

# MEASURING UP...

## Scotland's PB Charter and the Gorbals Ideas Fund



July 2019

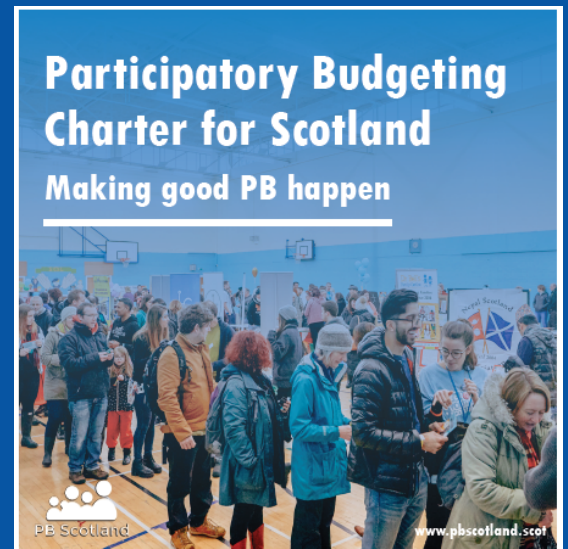


# INTRODUCTION

In June 2019 the Participatory Budgeting Charter for Scotland was launched.

The Gorbals Ideas Fund Community Panel helped develop the Charter, with the aim of making sure the community are front and centre of a document that is easy to read and jargon-free.

The Charter sets out seven key features of good Participatory Budgeting (PB). We're using the Charter as a tool to make sure everything we do or plan to do, meets these features.



## HOW ARE WE PERFORMING?

The Gorbals Ideas Fund was established in April 2018. Now that the PB Charter has been published we thought it would be useful to look at what we've done so far, and what we plan to do and measure how well it fits with the PB Charter.

## FAIR AND INCLUSIVE

### WHAT IT MEANS...

Everyone should be able to take part in community life. PB will be fair and inclusive when:

- the PB process meets all requirements in terms of accessibility;
- Everyone has a vote within a PB process;
- People who have experienced inequality are involved in designing PB processes; and
- The outcomes of a PB process help to reduce inequalities.

### WHAT WE'VE DONE:

- Supported accessibility e.g. hiring a mini-bus to make our event easy to attend.
- Worked with other organisations to recruit panel members from different backgrounds and with different experiences.
- Opened up voting to everyone over 8 to make sure children and young people have a say in decisions that affect them.
- Made our application process easy to understand, with short application forms that are easy to complete.
- Opened up the fund to individuals because good ideas can come from people as well as projects.

### WHAT WE PLAN TO DO:

- We plan to access funding to help us make PB more accessible for everyone, e.g. those with communication needs, disabilities or mobility issues.
- Develop digital voting tools to open up the process to people who may not be able to attend community voting events but who still have a right to be involved in the decision making process.

## PARTICIPATORY

### WHAT IT MEANS...

Participatory means that everyone affected by decisions on how money is spent has the opportunity to be involved in every stage of the PB process. We'll know PB is participatory when:

- Communities have an opportunity to shape PB processes from the start;
- Priorities for PB processes are decided by communities;
- Different and diverse communities discuss the issues and vote on priorities;
- A range of methods and events are used;
- People from communities say they are satisfied with the process and outcomes;
- Training and support is available to help people be involved in planning and delivering PB;
- The PB process is promoted widely and in a variety of ways to encourage people to take part.

### WHAT WE'VE DONE:

- Made sure local people have been involved from the very beginning.
- Used evidence, research and experiences to decide on priorities.
- Developed a Panel, with membership open to anyone who lives in the Gorbals.
- Developed training to give all Panel members the information and skills they need.
- Promoted our processes through our website, social media, leaflets and posters.
- Evaluated what we've delivered with successful applicants.

### WHAT WE PLAN TO DO:

- Develop a Youth Panel by 2020 to give children and young people an opportunity to shape our processes and share ideas.
- Use online voting at our next event.
- Evaluate what we do with the people who participate as voters to make sure they are happy and have the chance to drive improvements.

## DELIBERATIVE

### WHAT IT MEANS...

Communities have opportunities to share information and ideas, listen to and understand each other. This helps people to learn more about different issues and leads to informed decisions. We'll know PB is 'deliberative' when:

- Information people need to make informed choices is available and accessible at all points of the process;
- People involved have increased knowledge about the issues affecting groups and individuals in their own communities and other communities;
- Methods are used that allow people to express their views and encourage discussion;
- Ideas, priorities and the choices made about how money is spent are reached through public discussion and informed by wide-ranging views.

### WHAT WE'VE DONE

- Developed a Market Place Brochure for each event to give information on ideas and the amount each idea has applied for.
- Sourced evidence, research and experiences to help us better understand the community and the needs of people who live here.

### WHAT WE PLAN TO DO:

- Host Community Discussion sessions around specific topics to involve the whole community in discussions, ideas generation and problem solving.
- Conduct research to give the whole community a chance to shape our future priorities.

## EMPOWERING

### WHAT IT MEANS...

Decisions about how public money is spent are usually made by politicians and their officers. PB gives people and communities the power to decide what matters most to them and how public money should be used. PB encourages more people to become involved in their community and to work together to make change happen. We'll know PB is empowering when:

- Communities decide how money is spent;
- People feel they have more control over the issues that affect them;
- Decisions taken through PB lead to improved outcomes and services;
- More people are involved in wider democratic processes;
- More people become involved in community organisations and activities.

