

# **BRECKLAND PARTNERSHIP**

**16 July 2009**

## **Report of Mark Fretwell, Partnership (LSP) Officer, Breckland Council**

### **PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING (PB)**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

To inform and update LSP Board Members on the recent application (as attached) to the Your Norfolk Your Decision - Year 2 Participatory Budgeting in Norfolk project.

#### **2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the LSP Board:

- 2.1 Note [for information and planning purposes] the contents of this report.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 PB started in Brazil in the 1980s as part of a larger effort to establish democracy and get ordinary citizens involved after decades of military dictatorship and corruption. Today it has been developed in over 250 councils in 27 countries.
- 3.2 PB was first developed in the UK in Salford in 2003. In 2007 the Government funded 22 pilot projects setting targets of 100 PB pilot projects by the end of 2008 and all local authorities getting their citizens involved in PB by 2012.
- 3.3 In Norfolk young people have been involved in deciding budgets for some services for several years now. In 2008 Norfolk also ran two nationally recognised PB pilots:
- County wide pilot led by the Norfolk County Strategic Partnership called 'Your Norfolk, Your Decision' where £200,000 of second homes council tax funds were allocated to projects by local people.
  - 'Your Thorpe St. Andrew, Your Decision' focusing on improving health and safety in a specific area of Norwich with a £20,000 budget secured by Norfolk Constabulary from the Home Office and led by the Broadland Safer Neighbourhood Team.
- 3.4 The Norfolk County Strategic Partnership (NCSP) has agreed to use £200,000 allocated from 2nd homes monies for developing the Your Norfolk Your Decision pilot. In year 2 (09/10) the NCSP ambition is to develop innovative participatory budgeting (PB) projects in a variety of local settings, led by different NCSP partnerships and organisations.
- 3.5 The reasons behind this are they want to address the learning points from the successful PB Pilot in 2008, which were;
- To involve more local people in future PB initiatives
  - To involve elected members in future PB initiatives
  - To organise local PB initiatives.
- 3.6 The NCSP will be offering the following support to projects:
- Norfolk PB Master-class to share the learning from the two national PB initiatives undertaken in Norfolk by the NCSP and Norfolk Constabulary
  - A Norfolk PB toolkit
  - A pot of money for local people to allocate against evidence-based or community generated priorities
  - A contribution to the costs associated with running PB

- Branding of YNYD e.g. *Your Town, Your Decision, Your LSP, Your Decision*
- An Evaluation framework.

#### 4. **Issues**

4.1 Successful projects should offer the following:

- Undertake a PB project that involves local people and elected members
- Complete their initiative and evaluate the process by mid March 2010, although the pot of money does not have to be spent by then.
- Use of the YNYD branding
- Ensure that it is local people who decide how the funding pot is allocated.
- Demonstrate that they have only used the funding pot for the 'budget' and for no other purpose
- Contribute to the costs of running a PB initiative e.g. travel and meeting costs, decision event costs. We will make a small contribution to these.
- Provide progress reports on the development of the initiative to the NCSP

4.2 The closing date for applications is 10<sup>th</sup> July at 12 PM. Applications will then be assessed by the Your Norfolk Your Decision Steering Group. With an announcement of successful pilots on week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> July 09.

#### 5 **Options**

5.1 To note [for information and planning purposes] the contents of this report.

#### 6 **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

6.1 Participatory Budgeting (PB) represents an opportunity to

- Increase understanding of your organisation
- Better targeting of funds
- Brings communities together
- Can help achieve value for money
- Promotes public involvement

6.2 The Local Government White Paper of 2006 and the Lyon's Report of 2007 provided both an incentive and an opportunity for local authorities to adopt PB. The emerging policies included:

- A duty to "inform, consult and involve" citizens.
- Accountability via information to citizens.
- Local public ownership of assets.
- More citizen and user choices.
- Citizen involvement in debates on local priorities, services and budgets. and
- Public engagement to be a "bottom up" rather than a "top down" process.

6.3 Local authorities are required by the Government to inform, consult and involve local people; PB encourages local people getting involved, community cohesion and improves democracy. It can be used to assist Local Strategic Partnerships and inform strategies such as the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and Comprehensive Engagement Strategies.

6.4 If funding is awarded it will provide the LSP with a significant opportunity to consult the community on their priorities and allow them to take decision making at a local level.

6.5 The decision making at a local level will be fed up to the Breckland Partnership (LSP Board) to ensure that common district wide issues are identified and addressed.