is to deliver services more efficiently, as service delivery programmes will be based on a clearer understanding of residents' needs and priorities. Over time the proposals emerging from communities are also likely to improve as understanding of what can be achieved matures.

Why use PB?

“Democratic power should be delivered from communities up, not drip down from above. Democratic innovations such asparticipatory budgeting ... should ... become the standard by which [participation in decision making] is delivered in Scotland.”

The Commission for Strengthening Local Democracy, 2014¹

PB offers citizens the opportunity to debate and then decide on issues directly affecting their local communities and needs. It can attract more people to get directly involved in community action.

When people are engaged in community life, they are more likely to experience positive health and wellbeing and life outcomes.

PB can play an essential role in redressing the inequalities that exist within our society. Well run PB empowers communities as those involved feel their views have been respected and the process is fair and accessible. That increases trust between citizens and the elected representatives and officials that gave them the opportunity to make decisions.

PB improves citizens understanding of the choices that need to be made when spending public money. It also increases citizens understanding of the complex interactions between services, the role of the local public bodies, and what communities and families are better placed to do themselves.

The City of Edinburgh Council has produced a [series of videos](#) outlining the benefits of PB for projects, communities and democracy.

Margo Howe, former elected member, The Moray Council: “I’m a firm believer in participatory budgeting or Community Choices. I think it’s revealing that people themselves have grabbed the opportunity and seen the benefit of it. It’s their ideas and, because of this, they will make it work. They’re loving it!”

Local resident, Chris Parsons: “The PB process has changed (for the better) out of all recognition our relationship with local officers and members”.

¹ See <https://www.localdemocracy.info/2014/08/14/time-to-rebuild-scottish-democracy-what-the-referendum-decides/>, accessed April 2017

The role of elected members in PB?

Mainstream PB complements representative democracy and any process needs to be formally mandated by an accountable body. This means the primary role of elected members to set the authorities' budget and hold council staff to account is largely unchanged. The role of an elected member to provide leadership and opportunity for all those living within their wards and constituencies to have their say and express their needs, is enhanced through PB.

The roles and responsibilities for elected members in a PB process are:

- To be clear the aims of the process are understood.
- To make sure the relevant resources to run an effective PB process are in place.
- To ensure the process is inclusive and local people can participate in all stages of the process.
- To engage with local people, to encourage and support them to participate in the process.
- To approve the decision made by local people in the allocation of funding, through the appropriate decision-making committee/body in the council.

What does good practice look like?

Many areas within Scotland have explored how the small grant giving model of PB can support local communities and improve neighbourhood working. Many examples appear on the PB Scotland website, www.pbscotland.scot

Though PB has traditionally taken the form of [grant giving](#), the ambition in Scotland is now for PB to progress and be done at scale across [mainstream](#) budgets and to commission services so as to focus on the long term preventative approach that is required for public service reform.

Below are some examples taken from the PB Scotland website:

Case studies: Scotland

Grant giving model

'[Shared Vision – Your Decision](#)' was an Edinburgh-based initiative in late 2016/early 2017 which enabled local people to decide how public money is spent in eradicating Islamophobia and associated prejudice behaviour. Police Scotland, the City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Government made a total of £40,000 available as part of their ongoing commitment to addressing Islamophobia across Edinburgh. Islamophobic behaviour also effects other faith communities and they have included projects which also work with these communities.

The criteria allowed for three bids up to a maximum of £5,000 for three separate projects. In total, 34 projects were shortlisted and invited to a PB market place to support their bid. Over a two-week period more than 2,500 people voted on the projects that they wished to support. Voting could be done online or in person at 28 public libraries.

Thirteen projects were successful and are being funded through this PB process. All bids evidence how money will be spent eradicating Islamophobia or associated prejudice behaviour in Edinburgh; the projects aim to foster good relations and/or reduce prejudice. There are plans underway to repeat and extend PB, with a focus on community safety in the Edinburgh area.

Maintreaming model

“The Uist and Barra Public Bus Service Redesign project” has used innovative methods to improve service outcomes for rural communities through procuring services in a new way.

By using participatory budgeting methodology the community has had the opportunity to be fully involved in the design and procurement of their bus services. Together with the use of an output performance specification in the procurement process and extensive engagement with suppliers, this has made the project an innovative piece of work, addressing some of the key issues that face rural communities and their ability to access services.

