



# Case study pro-forma

<b>Case Study Title</b>	Henllan Participatory Budgeting Project
<b>Partner Organisation (s)</b>	Denbighshire County Council, Henllan Community Council, Wales Participatory Budgeting Unit, Henllan Primary School, Henllan Community Association, Parents & Teachers Association, North Wales Police, Tai Clwyd Housing Association, Friends of the Playing Field.
<b>Key words</b>	Local citizen control, local decisions, devolved budget, inclusive engagement, community involvement, adaptability, enjoyment, sustainability, feedback.

## 1. Brief Introduction

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a 'process for bringing together local communities to the decision-making process around public budgets. It makes new connections between residents, political representatives and local government officers'. PB can strengthen the community and voluntary sectors, focus on poorer communities, and build social capital by creating forums in which local groups can meet, negotiate and take decisions together and can enhance community cohesion as people come together and feel part of a community. Citizens can gain a better understanding of the complexities of setting budgets and choosing between competing priorities — they can be more responsible by being more aware of the resource constraints on their wishes leading to becoming active citizens not passive customers or consumers.

It is in this context that the case study reflects a PB event in the village of Henllan where the community was tasked with having a devolved budget to decide what play equipment should be provided in the local playing field.

## 2. Details of the issue addressed

How does the Council and its partners ensure that **all** residents have the opportunity to participate in the decision making process and ensure that all identified stakeholders are involved in the process? In particular what innovative approach could the Working Group take to involve young children in actively contributing to the selection of play equipment.

## 3. Actions/approach taken

To promote a PB event the usual practice of engaging with a local community is to arrange a public meeting to explain the PB process and seek involvement from those interested. This is supplement through flyers and one-to-one engagement. Our experience however is that only adults and teenagers are motivated to attend a meeting and that young primary age children are excluded from direct active involvement. To overcome this dilemma and complement the public meeting initiatives, youth workers representing the PB Working Group visited the local Primary School and engaged with all the pupils to explain the concept and offer them the opportunity of participating through suggesting suitable play equipment. Pupils then formed themselves into groups to further their preferred items of equipment and with the help of youth workers develop a three minute presentation on their preferred options. The presentations described the play equipment, how much it cost and the benefits it would have to the playing field.

Members of the Working Group re-visited the school to hear four groups of children put forward their projects before the school assembly. As there was insufficient funds to provide all projects the children were asked to vote for their preferred options.



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### 4. Benefits such as: improvements to service, improved dialogue about funding and service planning between third sector organisations and local authorities, in-kind support arrangements etc.

This participatory exercise was considered an outstanding success and delivered several key outcomes which have now been adopted in any future PB events in the County.

- The four groups researched their particular favourite play equipment with budgetary costing and arguments to support their project. Members of the group then devised their own presentation to assembly with different members taking the microphone and explaining the benefits of their project. Particular enjoyment was had by those who dressed the part, the pirates group being particularly effective.
- All of the children in the assembly were able to vote for their preferred piece of equipment through an electronic scoring system showing how the voting process was progressing – a buzz of excitement as several projects were ‘top’ at different stages of the voting.
- The Working Group felt a genuine sense of devolved decision making where those who usually speak on behalf of young children (older children, parents, youth workers and play providers) on this occasion played a periphery role in facilitating rather than advocacy.
- Feedback is instantaneous as participants see the results of the voting process as it occurs. The Working Group had a further debrief following the conclusion of the event.

### 5. Sustaining and or building on the benefits realised

This participatory exercise was considered an outstanding success and delivered the key outcomes identified above which have now been adopted in any future PB event in the County.

### 6. How do you feel the approach met the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales?

Disciples of PB firmly place this engagement process at the top rung of Arnstein’s Ladder of Participation, emphasising the partnership approach required, the devolved budget (power) to the community and the ultimate rung of giving the citizens of Denbighshire control over the process. Taking the PB event to the local school reflected and embedded each of the 10 National Principles

### 7. How would you rate your approach to the project against the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales?

#### Evaluation

1= very poor: 2 = poor: 3 = average: 4 = good: 5 = excellent

Principle	Evaluation
Engagement is effectively designed to make a difference	5
Encourage and enable everyone affected to be involved, if they so choose	5
Engagement is planned and delivered in a timely and appropriate way	5
Work with relevant partner organisations	3



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The information provided will be jargon free, appropriate and understandable	3
Make it easier for people to take part	4
Enable people to take part effectively	5
Engagement is given the right resources and support to be effective	3
People are told the impact of their contribution	5
Learn and share lessons to improve the process of engagement	3

### Contact details

**Name:** David Davies

**Title/role:** Community Engagement Manager

**Organisation:** Denbighshire County Council

**E-mail:** david.davies@denbighshire.gov.uk

**Telephone:** 01824 706146

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