

REPORT TO: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date of Meeting: 10th May 2017
Report of: Fiona Reynolds (Director of Public Health)
Subject/Title: Participatory Budgeting: Public Health Outcomes

1 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council Public Health Team and Communities Team have worked together to **coproduce** a local **Participatory Budgeting (PB)** model **with our communities**, which aims to co-commission 'community based' early intervention and prevention activities to improve public health outcomes. Our PB approach which was branded by our local communities themselves as '**You Decide**' also aims to empower, connect and build capacity within our local communities through the development of sustainable 'Local Community Networks'. The critical factor is that **our local communities have been given the power to make the decisions** regarding how our £400,000 grant funding has been spent.
- 1.2 During the development of our Public Health Lifestyles Commissioning programme 'One You', we recognised that not all providers and communities may be in a position to respond to large scale tender processes. Our ambition was to therefore work in partnership with our local communities to ensure that we could empower them to develop and deliver health enhancing services in response to local needs, by building on our local assets. Our local Participatory Budgeting (PB) development was also aligned to the Cheshire East Connecting Communities Strategy.
- 1.3 PB directly engages and empowers local people in making decisions on the spending priorities for a defined public budget. In Cheshire East the defined budget was £400,000 specifically for reduced health inequalities, improved Public Health outcomes and to support the development of sustainable 'Local Community Networks'. We have engaged local residents and community groups in Cheshire East, who have co-designed the local model/processes, discussed spending priorities, made spending proposals (project applications) and have voted on the projects which they feel most meet their local needs. It has also given local residents a role in the scrutiny and monitoring of the process.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To use the learning and evidence from the PB project to inform the development of guidance toolkits and best practice for community based commissioning across Cheshire East.

- 2.2 That commissioners should recognise PB as an option for future commissioning activities.

3 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The PB project is aligned to priorities and recommendations within the Connected Communities Strategy.
- 3.2 It supports capacity building for smaller organisations and Voluntary and Community Groups /Organisations (VCOs) across Cheshire East.
- 3.3 To provide a framework for increased community engagement, empowerment and democracy.

4 Impact on Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

4.1 Outcomes for Cheshire East Communities for Cheshire East Communities

All applications made to the PB process were required to achieve one or more of the following outcomes which are aligned to the 'One You Cheshire East' Public Health outcomes:

- Increased physical activity
- Increased levels of healthy eating
- Reduced levels of obesity
- Reduced smoking prevalence
- Reduced levels of harmful drinking and binge drinking
- Improved emotional health and wellbeing

Reduced health inequalities: The total funding of £400,000 was targeted at communities in Cheshire East with highest levels of health inequalities, with the aim of reducing disparity in the following areas: Crewe, Macclesfield, Wilmslow, Poynton, Knutsford, Congleton, Alsager, Haslington, Middlewich, Holmes Chapel, Sandbach.

Increased community engagement: Our communities have been engaged in the whole process which included:

- Co-designing our local PB model 'You Decide'
- Developing local project proposals to meet local needs and to build on our local assets
- Presenting project proposals to local residents and communities during Decision Days
- Voting on projects which most meet local need
- Playing a role in the monitoring and evaluation of commissioned projects.

Increased community empowerment and democracy: Our communities/residents have been given the power to make funding decisions based on their perceptions of local need. As such PB has encouraged more people to take an active part in their community, therefore, offering greater community cohesion, as diverse people, sometimes meeting for the first time, make decisions together. This in turn empowers them to take positive action themselves e.g. by developing their own projects, resulting in greater ownership by the community over their area.

Increased community capacity: The PB process has provided resources and supported the development of activities, which have strengthened the skills, abilities and confidence of our residents and local community groups to take effective action and leading roles in the development of:

- the Cheshire East PB model
- community based public health projects
- and LCNs.

Ultimately, communities with capacity are more confident, organised, cohesive and influential, and mean that community members are likely to enjoy a better quality of life.

This means Cheshire East communities will:

- work more effectively with public bodies to come up with solutions to problems or opportunities
- do more to set up and run projects or initiatives
- encourage people to support each other.

