

# Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 22 May 2018

## Choose Youth Work – Participatory Budgeting

Item number	7.10
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	<a href="#">31</a>

### Executive Summary

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In year 2 of the Choose Youth Work (CYW) programme, £166k of funding for youth work was distributed via participatory budgeting (PB). At E, C & F Committee in August 2017, officers were asked to evaluate year 2 and report to Committee prior to any decision about year 3. This report provides the outcome of year 2 in terms of the vote, an evaluation of the PB process and the funding recipients, and makes recommendations for year 3.

## Choose Youth Work – Participatory Budgeting

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 Committee is asked to:
  - 1.1.1 To reverse the decision (from E, C & F in December 2016) to distribute the entire universal youth work budget (£590k) in year 3 (2019/20) via Participatory Budgeting;
  - 1.1.2 To approve that grant funding of £424k should be rolled over from year 2 (2018/19) into year 3 (2019/20) at the same levels for the same organisations as in year 2 (see Appendix 2). This is consistent with the recommendation made in the main revenue grants report;
  - 1.1.3 To approve that the remaining £166k (as in year 2) be available as a grant fund distributed via a participatory mechanism based on close engagement with young people (for example Youth Talk, a Youth Panel or PB) for work with children and young people;
  - 1.1.4 To approve that Schools and Lifelong Learning work with Procurement, Localities, young people and the Third Sector to co-produce a more strategic and sustainable model of funding for open-access, universal youth work to come into effect in 2020/2021;
  - 1.1.5 To note the awards for 2018/19 in appendix 1.

### 2. Background

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- 2.1 The [Youth Work Funding 2017-19](#) report was presented to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 13 December 2016 outlining a strategy of funding for open-access, universal youth work in the city.
- 2.2 The report included recommendations to run participatory budgeting grants programmes from 2017-18 onwards with increasing budgets.
- 2.3 The first programme was run in 2017-18 with a budget of £60k and 11 awards were made.
- 2.4 Owing to concern from some of the youth work sector about PB as a means of distributing core funding, officers were asked to carry out a full evaluation of the process in year 2 and report back to E, C & F Committee with recommendations about how to proceed in year 3.

- 2.5 In year 2, a total of £166k was made available through PB. Five Choose Youth Work (CYW) PB programmes ran concurrently: one in each locality and a city-wide programme. 58 applications were received, of which 55 proceeded to the voting stage. 32 organisations were awarded funding.
- 2.6 This work closely relates to the participation theme of the Year of Young People 2018 and developments underway aimed at working with children and young people to make Edinburgh a children and young person friendly city (as reported to Committee in March 2018). It also reinforces the importance of children and young people's meaningful engagement in decisions that affect their lives and services they may use (e.g. as set out in the Additional Support for Learning and Special Schools – Inclusion and Engagement of Children, Young People and Families report to this meeting). It contributes to Strategic Outcome 5 of the Children's Services Plan 2017 -20, specifically the objectives to 'ensure continued delivery of effective universal youth work programmes' and 'enhance children's rights across the city in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.'

### 3. Main report

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- 3.1 A consultation process took place with young people over the summer of 2016 to identify priorities for them in open access youth provision. These priorities were then used to shape the questions in the grant programme application form.
- 3.2 The first Choose Youth Work Grant programme invited voluntary organisations to make applications up to a value of £10,000. Twenty-one applications were received with a total request value of £155,520. The total budget available was £60k.
- 3.3 Sixteen applications went forward to the voting stage and a total of 11 awards were made following the voting period.
- 3.4 For the programme in 2018-19 there was an increase of budget from £60k to £166k and the introduction of four locality programmes as outlined in the [Youth Work Funding 2017-19](#) report. The budgets available were as follows;
- Citywide £60,000
  - North East £23,758
  - North West £24,035
  - South East £27,555
  - South West £30,652

The maximum award for the citywide programme is £10k and the minimum £1k.

The maximum award for each locality programme is £5k and the minimum is £500.

- 3.5 The application period opened on 25 September 2017 and closed on 10 November 2017. Two briefings were held for organisations interested in applying for funding.

