



Community Led PB

Workshop Report July 2021

Workshop Programme

09.50 – Workshop Open
10.00 – Welcome, Introductions and Polls
10.10 – Learning from New Gorbals Community Led PB Guest Speakers: Jo Speirs and Kim Logan, New Gorbals, Gorbals Ideas Fund, Glasgow
10.45 - Q&A Opportunity
11.00 - Breakout Room Discussion and Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What are the opportunities and challenges of Community Led PB?- What does 'good' PB look like?- How can we support communities to lead on the planning and design of 'good' PB?
11.25 - Evaluation Poll
11.30 – Thanks and Community Conversations
11.45 – Workshop Close

Introduction and Welcome

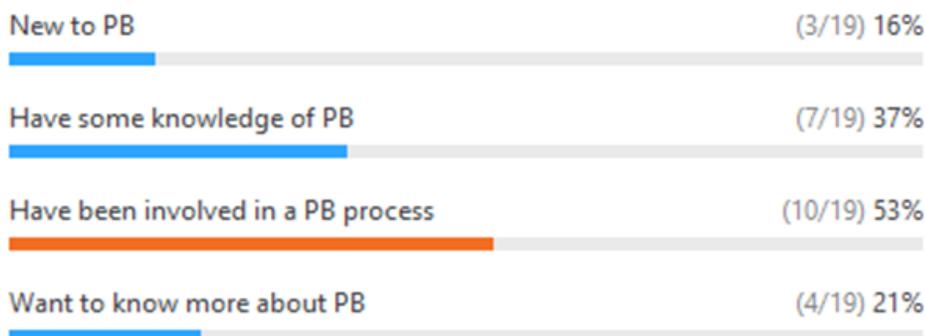
On 16 June 2021, 25 participants joined an online zoom-shop to explore Community Led approaches to Participatory Budgeting (PB). The session was hosted and facilitated by Louise O’Kane, [Community Places](#) - [PB Works](#) with guest presentations from Jo Speirs, Community Budgeting Officer from New Gorbals Housing Association, and Kim Logan, a Community Panel member of the Gorbals Ideas PB Fund in Glasgow.

Louise welcomed participants and invited them to introduce themselves via the chat function. The workshop programme was outlined and it was noted that the workshop is part of the ‘Putting People in the Lead through Quality PB’ project, funded through the National Lottery Community Fund.

A poll was launched to provide a flavour of the sectors represented at the workshop. Two-thirds of the participants represented the Community and Voluntary Sector (63%: 12). This was followed by representatives from a Local Authority (21% - 4); 11% (2) a Statutory Partner; and 15% (1) Other. A second poll was launched to determine the level of knowledge and familiarity of PB amongst participants. Over half of the participants, 53% (10) have been involved in a PB process. 37% (7) have some knowledge of PB, with 21% (4) wanting to know more about PB and 16% (3) entirely new to PB. An introduction to Participatory Budgeting and update on PB practice in the local context was provided by Louise.

Poll 2: How familiar are you with PB?

1. How familiar are you to PB? (Multiple choice)



Framing the Conversation

Jo Speirs and Kim Logan, New Gorbals, Glasgow.

Louise introduced and extended a very warm welcome to Jo and Kim whose contributions would help to frame the conversation. Jo shared her extensive experience of planning and supporting Community Led PB in New Gorbals and Kim shared her experience and passion of being part of the Youth Panel and her progression to representing the Community Panel and tailoring the approach to PB to the needs of the Gorbals community.

Jo firstly provided some information on the background and context of the Gorbals area which is home to 9,000 people. The approach to the physical and social regeneration of the area over a ten-year period was also outlined. Gorbals since 2015, had been a 'Spirit' Community, a recipient of a fund established as part of the legacy of the Commonwealth Games. This included a Community Budgeting initiative where decisions on the allocation of funds were made by a closed group of people from within the community. Jo explained that in 2017 the decision was taken to appoint a Community Budgeting Officer to support communities to become more involved in budgetary decision-making processes through Participatory Budgeting (PB). Jo shared how the New Gorbals Ideas PB Fund represented a shift from Community Budgeting (closed number of individuals) towards a more open participatory process where the whole community had an opportunity to decide how and where resources were allocated. Jo outlined how the process had developed, that they were seeking to strengthen local democracy through the use of PB, how they have taken PB forward, the impacts it had made and plans for the future to further embed PB. This included the development of a Community Panel made up of 12 local people who shape and oversee the entire PB process. Jo stressed the importance of supporting people to get and stay involved in this panel, and the continued efforts undertaken to ensure that the panel is representative of the wider Gorbals Community. The Panel have recently agreed that all decisions about the Great Ideas Fund should be shaped by the wider community.