The innovative approach enabled community members to effect change on a bus service that many felt was not meeting their needs. Already there is a reported increase in uptake following introduction of the new timetables. The contracts commenced on 25 March 2016.

In the longer term, the participatory budget methodology will enable communities to become more involved in determining the outcomes of other aspects of service delivery. Benefits from the process are the community has gained an understanding of public sector procurement processes and suppliers are able to respond to public demand more easily.

International examples of PB

Paris

Launched in 2014, Paris implemented a successful method of citizen participation. Ideas are developed and submitted on an internet platform by residents or groups of residents. In 2015, Parisians submitted over 5,000 projects. In 2014, its first year of operation, over 40,000 Parisians chose nine winning projects at a cost of €17.7m.

In 2015, this increased to nearly 67,000 participants. They selected eight projects for Paris as a whole and 180 projects for arondissements (city districts). The Paris projects and the arondissements in 2015 represent an allocated budget of around €67m, equivalent to about £57m at January 2017 rates.

More UK and international examples can be found on the PB network website:
www.pbnetwork.org.uk

The UK PB Network list these following principles as good standards for PB:

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.
3. **Support for representative democracy:** Participation mechanisms such as PB should be seen as supporting representative democracy rather than undermining it. 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:** Citizens, officers, councillors and partners should plan and lead PB events together, demonstrating local people's empowerment.
9. **Shared responsibility:** PB should build common purpose and a commitment from all stakeholders.

The full 2009 version of PB Network Values, Principles and Standards are available at <https://pbnetwork.org.uk>

Key challenges for consideration

Elected members are crucial in ensuring the vision for mainstream PB works. There are significant challenges that need to be overcome, and without political support it is unlikely PB will bring the benefits that can be achieved by reshaping the way in which local decision making is made.

Some of these challenges include:

Bringing together representative democracy with an open, direct participatory democracy. The aim is for the representative and participatory 'strands' to complement each other and once seen in action initial and understandable reluctance to engage with PB does dissipate.

With limited resources and concerns about the withdrawal of cherished services there is a concern that vested interests will try to unfairly influence the opening up of decision-making. Questions such as whether voting processes will be fair. Or how to avoid decision-making events being flooded by people only interested in supporting their friends. This can be prevented through agreeing a

clear definition of what PB is in Scotland. Not simply focusing on what the process is and when embedding PB, using flexible voting mechanisms and appropriate facilitation at meetings that make the activity accessible and representative of communities. Visible and engaged elected members at an event can build trust.

There can be concerns about 'up-front' costs to implement a new PB process. When money and staff time is short it is a challenge for public bodies to seek to engage new people. Elected members are crucial in encouraging new ways of working that build on existing engagement structures and make better use of networks and forums that already operate.

Inclusivity and connecting with seldom heard groups is cited as a common problem. However, experience shows PB offers the opportunity to engage in non-traditional ways and times that reaches out to people who often don't have a voice.

There are strategic and sensitive issues that appear not immediately amenable to PB. The statutory protection of young or vulnerable people is one examples that would remain the core responsibility of officers and elected members'. Whilst PB is not about changing all responsibilities it is about ensuring lived experiences do help shape decisions. Used imaginatively and in a transformational way PB can generate fresh ideas or approaches to make services work better for local people and which will have long term benefits to the cost of service delivery. With the accessible information and organisational trust, local people can make informed decisions.

PB is not the only way to engage with local people but it can enhance and improve current practice.

Actions to take as an elected member

- Read about PB in action through the resources and case studies available on the PB Scotland and PB Network websites: <https://pbscotland.scot> and www.pbnetwork.org.uk
- Talk to senior officers and other elected members about what mainstream budget or up and coming commissioning process PB can be used for.
- Contact elected members in other areas that have tried PB and ask to visit one of their projects. Seeing PB in action makes it real.
- Start by running a small grants PB process in your area using existing funds, perhaps even your own discretionary funding. Through its ability to engage people in decision-making PB adds value to small grant programmes already in operation. Use it to build trust and confidence in decision-making.
- Commit to using PB on a larger scale as is already happening in areas across Scotland and in the rest of the world. Build the confidence of other elected members in your area, enabling the move on to widening engagement in mainstream budgets and involvement in local decision making from communities.

