



Glasgow City Council

Operational Performance and Delivery  
Scrutiny Committee

Joint Report by Executive Director of Education and Director of  
Community Empowerment and Equalities

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**Item 5**

12th January 2022

## Pupil Equity Funding and Participatory Budgeting

### Purpose of Report:

To advise Committee regarding the background to the classification of the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) as Participatory Budgeting and the standard and nature of option development and stakeholder engagement used in PEF allocations.

### Recommendations:

Committee is asked to consider the background to PEF allocations and their relevance to participatory budgeting.

Ward No(s):

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes  No  consulted: Yes  No

### PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

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## 1 Background

Executive Director of Education Services and the Director of Community Empowerment and Equalities were asked to report to the next meeting of the OPDSC regarding the background to the classification of the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) as Participatory Budgeting and the standard and nature of options development and stakeholder engagement used in PEF allocations.

## 2 Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)

2.1 Pupil Equity Funding is provided as a ring-fenced specific grant to the local authority. National guidance is provided by the government <https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-equity-funding-national-operational-guidance-2021/>

2.2 The key principles of the funding are:

- Headteachers must have access to the full amount of the allocated Pupil Equity Funding.
- Pupil Equity Funding must enable schools to deliver activities, interventions or resources which are clearly additional to those which were already planned.
- Parents and carers, children and young people and other key stakeholders should be meaningfully involved in the planning process.
- Funding must provide targeted support for children and young people (and their families if appropriate) affected by poverty to achieve their full potential.
- Although the Pupil Equity Funding is allocated on the basis of free school meal eligibility, headteachers can use their professional judgement to bring additional children in to the targeted interventions and approaches.
- Headteachers should work in partnership with each other, and their local authority, to agree the use of the funding. Schools must take account of the statutory responsibilities of the authority to deliver educational improvement, secure Best Value, and the authority's role as employer. Local Guidance will set out more detail on how this will operate.
- The operation of the Pupil Equity Funding should articulate closely to existing planning and reporting procedures e.g. through School Improvement Planning and Standards and Quality reports. This should provide clarity to stakeholders on how Pupil Equity Funding is being used.
- Headteachers must develop a clear rationale for use of the funding, based on a robust contextual analysis, including relevant data which identifies the poverty-related attainment gap in their schools and plans must be grounded in evidence of what is known to be effective at raising attainment for children affected by poverty.

- Schools must have plans in place at the outset to evaluate the impact of the funding. These plans should outline clear outcomes to be achieved and how progress towards these, and the impact on closing the poverty-related attainment gap, will be measured. If, as a result of this ongoing monitoring, the plans are not achieving the results intended, these plans should be amended. Plans for sustainability should be considered as part of this.

### **3. Participatory Budgeting**

3.1 Participatory budgeting (PB) is a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making, in which people decide how to allocate a public budget.

3.2 PB can

- help deliver on outcomes in Scotland's National Performance Framework that 'we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe' and 'we tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally'
- complement aspirations in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 to give communities more powers to achieve their own ambitions
- help deliver the Public Sector Equality Duty by advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups
- support the principle of Public Service Reform that says people should have equal opportunity to participate in decisions shaping their local community and society

### **4. Development of Participatory Budgeting in Glasgow**

4.1 In July 2017, a working group, led by Financial Services, was established to progress the council's approach to mainstreaming Participatory Budgeting and community engagement in 2018/19 and beyond. Education Services were one of the 7 council family areas represented on the group.

The overall policy objective was to develop a new, more open and transparent approach to working together to build healthier, more sustainable and equitable communities, which are confident in shaping their own future.

The group was asked to assess and provide information on areas of existing expenditure that would be suitable for mainstream Participatory Budgeting in 2018/19 and beyond. 17 areas of expenditure were identified as potentially suitable, including the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) which was deemed to be at the Community Engagement Consult Level.

4.2 In 2019, the Council allocated £1m to 4 area based participatory budgeting pilots which were delivered in partnership between the Council, local anchor organisations and third sector specialist equalities groups. The pilots focussed

on specific priorities in each area: Child Poverty, Income and Employment Deprivation, BME Communities and Young People, with the overarching aim to reduce poverty and inequality. 147 people became members of the Citizen's Panel in each area, contributing over 6000 hours in volunteering. Over 2000 people voted in the decision-making process, both online and at public events.