- 3.6 Initially applications were received from a total of 36 organisations across the five programmes. These applications were assessed to ensure quality and strategic fit before going on to the voting process. Four applications did not score highly enough to go to the voting process. As a result, only the citywide and north west programmes had enough applications to require a ballot.
- 3.7 It was therefore agreed to extend the application period to encourage more applications with a new closing date of 16 February 2018 and the voting period opening on 5 March and closing on 16 March. A third briefing was held for organisations interested in applying for funding. Applicants which were unsuccessful in the first round were encouraged to re-apply.
- 3.8 After this extended application period a further 22 organisations applied making a total of 58 applicants. Following a second round of assessments 55 applications went forward to the voting process.
- 3.9 Young people could vote online at the Young Scot website using their Young Scot Card number or using temporary numbers issued through schools, libraries or via an email application to [chooseyouthwork@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:chooseyouthwork@edinburgh.gov.uk). In addition, paper ballots were provided to support young people who couldn't vote online. In order for their vote to be valid, young people had to cast three votes in each ballot.
- 3.10 The total number of votes cast was as follows;
- Citywide 7161 (2387 voters)
  - North East 1440 (480 voters)
  - North West 2820 (940 voters)
  - South East 2412 (804 voters)
  - South West 1668 (556 voters)
- 3.11 It is not possible to give the exact number of young people that voted because young people needed two different temporary numbers to vote in a locality programme and the citywide programme. The best estimate is that approximately 4,000 young people took part in total.
- 3.12 Organisations were ranked by their number of votes and the budget applied until it was exhausted.
- 3.13 These organisations are listed in Appendix 1.
- 3.14 Analysis of evaluation of Choose Youth Work has identified a number of common themes:
- The principle of participatory budgeting (PB) has some merit but there are concerns regarding the time and effort required to engage with young people to ensure that they all have the information and access necessary.
  - PB does not ensure the strategic funding of youth work across the city.
  - The process was seen as inequitable, excluding many young people, particularly minority groups and those who are harder to reach.
  - The engagement of schools in the PB process was not consistent.

- The use of Young Scot cards as key to the voting system proved problematic.
  - There needs to be clarity about the principle of universal youth work.
  - PB is not an appropriate method for the allocation of funding to youth work organisations.
- 3.15 Using a PB approach resulted in several positive developments. It engaged, citywide and in localities, a number of young people in designing the programme, assessing applications, promoting the programme to applicants and peers, and evaluating its impact. There was useful learning for those young people from this involvement and there should be opportunities for them to build on this should they so wish.
- 3.16 The programme also attracted new applicants, involvement from secondary schools and a higher voter turnout than in year 1, with several thousand young people taking part.
- 3.17 There are, however, some concerns about PB as a funding model, and its use led to some concerted criticism from some of the youth work sector, including from some organisations that submitted applications.
- 3.18 Some organisations opted not to apply because they oppose PB on principle. One organisation, having submitted an application, then chose to withdraw it for this reason. Others viewed the process as highly labour-intensive. They cited the need to invest what they considered to be a disproportionate amount of time and work in order to have any chance of success and felt that this did not merit the level of funding available.
- 3.19 A further concern is that the programme can become a ‘popularity contest’ in which the organisation which is better-known, more popular or more able to marshal its vote will have a greater chance of success.
- 3.20 The definition of open-access, universal youth work is complex and open to challenge. In consultation with partners from the sector and academics, the following definition was agreed:

***‘Choose Youth Work aims to support open access universal youth work.***

*Although there is no universally agreed definition of the term, by open access universal youth work we mean provision which:*

- *all young people in a community (defined either in terms of geography or of interest) can take part in*
- *young people take part in on a voluntary basis*
- *is affordable for participants (and often free of charge)*
- *offers a safe space (often a youth club or a youth centre) for personal and social development and learning, and for young people to meet and associate with each other*
- *offers a high degree of autonomy to young people*
- *supports, listens to and empowers young people especially those in marginalised or vulnerable situations, with youth workers able to act as trusted adults, identifying needs and issues through early intervention where appropriate*

- *uses informal learning methods and adapts them to suit the needs and interests of young people*
- *does not have predetermined outcomes and is not designed to address specific issues or problems*

*Open access universal youth work is often contrasted with more **targeted work** which:*

- *is focused on identified individuals and groups of young people*
- *is based on particular needs, generally with pre-defined outcomes*
- *is often accessed by referral*
- *often takes place through one to one meetings with professionals.*

3.21 Whilst every effort was made to apply this definition consistently, it is acknowledged that it was not failsafe. It is also acknowledged that this may be confusing for equalities groups, where provision is open but for a particular community of young people (e.g. young people who are deaf). In practice, the distinction between open access, universal youth work and more targeted provision is often blurred and there are many links between the two approaches.

3.22 In addition, there are a number of logistical and practical aspects that need to be taken into account. PB has not proven to be an efficient means for distributing funds. A great deal of staff time and resources, from the central and each locality team, have been invested in creating the Choose Youth Work PB programme. This was partly due to the lack of existing infrastructure to support the work (especially the absence of: an e-voting platform; an information-storing agreement with the chosen platform provider; and resources for promotion and publicity) and the need for substantial input from Business Support. Amongst other things, this deflected staff time and attention away from other important and pressing priorities.