Kim shared her passion and experience of working with young people and the vital role which Youth PB can have in empowering and unlocking the potential and influence which younger people can have. Kim shared her own experience of participating in the Young Decider Youth Panel, how this ignited her interest and enthusiasm to demonstrate the positive influence and action which younger people can have on each other and on the wider community, including the role of PB in schools. Kim stressed that young people have more influence in their communities than they realise and noted that it is important to challenge the stereotypes that all young people are the same. Kim noted that PB can support younger people to develop news skills, and relationships with peers and the wider community and enables younger people to take back ownership and control of youth needs. Kim shared how she continues her participation through her activity on the New Gorbals Community Panel.

Jo then highlighted next steps for the Gorbals Ideas Fund, emphasizing that they are focused on including more ideation, deliberation and debate within their PB practice. They will continue to advocate for community issues and have ambitions to increase the number of local people voting and engage more young people in the process. Jo noted that they are committed to continuing to refine and develop PB practice and processes for the benefit of the whole Gorbals community.



Snapshot of some of the participants at the Zoom-shop

After the two presentations, there was an opportunity for participants to pose questions to Jo and Kim these focused on the membership and nomination processes used for the Community Panel; the level of support which is provided; what steps have been taken to consider the role of Covid-19 funds in building back better through PB, digital PB voting processes, the challenges which have been overcome, keeping the Panel motivated and representative; and efforts to broader participation in the Gorbals Ideas Fund. Jo kindly shared the Gorbals Ideas Fund Strategy – [Communities Know](#) and her contact details with participants and welcomed further engagement: johanna@newgorbalsha.org.uk www.gorbalsideas.org.uk @gorbalsideas

A full zoom recording of the workshop is available [here](#) and a copy of the presentation slides is available [here](#).

At this point in proceedings the participants were invited to breakout into smaller groups to reflect on the presentation and to discuss the opportunities and challenges posed by Community Led PB.

Breakout Sessions

A summary of the key challenges and opportunities identified by participants is presented below. A full record of each of the breakout room discussions can be found at Appendix 2.

Opportunities

- Community can shape the process to their own unique context – tailored approach
- Reach people
- Ideas and projects which are developed from within the community which meet the needs of citizens rather than perceived needs which funders may hold
- Trust the community to take decisions
- Established community panels have the confidence to challenge traditional funding procedures and criteria, they can demonstrate a different approach
- Capture evidence of impacts and outcomes to continue to make the case for PB investment

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- More sustainable
 - Compare PB against reality and not perfection – money is the bait not the fish!
 - Have a go!
 - Be open to trial and error – huge learning process

Challenges

- Impacts of COVID-19 on all players – can lose momentum, need to re-engage with people with different levels of confidence and capacity
- Ensuring everyone is involved in shaping priorities for PB processes
- Analyze and understand the assets, challenges, and needs of the community to inform PB process
- Moving towards more mainstream approaches to PB is required – greater investment and opportunities to get involved in decision-making
- Targets set by funders – can be different through PB
- Support to establish community panel infrastructure
- Having to prove that communities can be trusted
- Digital access and exclusion – particularly for rural communities, older people and those without English as a first language

What does ‘good’ PB look like?

- Each process should be unique, tailored to local context
- Representative of the wider community
- Not one-off – longer term, sustainable, process that values people
- Accessible process that people can understand and feel a sense of ownership of
- Options for people to choose how they want to participate. For example, involved in a panel, at the ideas stage, or voting for projects they want to support
- Community profits from social enterprises can be reinvested and distributed via PB processes- community genuinely in control
- Aligned to many different themes and contexts – choices driven by the community
- Youth-led PB processes
- Bridge building – across generations, different capacities, a range of potential ‘divides’

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- Can bring divided communities together through positive shared experience
 - Can create community influence which can challenge paramilitary control
 - Makes a positive difference in the community – tangible concrete actions

How do we support communities to lead on the planning and design of ‘good’ PB?

- Create opportunities to do PB – time and resources available
- Leadership development
- Capacity building
- Encourage communities to speak up along with local leaders to advocate for PB resources from central and local government
- Investment in digital infrastructure – access to technology and skills
- Support for communities to get advice

Louise invited participants, on reflecting on the workshop presentations and smaller group discussions, to consider and share what ‘good’ PB looked like to them. Central to the responses were comments such as community, transparent, inclusive, participation and empowerment. A word cloud illustrates the full comments below:



In drawing the workshop to a close Louise asked participants how useful they had found the session. All of the participants had found the workshop either 'Very Useful' (91%) or 'Useful' (9%).