4.3 Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH) was commissioned to do a short-term evaluation of the pilots and make recommendations for mainstreaming, based on the learning. The evaluation, published in October 2019, identified a number of positives as well as challenges from the pilots.

The positives included:

- The dedication of all partners and the authenticity of the process
- The strong commitment to inclusive and accessible participatory budgeting, with Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA) supporting disabled people to participate
- The pilots were delivered in disadvantaged communities or targeted at often excluded communities of interest and identity
- The pilots successfully adopted a Citizen's Panel approach
- The pilot leads developed supportive, authentic and trusted relationships with the Citizen's Panel members and this was an important factor in the success of the pilots

Among the challenges were:

- The level of funding allocated to support the development of the Citizen's Panels and implementation of the process, which should have been higher
- The timescales were too tight
- Capacity building is vital and needs time, resources and support, to allow community members to participate in a meaningful way
- The Citizen's Panels were a traditional "small grants" form of Participatory Budgeting, which has resource, capacity and co-ordination implications

4.4 Work on mainstreaming then went on hold during the emergency phase of Covid-19 and restarted in July 2020 through the Social Recovery Taskforce. Research provided by the Academic Advisory Group of the Taskforce highlighted that the pandemic had exacerbated existing inequalities for disadvantaged communities – the disabled, BME groups, older people, children and young people, women and those experiencing violence or homelessness. The 1% Framework Agreement agreed between Scottish Government and COSLA in 2017 was reviewed in the context of Covid recovery and it was agreed to give local authorities flexibility in meeting this target for mainstreaming participatory budgeting. The 1% target of council budgets refers to the total estimated expenditure for revenue, less assumed council tax intake. For Glasgow City Council, this amounts to £12.2m for 2021.

4.5 In the light of Covid and recovery work, there has been a shift in language across local authorities from Participatory Budgeting to "Participatory Democracy", including a desire to go beyond a small grants process towards embedding participatory democracy in service (re)design and delivery, supporting and empowering communities to make decisions and building on

existing good practice which, for Glasgow, includes the Pupil Equity Fund, the Parks and Greenspace Participatory Budgeting Panel and the Pollok Social Innovation District.

- 4.6 Members will be aware that a wide-ranging review of the Area and Sector Partnerships was also carried out over 2019 and included the aim of enhancing community engagement. The draft recommendations were provided to the Area and Sector Partnerships and the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (GCPP) Strategic Partnership for comment in late 2020 and early 2021. The GCPP Strategic Partnership subsequently approved the Implementation Plan for the new model of Area Partnerships on 7 December 2021.

The new model is underpinned by the following principles:

- It is participatory and encourages views and inputs from all sections of the community
  - It will seek to support those people who have traditionally been excluded from decision making to become involved and will use learning from the 2018/19 Participatory Budgeting pilots to support active engagement
  - It will enable resources to be directed by local people on their priorities and as outlined in The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
  - It will support the development and scrutiny of local area action plans
  - It will be less formal and less report based, with consideration given to how to engage in non-traditional ways; and
  - It will prioritise effective communication both within the partnership and within communities.
- 4.7 In developing the new model, consideration was given to the significant refocussing of priorities and approach as a result of the pandemic. This includes having delivery models that foster collaboration, transparency and citizen participation in priority setting and resource allocation at an *area-based* level. This also dovetails with the city's Open Government vision and proposals
- 4.8 The model also provides a mechanism for the rollout of participatory democracy through Citizens' Panels, informed by learning from the recent Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change and co-developed with communities, at electoral ward level. This reflects the commitment in Glasgow's Open Government Partnership (OGP) Action Plan 2021-23 to *Increasing Participatory Democracy - Developing Citizens' Panels across Glasgow*. The new model has been identified in the OGP Action Plan as the mechanism for involving local people and organisations. It will also align with the Open Government Partnership's values and principles of openness, transparency, accountability and participation.

## 5. Conclusion

From the key principles and guidance outlined above, and the flexibilities afforded to school communities in how these fully devolved resources are

deployed in best meeting local needs in attainment improvement, it is considered that there is a degree of alignment between Pupil Equity Funding and Participatory Budgeting.

## 6. Policy and Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

*Financial: none*

*Legal: none*

*Personnel: none*

*Procurement: none*

**Council Strategic Plan:** Excellent and Inclusive Education

**Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:** n/a

**Climate Impacts:** n/a

**Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:** n/a

## 6. Recommendation

Committee is asked to consider the background to PEF allocations and their relevance to participatory budgeting.