Better understanding of the complexities of setting public budgets and choosing between competing priorities, in a time of financial restraint and tough budget choices. PB can be used to prioritise budgets and target resources more effectively at key services. Involving the community not only gives them greater understanding of the financial situation, but enables them to be part of the solution.

Connected communities: A key area of feedback that we have received from our local residents is that they feel more connected as a result of attending Decision Days in their communities. PB has enabled residents to understand more about what assets are available locally, including projects, organisations, facilities, services, people etc.

4.2 Outcomes for smaller organisations and VCOs

Capacity building for smaller VCOs: Supporting groups and organisations who don't have the capacity and infrastructure to participate in a higher tier of commissioning and more formal tender processes. Access to PB Grants has enabled VCOs to grow, develop and potentially be able to access and participate in wider

commissioning opportunities in the future. Monthly support sessions have been established in some areas to support development of VCO with governance, funding etc. Already a number of new groups have benefitted from these drop in sessions run in partnership with CDOs and CVS. Further capacity building activity has included:

4.3 Outcomes for Councillors

Strengthening and renewing democracy: PB builds relationships between residents, councillors and officers; providing a stronger role for councillors as community leaders and demonstrating transparency and accountability to local people. This in turn develops mutual trust and confidence in representative democracy and encourages more people to take an active part in their community.

4.4 Outcomes for Commissioners

Increased insight and understanding of local needs via ‘meaningful’ consultation and engagement: through closer relationships and engagement with local residents and communities, especially with expenditure cuts requiring difficult decisions to be taken. PB techniques can be valuable in determining the opinions of residents, business or other stakeholders.

Asset Mapping: Commissioners now have a greater knowledge and understanding of local assets, with closer relationships with the market, particularly smaller VCOs who have less capacity to engage in formal procurement/tender processes.

Market Development: Capacity building for VCOs supports them to become commission ready, and more able to partner with larger infrastructure organisations or lead tenders themselves. This creates greater competition in the market, higher quality tender submissions, and therefore higher quality service provision. This also supports commissioning requirements of the Social Value Act in terms of building the local market, employment, and local CVOs etc.

Community Based Commissioning Guidance: The PB programme is a key element of the Cheshire East Connecting Communities Strategy, and plans are in place to use the learning from PB to inform the development of a Community Based Commissioning Guidance. Learning from the local PB programme is currently being used to develop plans to engage communities in the decision making processes for the re-commissioning of tendered Substance Misuse Services.

5 Background and Options

5.1 Outputs

- Total number of applications made: 251
- Total numbers of presentations delivered across the areas: 134
- Total number of successful bids across the area: 103
- Total number of voters (members of the community) who attended the events: 537

5.2 We have worked in **partnership** and **engaged** with our local communities to **co-design** a local PB model using the following approaches:

Training and support - A specialist organisation in PB approaches (Mutual Gain) were commissioned to deliver PB training across the 8 Local Community Networks. The PB training aimed to increase knowledge and skills within our communities to develop local PB approaches across Cheshire East.

A Core Community Steering Group (CCSG) was developed to lead on the development of local PB processes, including the criteria, communications, marketing, branding, application forms and voting systems etc. Members of the CCSG have a range of skills and expertise to offer, for example one member has designed a Facebook page in his own time, to promote the Cheshire East PB Grants using the branding also designed by the Steering Group 'You Decide'.

8 Local Community Networks (LCN) The LCNs (supported by Community Development Officers - CDOs) have used the tools and templates developed by the Core Steering Group, and adapted them for their localities. The LCNs have developed their own local timeline for the delivery of local PB approaches.

Community Drop In Sessions have been developed by the LCNs to provide information, support and guidance for groups and organisations to submit an application to the PB Grants process. Members of the community have given their time to support and facilitate Drop In Sessions in their local areas. Individuals, groups and organisations have received information and support to help, ranging from how to complete application forms, how to develop presentations and even opportunities for small groups to 'buddy up' with larger organisation.