Poll 4: How useful did you find the Learning Workshop



Thank-you and Close

Louise O’Kane thanked everyone for their participation and energetic discussions and noted that a report of the workshop would be circulated to all participants and made available on the [PB Works website](#). Participants were reminded of the opportunity to sign up to the [PB Works NI Network](#) to receive information about upcoming events and to contribute to the development of quality PB across the region. The workshop was brought to a close.

Appendix 1: List of Participants

Participant	Organisation
Angela Greene	HSCNI
Anne-Marie Doherty	HSCNI Northern Trust
Annie Clarke	HSCNI Southern Trust
Bebhinn McKinley	Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
Chris Leech	Emmanuel Church
David McAuley	Villages Forum
David Quinney Mee	Rathlin Development Community Association
Doreen O'Neill	Community Places
Fergal Barr	Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
Gemma McCaughley	Community Foundation NI
Gráinne O'Neill	
Jane Dunlop	Mid and East Antrim District Council
Jez Hall	Shared Future CIC
Jo Speirs	New Gorbals Housing Association
Kevin Bailey	West Belfast Partnership Board
Kim Logan	New Gorbals Community Panel Member
Louise O'Kane	Community Places – PB Works
Mark Peters	PB Works
Martin Corr	
Michelle Markey	Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Noeleen Diver	PB Works
Paul Braithwaite	Community Foundation NI
Sharon Doherty	St Columb's Park House
Stacey Cuthbertson	Capital City Partnership

Appendix 2 – Breakout Room Notes

Discussion questions

- What are the opportunities and challenges of Community Led PB?
- What does 'good' PB look like? and,
- How can we support communities to lead on the planning and design of 'good' PB?

Breakout Room 1

Notetaker: Mark Peters, PB Works

Opportunities	Challenges
Trust community with process and making decisions	Getting sustainable funding
An established PB panel has confidence to object to a funders stipulations	Potential to lose momentum
	Targets set by founders allocating how funds are to be spent
	Setting up PB community panel and infrastructure
	Having to prove communities can be trusted

Add more rows as required...

What does 'good' PB look like?
Can use social enterprise funds to run PB process
Potential profits from funded projects can be reinvested
Can address lots of different community issues
Involve young people in PB process
Examples of PB projects bringing divided community together by creating shared experiences

PB has created community influence and undermined paramilitary control

Add more rows as required...

How can we support communities to lead on the planning and design of 'good' PB?
Space, funding and opportunity to do PB
Encourage communities to speak up along with local leaders to advocate for funding from local and central government etc

Breakout Room 2

Notetaker: Louise O'Kane, PB Works

Opportunities	Challenges
Shaped in relation to 'context' of the community	Impacts of COVID-19 – challenge/ delay/ re-engage with people with different confidence and capacity
More sustainable	
Reach / engage the right people with the right projects	
Meet the needs of the 'community' rather than needs of the funder or 'perceived need'	How do we make sure everyone is involved in shaping priorities / making decisions
Does moving digital help to reach new people, new voices	Digital exclusion, access, rural communities access to internet, older communities, language barrier – ethnic minorities
Tailored and unique to the community – not a model but a tailored process. Compare against reality and not perfection – money is the bait not the fish Improvements to the attitudinal data	Community led – how do we move to mainstream/ bigger budgets – why not happening? HA

Add more rows as required...

What does 'good' PB look like?
Unique / tailored to context
Representative of the community

Accessible
Not overly complicated – process that people can understand and feel a sense of ownership
Different ways to participate – voting, more in ideation, more in panel – options for people to choose how and when to participate
Impact – positive difference – tangible concrete actions
Bridge building – young and old, disabled etc across a range of ‘divides’
Community Panel – meet regularly – sense of ownership – coming together sharing ideas, Clever, not one off or around a specific action – long term, sustainable, valuing people -

Add more rows as required...

How can we support communities to lead on the planning and design of ‘good’ PB?
Leadership development
Capacity Building
Investment in digital infrastructure – access to technology and skills
Support for communities to get advice.

Breakout Room 3

Notetaker: Noeleen Diver, PB Works

Opportunities	Challenges
just start, have a go, be it ever so small, and more buy in would happen as you go along.	Making the shift to mainstream PB
Be open to trial and error and learning	Needing to analyse and understand the challenges, needs and assets of your identified place
Ensure we do what we can to provide evidence of process and outcomes, especially for funders.	
Role of women was in making PB work	

*This Report was prepared by Louise O’Kane, Community Places and PB Works.
PB Works is managed and co-ordinated by Community Places.*