- If you want further political input into the way PB is approached across Scottish local government raising this with your elected member who is the council's representative on the COSLA Community Wellbeing Board.

Further support and contacts

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For more information visit the pbscotland.scot website which provides accessible information on events, policy and resources in Scotland, and profiles examples, pictures and videos of Community Choices in action.

To join Scotland's PB network go to: <https://pbscotland.scot/network/>

Useful reading:

Guide to Grant Making through Participatory Budgeting
<https://pbnetwork.org.uk/grant-making-through-participatory-budgeting-a-how-to-guide/>

Briefing on PB at Scale
<https://pbnetwork.org.uk/mainstreaming-participatory-budgeting/>

Guide to Evaluating PB
<https://pbnetwork.org.uk/hear-the-voice-make-the-change/>

Community Choices Fund 2016/17 Report
<https://pbscotland.scot/blog/2017/10/12/the-right-choices-read-the-community-choices-fund-201617-report>

Community Choices 1% Framework agreement

www.cosla.gov.uk/community-choices-1-framework-agreement

Interim evaluation report on PB in Scotland – Glasgow Caledonian University

<https://pbscotland.scot/blog/2017/11/10/interim-evaluation-report-on-pb-in-scotland>

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To: Leadership Board

On: 12 September 2019

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Climate Change emergency

1. Summary

- 1.1 On 27 June 2019, Renfrewshire Council declared a climate emergency, with many other local authorities across the UK and Scotland also making this declaration. The actions that are required to respond to the climate emergency, are potentially complex and multi-faceted, and it is recognised that these need to be supported by organisations across all sectors, and in partnership with local communities.
- 1.2 At the meeting on 27 June 2019, Council also agreed that a cross party working group be established to explore options for action and to make recommendations to Council by end of financial year 2019/20. The purpose of this paper is to engage further with elected members on the establishment of this working group, in order that it achieves its purpose and meets the requirements of all stakeholders.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Board consider arrangements in relation to the establishment of a climate emergency cross party working group in Renfrewshire.

3. Background

- 3.1. On 27 June 2019, full Council approved two motions relating to the declaration of a climate emergency in Renfrewshire. These were tabled by Councillors McCartin and A Doig, Cllr Don and Adam McGregor, with an amendment accepted from Councillors McIntyre and Graham. Renfrewshire Council is one of a number of local authorities in Scotland that have taken the decision to formally declare a climate emergency during 2019.
- 3.2. The motions require officers to progress a range of activities, with full detail on these activities attached as appendix 1 to this report. A key action to be progressed is the establishment of a cross party working group, the aim of which would be to examine in detail the actions that could be taken to address the declared climate emergency.
- 3.3. This paper is seeking the views of members of the Cross Party Sounding Board on the establishment of this group, in order to ensure that this group has the right approach and membership and is able to work at pace to report back with recommendations to full Council by the end of the financial year 2019/20.

4. Establishment of Climate Emergency Working group

- 4.1. As set out above, the Climate Emergency working group is being established as a direct response to the Council declaring a climate emergency on 27 June 2019. The declaration received support across all political groups, with agreement reached for a cross party working group to be established as soon as possible to consider what actions could be taken to address the declared climate emergency.
- 4.2. As elected members will be aware, the Cross Party Sounding Board was established in 2017 to provide an opportunity for cross party discussion on matters of Council-wide relevance. In terms of its remit it could be considered appropriate for the board to lead discussion and consideration of all issues related to the climate emergency in line with the Council decision. However a key limitation which members of the Board may wish to consider would be in terms of its membership which is set and has been agreed by Council. This could limit the ability of the sounding board to involve and engage local and national organisations, community groups and partners in a working group, all of whom could contribute to the discussion and the exploration of ideas and recommendations.
- 4.3. Further, members of the board may wish to consider whether the creation of a working group with wider membership and participation, may achieve greater traction, by involving key stakeholders in identifying the key issues and

opportunities at an early stage, as well as in drafting local recommendations for Council.