Phase 1 (Application Form) The application form was developed and designed by the CCSG. Representatives from each of the 8 LCNs agreed to give their time to review and evaluate which applications met the criteria and would therefore be invited to present their project during a local 'Decision Day'.

Phase 2 (Decision Days) All applications who are successful in Phase 1 were invited to give a short presentation to their local community who voted for the projects that they felt should receive funding. The Decision Days were a real opportunity celebrate our local communities and to bring citizens together for the mutual purpose of improving health and

wellbeing in their communities. It was also an opportunity for organisations to promote their work even if they are not successful in achieving funding.

Presentations Training - Some individuals and groups expressed that they felt that they do not have the skills to deliver presentations. Therefore, in response to this we worked with our local CVS who then delivered a number of training sessions to build skills and confidence.

Understanding of Health and Wellbeing - In response to our communities, who requested information to help them to understand more about Public Health Outcomes and what they look like at a local level, we developed Local Community Health Maps for each of the 8 areas. Communities requested this information to support them with their local decision making processes.

Communications and Marketing - Local communities have rallied together to promote the PB Grants process. Members of the community have used a wide range of opportunities including posters, flyers, talks, meetings, videos and social media to spread the word about the opportunity to be involved in PB, either to submit an application or to attend their local decision day to vote for the projects that they feel deserve to be successful in receiving funding.

Mentors Scheme - The monitoring and evaluation will be taken on by the mentors (Steering Group Partners). Outputs, Outcome and Impact training will be delivered to all successful projects. The cost Benefit Analysis training to be offered to all successful projects (March 2017). All organisations will have shared referral routes in to projects (Good News Brochures).

Follow up Drop Ins Sessions and Showcase Days - Sessions have been provided for successful, unsuccessful and new groups across the area to have access to CVS and CDOs to **develop, sustain or create new projects**. The sessions also helped to raise awareness of the projects that have received funding.

5.3 Qualitative Feedback

“What a fantastic fascinating day I have never experienced an event like it”.
 Senior Forum

“The day was a great opportunity for local people to communicate with local providers about what they think should be delivered in their community.” Healthbox

“4 hours seemed like a lifetime before the event but amazingly it went so fast and time was well spent – lots to do, very interesting, many people to seek out and chat

to that I hadn't met before, many opportunities for partnership work – a really worthwhile day.” Wishing Well

“The day was enjoyable from start to finish and was extremely well organised” Living Well Dying Well

“My first ever experience of an event like this and it was an enjoyable one.” Survive

"Very professional, informative day. An enjoyable and rewarding experience thank you " Parchment PALS

“I am so pleased for many of the winners on the day – very well deserving.” Beechmere

“The whole day was a great success – from meeting other like-minded organisations and individuals to receiving the support we needed to bring our Deafness & Dementia Project to the people of Crewe.” Deafness Support Network

“Barnies Community Hub supports the whole community getting involved in PB Funding opportunities.” EEA

“It was inspiring to hear about the variety and extent of really worthwhile organisations, projects and activities who are working to make a difference in Crewe. Whether funded on the day or not, I hope all the projects can find the means to develop and grow!” Cheshire Dance

“We were really delighted to be awarded a grant from the Crewe ‘You Decide’ event for our Turntable lunch club project. This will make a huge difference to those in our local community who face issues of food poverty and isolation. We look forward to reporting on our progress to our broader community and to all those who voted for us – thank you from all at St Andrew’s and from all those who will benefit from the Lunch Club” Rev Lynne Cullens

“I attended the above session last Saturday and was very impressed by the whole event. In particular, the Introduction to the process was very clear and informative. The timing was immaculate The presentations were of a high standard, but the Time Out Group presentation was outstanding in every respect. The voting system worked for me. The presentation of cheques to those who were chosen was a very good way closing the event. Well done Cheshire East.” Member of the Community

6 Access to Information

- 6.1 Connected Communities Strategy
<http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s51805/Connected%20Communities%20-%20appendix.pdf>
- 6.2 One You Cheshire East <https://www.oneyoucheshireeast.org/>
- 6.2 Participatory Budgeting Film https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sU-_cChVi4g&t=2s

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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