

Guidance for Parish and Town Councils on Delegated Budgets incorporating principles of Participatory Budgeting for 2010-11

Purpose

In December 2007, we were approached by Communities and Local Government to be one of the national pilots taking the Participatory Budgeting (PB) project forward and we accepted the invitation.

PB is a mechanism, which brings local communities closer to the decision-making process around how budgets are spent. It gives people direct and clear choice about how funds are allocated in their local area, thus ensuring that their priorities are met. It is a flexible process and can be implemented in varying forms. PB aims to enhance participation in local democracy whilst ensuring the delivery of cost-effective local services.

To take this project forward, pilots were carried out in two Local Areas; Wendover and Chepping Wye Valley. A key aspect of the PB project is to ensure that local communities are more closely involved in the decision making process. We therefore want to ensure that parish and town councils are engaging their communities when putting forward 'bids' to BCC. Our aspiration is to move in a more sustainable and meaningful manner from limited involvement by local communities to high levels of active and direct participation by our residents and local Members in our decision-making processes.

This paper is to advise Parish and Town Councils of the decision to combine the principles of Participatory Budgeting (PB) into the future bidding process for Delegated Budget funding.

In all Local Community areas it is expected to roll out this advisory document in time for the next round of Local Area Fora due around September 2009

Background

Delegated budgets were originally established to allow Local Area Committees to make decisions on an allocation of funding for local highway and transport needs. Historically, the schemes have generally been of a highway nature and have been on publicly maintainable land or had become dedicated as publicly maintainable following completion of the scheme. Following the change from Local Area Committee to the introduction of Local Area Forums, the delegated budget has been split between the 19 Local Community Areas throughout the County, using a needs based assessment using technically weighted criteria.

The Local Area Forum (LAF) and Local Community Partnerships (LCP) Delegated Budgets, as they will now be known, have allowed Parish/Town Councils an opportunity to promote a scheme, which will add benefit to the local community which under normal circumstances, would not have received a high enough priority to be carried out as part of the Transport for Buckinghamshire annual programme. Any scheme that a parish or town council puts forward must be submitted through the Transport Localities Team Leader to the LAF/ LCP for consideration.

Annually, on receipt of the bids for Delegated Budget funding, all schemes are assessed by Officers and priorities considered and agreed by the LAF /LCP .Local Members form an active part of the Local Area Forums and Chair the meetings, to further enhance local democracy. Members are encouraged to engage with local Parish and District Councillors and other stakeholders to jointly develop schemes that satisfy both the needs of the County Council and the locality.

The rationale behind **this** proposal is to include the principles of Participatory Budgeting into this process. In doing so, as well as taking into account the technical aspects of a scheme, due consideration is given to social, economic and other equality criteria including the level of importance of a scheme to the local community. The outcome from this will be that we will provide the general public with a greater sense of participation in the budgetary decision making process.

Criteria for scheme bids

- a) Schemes bids should be supported by Parish/Town members and full details must be submitted in writing by the Parish Clerk to the Transport Localities Team Leader
- b) Parish/Town Councils are responsible for carrying out local consultation on proposed schemes to harness views of residents, councillors, officers, community groups, police and other public sector and voluntary organisations into a partnership around local needs, preferences and priorities. Evidence of this consultation should be included as part of the application for delegated budget.
- c) Scheme bids should only be considered for new works or improvements and preference will be given to those schemes which meet the needs of the community. Examples of previously successful schemes can be found at the end of Part 3 of the Submission Form
- d) Individual scheme bids must exceed the LAF/LCP budget allocation unless part funding arrangements are agreed.
- e) Scheme bids are assessed using the LAF /LCP Delegated Budget Scheme Assessment process (see Appendix 1) in order to prioritise them based on benefit to local communities and the needs of multiple and diverse groups.
- f) Scheme bids for the following financial year should be submitted before 30 November 2009 for agreement by the Local Area Forums in the January/February cycle. Beyond 2010-11, bids will need to be submitted by May for inclusion in the following financial year's programme.

- g) All scheme bids are assessed and reported to LAF / LCP meetings held in the last financial quarter for approval and implementation in the following financial year.

How to make a bid

Appendix A outlines criteria for the scheme, taking into account local circumstances and reflecting Participatory Budgeting principles. Parishes and Town Councils will be asked to complete Part 1 of the form. It is important to consult local communities as part of this process and include all supporting information to enhance your bid for Delegated Budget funding.

The technical assessment (part 2 of the form) will be completed by Transport for Buckinghamshire and will supplement the application process.

Local Area Forum Delegated Budget Scheme Assessment sheet

Part 1 - to be completed by Parish/Town Council

	PROVIDE DETAIL	POINTS SCORED (BCC TO COMPLETE)
Have local stakeholders and community leaders been engaged in the planning of this scheme? (Evidence required as part of the submission)		
Have the needs of different groups of people where relevant/appropriate been taken into account?		
Could the scheme result in an adverse effect on the local community? If so, is it justifiable or legitimate?		
Will this scheme increase equality between groups and/or make it more visible?		
Does the scheme actively engage and involve people from different backgrounds in the locality?		
Does the scheme bring groups and communities into increased contact with each other?		
Will this scheme help groups develop a sense of belonging and feel engaged in local budgetary decisions?		
Total (Max 2.0)		

Part 2 to be completed by Transport for Buckinghamshire Officer Only

Date.....

Scheme.....

Parish.....

Accessibility (tick boxes)

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-----------|
| Dropped kerbs – improved pedestrian access..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.3 max) |
| New community footway..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.2 max) |
| Improved access to schools..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |
| Improved access to local shops..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |
| Improved access to hospitals..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |
| Improved access to health care..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |
| Improved access to sheltered housing..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |

 TOTAL

Congestion

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Improved visibility..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.4 max) |
| Improvement to on street parking..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.3 max) |
| Remove carriageway obstruction..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.3 max) |

 TOTAL

Environmental Issues and Impacts

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-----------|
| Reduce traffic speeds..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.5 max) |
| Encourage walking, cycling or use of public transport | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.5 max) |

 TOTAL

Road Safety Issues

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-----------|
| Potential for reducing collisions..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.2 max) |
| Safe place to cross roads..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |
| Signs or line improvements/Village gateway feature.. | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |
| Lighting improvement..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |
| Vehicle Activated Signs..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |
| Provision of new footway..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (0.1 max) |

 TOTAL

Maintenance Issues (- minus score)

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|------------|
| Significant utility plant impact (> £1,000)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | (-1.0 max) |
|--|--------------------------|------------|

 TOTAL

Note:

In each section the criteria are weighted and give a possible maximum score of 1.0. The higher the score, the greater the case of the schemes being implemented. A low score will mean that schemes do not rank as high priority. The maximum possible score for all sections is 4

Part 1 Scores

Total

LAF DB Assessment Score

 GRAND TOTAL

Examples of schemes that have been approved in the past are shown here. This list is not exhaustive only indicative of successful bids.

- Bus shelter,
- New Street light
- Kerbing
- Provision of footway
- Vehicle Activated Signs
- Salt bins
- Dropped kerbs and accessibility improvements
- Parking areas