- 4.4 Should a cross party working group be established which is distinct to this board, it is suggested that it would be appropriate for members of this Board to form the core membership of the climate emergency working group. This would ensure the same level of political representation as the Cross Party Sounding Board. Should political groups wish to nominate a substitute or alternative elected member to the cross party group, this could also be supported.
- 4.5 In terms of the activities being undertaken to promote cross party working on climate change in other local authorities, there are a range of approaches emerging. For example, Glasgow City Council recently published a report on its response to its declared Climate Emergency, which has been produced by its own cross party working group on this issue. It's working group met on a monthly basis, with representation from all four political groups on the Council, as well as citizen activist groups, key policy leaders, and the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. The group has met on a monthly basis and considered a number of presentations from speakers on a range of issues relating to climate and sustainability. The report is available as follows:
<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewDoc.asp?c=P62AFQDN0GZLZ3DN0G>
- 4.6 In addition to the membership and format of the group, members of the Cross Party Sounding Board may also wish to suggest particular areas which it would like the working group to explore in its initial phases, with the remit and work programme being fully agreed by the established group.
- 4.7 Officers will fully support the working group by organising meetings; preparing briefings on all required matters and in terms of securing internal and external speakers with expertise on matters raised. As there is a requirement for the working group to report to Council by the end of the 19/20 financial year, officers will support the group to work at the pace required to achieve this deadline. An internal officer group is also being established to support this work programme, incorporating different areas of professional expertise.

5. Key areas for discussion

- 5.1 In summary, following on from the decision of Council to establish a cross party working group in relation to the declared climate emergency, the views of members of the board are invited on:
- Membership of the cross party working group to be established
 - Frequency of meetings
 - Specific areas of interest/focus suggested for the working group.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – n/a
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – n/a.
3. **Community Planning** – climate change and sustainability are key overarching principles agreed within the Renfrewshire Local Outcome Improvement Plan.
4. **Legal** - none.
5. **Property/Assets** – none.
6. **Information Technology** – n/a
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – none.
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – none.
9. **Procurement** – none.
10. **Risk** – n/a
11. **Privacy Impact** – none.
12. **COSLA** - Welcomed the risk based and proportionate approach to audits.
13. **Climate Risk** – as per the content of this report.

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Appendix 1

“That this Council believes: (a) That all governments have a duty to limit the negative impacts of Climate Breakdown, and local government recognises it cannot and should not wait for national government to act;

(b) That it is important for the residents of Renfrewshire that the council and other public authorities commit to reducing CO2 eq emissions and work towards carbon neutrality as quickly as possible;

(c) That bold climate action can deliver economic benefits by way of new jobs, economic savings, market opportunities and improved well-being.

That this council agrees to: (e) declare a “Climate Emergency”; (f) pledge to work proactively with others to make Renfrewshire carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions; (g) continue to work with partners and community groups across Renfrewshire to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans; (g) assist communities to become more resilient to the impacts of global warming, particularly to flooding and to drought;

(h) ensure that all reports in preparation for the 2020/21 budget will take into account the actions the council will take to address this emergency;

(i) report to Full Council before the end of the financial year 2019/20 with the actions the Council has, and will take, to address this emergency.

The Scottish Government on 14 May 2019 declared that there was a global climate emergency. The evidence was irrefutable, and the science was clear. We all have a part to play: Government, councils, individuals, communities, businesses, other organisations. It was not too late to turn things around. Council therefore further agrees: (j) to recognise that there is an environment and climate emergency; (k) that this emergency could impact on all areas of Council policy; (l) That a cross-party working group is established to examine in detail what actions could be taken to address this emergency; and (m) That officers begin, without delay, to prepare options for the working group to consider. This Council also further agrees to: (n) include climate change in the Council Register of Strategic Risks; (o) include climate risk as a category in reports to council meetings and boards. This should be introduced as a heading in the implications of report section in the same manner as financial, legal and equality & human rights issues; (p) ask all electricity suppliers to the council how much of their electricity production is certified by Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin or has been carbon offset. If electricity is supplied centrally then write to the Scottish Government asking the same question; and (q) investigate the feasibility of setting up a revolving fund for energy efficiency improvements to buildings within the council estate. The fund would be replenished by the savings resulting from the energy improvements.”