3.23 At a time when resources are under significant pressure, it is essential that they are used as effectively as possible and reach the young people that can most benefit from this type of provision. The role of youth work in terms of early intervention and prevention, GIRFEC, and its contribution to raising attainment and work with schools needs to be prioritised. The benefit and impact of youth work is well-documented but still needs to be more widely recognised. Research for YouthLink Scotland in 2016 estimated, conservatively, that youth work delivers £7 in value for every £1 it costs.

3.24 It also builds a range a soft skills and capabilities, especially confidence and motivation, both highly valued by employers. The same research estimates that youth work has made a major difference to the lives of over 450,000 people in Scotland today (over 13% of the population)<sup>1</sup> For many 'disengaged' young people, youth work can also provide the contact with one significant adult that research

shows is important in young people's lives. Research demonstrates that youth work supports a range of protective factors including good mental health and wellbeing by facilitating friendships, belonging to groups, and being involved in leisure and informal learning activities.

- 3.25 An essential factor in achieving coherent and effective youth work provision will be a strong partnership with third sector youth work providers. Any new funding mechanism should therefore be co-designed with localities teams, third sector organisations and young people, and be one that they support. This should tie in with the current mapping work to develop a community entitlement for young people which includes youth work provision. This will highlight gaps in provision and ensure that children and young people's views are included in future provision.
- 3.26 The experience of PB in this context has, to some extent, put additional strain on the relationship with the third sector. Several organisations have expressed concerns that distributing the whole of the current budget for youth work via PB could threaten the survival of some youth work providers, including those with proven track records working with priority groups of young people.
- 3.27 There are also concerns that PB is insufficiently strategic and, because it requires an annual vote, offers organisations and participants little in the way of certainty or sustainability, especially where core funding is concerned. Whilst all the applications are assessed against a set of strategic priorities, there is no guarantee, once these are put to a vote, that the most important or pressing of these will receive funding. Sustainable core funding is crucial for organisations when looking to lever in other, external funding. The PB programme as proposed is also seen by officers and representatives from the third sector as potentially fragmenting the youth work budget and setting up a 'scattergun' of short-term, small-scale provision that no longer has the 'critical mass' to attract significant additional match-funding and thus negating a more strategic and co-ordinated multi-sector service.
- 3.28 No organisations expressed concern at the greater involvement of young people in decision-making, including about funding. Indeed, it was widely welcomed as a positive development. The main concern, expressed from different sectors, was that decisions were ultimately made on the basis of a vote. It is felt that this can only be justified if those being asked to vote do so from a fully informed position. The large scale of this programme made it extremely difficult to carry out in-depth and meaningful engagement with young people that allowed them to vote from a fully informed point of view. The fact that young people were asked to vote for projects across their locality meant that some were being asked to vote on projects which were based several miles away whilst there weren't any local applicants that they could vote for (e.g. between Kirkliston and Pilton in the North West Locality). A number of organisations, young people and schools raised this as a concern. Additionally, some also felt that some young people would find it more difficult to be meaningfully involved in this kind of exercise because of other issues in their lives. Several organisations stated, in line with the children and young people's rights agenda, that young people were already involved in decision-making and agreeing

what would be delivered in their programmes. It was also pointed out that not all young people take part in open access, universal youth work and that therefore some non-participants were not interested in voting on which projects should be funded.

- 3.29 Whilst the intention at the outset was to facilitate, as far as possible, meaningful involvement of young people throughout, with hindsight there are more effective ways to engage young people in participative processes. Alternative approaches could include establishing a representative Youth Panel in each locality which is supported to, amongst other things, assess funding applications. Alternatively, PB on a much smaller scale (in terms of numbers of young people and budget available) where the emphasis is on supporting young people to generate and develop ideas (for more general work with children and young people as in North Ayrshire rather than more narrowly-defined open-access, universal youth work), and facilitating a much more in-depth deliberative engagement prior to any voting, would be much more rewarding. Such a proposal could be trialled in the Small Priority Areas identified in each Locality Improvement Plan, thus ensuring that resources were appropriately targeted where most needed and ‘hardly reached/seldom heard’ young people were more engaged in deciding how they were used.
- 3.30 A new model for funding youth work that helps to safeguard its future and ensures that it is focused where most needed should be co-produced with the third sector, localities teams and young people, and supported by Procurement. The detail of this should be developed by June 2019. It could take the form of developing a youth work ‘hub’ or ‘anchor organisation’ in each locality that is contracted by the Council to develop the improvement themes identified in the Youth and Children’s Work Strategy and to support the priorities of the Integrated Children’s Services Plan. A contract model will allow the Council to ensure that resources are deployed as and where most required. The hubs should be located in areas of disadvantage to ensure they are accessible to the most disadvantaged young people. The work to develop this new model should also draw on the experience of successful similar developments in Scotland such as Scottish Borders Council’s work with Youth Borders.