### WHAT WE'VE DONE

- Given local people the power to decide how funding is used at 4 community voting events.
- Improved the community and the outcomes for local people by making funding available.

### WHAT WE PLAN TO DO:

- We will evaluate the impact of the ideas you've chosen to fund and publish a report by the end of the year.
- Find a successful way of evaluating our processes with the people who vote.
- Monitor voter turnout and participation at elections and other events to measure the wider impacts of PB.

## CREATIVE AND FLEXIBLE

### WHAT IT MEANS...

PB processes should be designed in a way that makes it easy and attractive for people to get involved. A creative mix of face to face approaches and online tools should be used to distribute information, encourage participation and get the best results.

PB in Scotland is a developing process which requires the confidence to take risks - to be flexible, to listen, to do things differently, try new things and learn from mistakes as well as success. We'll know PB is Creative and Flexible when:

- A range of methods have been considered and used as part of the process;
- Support is in place for people who plan and deliver PB so they can take risks;
- PB processes are continuously evaluated and improved as a result;
- PB in Scotland learns from and keeps pace with developing practice across the world.

### WHAT WE'VE DONE

- Used online and traditional methods to promote the fund, our events and volunteering.
- Used different voting processes.
- Evaluated and changed our processes with every cycle to improve what we deliver.
- Connected to PB Network Scotland to learn from others.
- Used different activities to encourage participation at events e.g. graffiti workshops.

### WHAT WE PLAN TO DO:

- Use digital voting to give everyone a chance to have their say.
- Keep reflecting on what we've done, what we've achieved and make changes to improve PB in the Gorbals.
- Evaluate our processes with voters at future events to ensure their feedback influences and shapes what we do.



# TRANSPARENT

## WHAT IT MEANS...

Everyone involved in a PB process should be able to see why and how decisions are taken, and what effect those decisions have. We'll know PB is transparent when:

- Information on the process and how people can get involved is clear and accessible;
- Information on budgets is publicly accessible and understandable;
- It is clear who is accountable for the PB process;
- Voting rules are clear and well understood;
- People know the results of the process and what difference their involvement has made.

## WHAT WE'VE DONE

- Shared information about our funds and where they come from.
- Made information about the funds available online and through application packs and leaflets.
- Published successful ideas through our website and social media accounts.

## WHAT WE PLAN TO DO:

- Evaluate our processes with successful applicants to find out what they've learned, what they've achieved and what they'd do differently. We'll publish this widely to give local people information on the differences their vote made to local people and the community.

# PART OF OUR DEMOCRACY

## WHAT IT MEANS...

PB is a central part of our democracy in Scotland and should be standard practice for how budget decisions which affect communities are made. PB should be resourced and delivered as part of regular budget planning. We'll know PB is part of our democracy when:

- People expect to have a direct say in each budget cycle;
- Public agencies have staff and systems in place to support good-quality PB processes;
- Communities and community organisations have the skills and knowledge, as well as the time and funding, to get involved and support the PB process;
- The PB process continues uninterrupted from one budget round to the next; and
- Over time PB is shown to improve outcomes, reduce inequalities and encourage people to be more involved in democratic processes.

## WHAT WE'VE DONE:

- Laid the foundations of PB in the Gorbals to make sure local people know about Participatory Budgeting and what it means.
- Developed leaflets and information sheets to help people understand Participatory Budgeting, what it could mean for our community and why they should get involved.
- The Community Panel make decisions about how the PB process is designed and delivered, people can volunteer to be part of the Panel at anytime.
- Developed a PB cycle, holding 3 events each year.

## WHAT WE PLAN TO DO:

- Use digital voting to raise awareness and participation.
- Create opportunities for local people to be involved in bigger conversations and decisions.
- Advocate for the community to help make sure the people of the Gorbals have their voices heard at every level and can influence decisions about how public budgets are spent.
- Embed Participatory Budgeting in the Gorbals, to do this we're going to work with children and young people – making sure the younger generation grows up expecting a say in decisions that affect their community.

## NEXT STEPS

We want to put our planned improvements and developments in to practice as soon as possible. We are happy with the progress we've made in such a short space of time but we want to keep building on what we've achieved and encourage more and more people to get involved, as part of the Community Panel, as an applicant or as a voter.

We want Participatory Budgeting to be fair and inclusive and that means that we need the input of lots of different people with lots of different experiences. Our plans for the future will mean there's different ways for people to get involved and have their say and we'll keep evaluating what we do and making changes and improvements to make it as accessible as possible for everyone.

You can stay up to date with our work at [www.gorbalsideas.org.uk](http://www.gorbalsideas.org.uk) or by following us on Facebook and Twitter @GorbalsIdeas, or if you'd like to know more about what we're doing, or you'd like to get involved please email [info@gorbalsideas.org.uk](mailto:info@gorbalsideas.org.uk) or call Jo on 0141 429 3900.

## MORE INFORMATION

You can download a copy of the PB Charter for Scotland at: <https://pbscotland.scot/charter>

You can join the PB Scotland Network at: <https://pbscotland.scot/network>

You can stay up to date with the Gorbals Ideas Fund work at **[www.gorbalsideas.org.uk](http://www.gorbalsideas.org.uk)** or by following us on Facebook and Twitter **@GorbalsIdeas**. If you'd like to know more about what we're doing, or you'd like to get involved please email **[info@gorbalsideas.org.uk](mailto:info@gorbalsideas.org.uk)** or call Jo on **0141 429 3900**.