## **4. Measures of success**

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- 4.1 Young people from across the city are involved in decision-making on funding for youth work, from identifying priorities to co-assessing applications to voting for projects

## **5. Financial impact**

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- 5.1 The allocation of the budget available (£166k) is set out in Appendix 1.



## 6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

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- 6.1 This report is in line with the recommendations of the Review of Grants to Third Parties and complemented by the co-production process to redesign the Communities and Families approach to grants for 2016/17 onwards as approved at Committee in October 2016.

## 7. Equalities impact

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- 7.1 The funding of activity by third parties through grant aid contributes to the Council's delivery of its Equality Act 2010 duty to seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality and foster good relations. PB initiatives are intended to promote community cohesion and therefore contribute to good relations.

## 8. Sustainability impact

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- 8.1 N/A

## 9. Consultation and engagement

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- 9.1 This process involved extensive engagement with young people throughout.

## 10. Background reading/external references

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- 10.1 <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/1254/full-report-social-and-economic-value-of-youth-work-in-scotland.pdf>

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## 11. Appendices

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- 11.1 Appendix 1: Citywide and Locality

Appendix 2: Youth Work Grants Awards 2018-19

## Appendix 1

### Citywide

	Total votes	Award
Edinburgh Leisure	1021	7,966
Deaf Action	785	10,000
Gorgie City Farm	716	9,704
LGBT Youth Scotland	650	7,422
The Yard	617	9,360
Lothian Autistic Society	498	6,088
Media Education	497	6,936
Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust	399	2,524
RUTS	372	no award
The Green Team	338	no award
Venture Scotland	311	no award
FABB	260	no award
Friends of the Award	247	no award
Canongate Youth	245	no award
Saheliya	205	no award
<b>Total votes cast</b>	<b>7161</b>	
<b>Total number of voters</b>	<b>2387</b>	

### North East Locality

	Total votes	Award
Citadel Youth Centre	279	5,000
Craigentiny Community Centre	278	4,993
A.R.T.s Afternoon	202	4,920
Pilmey Youth Centre	198	1,689
Cavalry Park Sports Club	168	4,677
Circus Alba Ltd.	160	2,479
People Know How	155	no award
<b>Total votes cast</b>	<b>1440</b>	
<b>Total number of voters</b>	<b>480</b>	

### North West Locality

	Total votes	Award
Fetlor	490	5,000
Pilton Youth and Children's Project	329	4,916
Granton Youth Centre	326	5,000
Corstorphine Youth and Community Centre	296	4,978
Stepping Stones North Edinburgh	257	4,141
Drylaw Telford Community Association	224	no award
North Edinburgh Young People's Forum	188	no award
Arts Afternoon	178	no award
North West Carers	166	no award
Muirhouse Youth Development Group	145	no award
North Edinburgh Arts	116	no award
U-Evolve	105	no award

<b>Total votes cast</b>	2820	
<b>Total number of voters</b>	940	

#### South East Locality

	<b>Total votes</b>	<b>Award</b>
Gilmerton Community Centre	463	4,996
Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre	433	4,995
Positive Realities	377	4,918
Canongate Youth Projects	334	4,998
Dunedin Canmore Youth Projects	317	5,000
Bridgend Allotments Growing Communities	299	2,648
Bridgend Inspiring Growth	189	no award
<b>Total votes cast</b>	2412	
<b>Total number of voters</b>	804	

#### South West Locality

	<b>Total votes</b>	<b>Award</b>
Clovenstone Community Centre	183	5,000
Sighthill Community Centre	179	4,366
West Edinburgh Warriors	170	4,992
Broomhouse Centre	152	5,000
The Health Agency	135	4,999
About Youth	113	4,941
88th Craigmmond Scout Group	110	1,354
Ratho and District Community Council	102	no award
Friends of the Award	97	no award
Youth Vision	96	no award
Buckstone Youth Project	95	no award
Dunedin Canmore Housing	88	no award
St David's Broomhouse	86	no award
SCOREScotland	62	no award
<b>Total votes cast</b>	1668	
<b>Total number of voters</b>	556	

## Appendix 2

### Youth Work Grant Awards 2018-19

<b>Name</b>	<b>2018/19</b>
Canongate Youth Project	£86,710
The BIG Project	£5,133
Edinburgh City Youth Café	£23,510
Citadel Youth Centre	£95,031
Pilton Youth & Children's Project	£96,139
West Hailes Youth Agency	£50,104
SCOREscotland	£33,612
WHALE Arts Agency	£33,760
<b>Total</b>	<b>£424,000</b>