

The background of the slide features the official coat of arms of the City of Vancouver. It is a shield-shaped emblem with a crown on top. The crown has four points, each with a stylized flower. The shield is divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a sailing ship on the water. The top-right quadrant shows a stag's head with antlers. The bottom-left quadrant shows a beaver. The bottom-right quadrant shows a grizzly bear. A banner at the bottom of the shield contains the motto "A NE FOR A".

## **Agenda Item 5**

**Enabled Communities –  
renewal following COVID 19**

**Falkirk Council**

**Title: Enabled Communities – renewal following COVID 19**

**Meeting: Executive**

**Date: 13 October 2020**

**Submitted By: Director of Corporate and Housing Services**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report informs Members about how we can build on the empowered and informed community foundation that has emerged during the current situation to fundamentally change the relationship the Council has with our Communities.

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1 The Executive is asked to:-**

- (1) Recognise the vital role that Communities have undertaken to support people throughout the COVID-19 situation.**
- (2) Agree that the Council should change its ways of working with Falkirk's communities: engaging with communities in a more empowering and collaborative relationship and offering enabling support to build community leadership.**
- (3) Agree the recommendations set out in the Community Choices report in Appendix 1, including the framework for implementing Community Choices.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Prior to COVID-19, the Council was exploring how we could improve the way that we work with communities, recognising the valuable role they have in supporting people and reaching people who may not engage with our services. We were working to develop a renewed relationship with communities and the local third sector where we work together to design services and where communities are involved in decision making.
- 3.2 To develop this approach we planned a series of empowerment focused workshops or 'Hackathons', where we worked with community representatives to agree how to take this forward. The workshops explored:

- public apathy for involvement;
  - the need to develop community and Council expertise to work together;
  - the potential conflict between community decision making and Council accountability.
- 3.3 During the COVID-19 situation the Council worked in partnership with a huge number of third sector organisations, alongside CVS Falkirk who took a liaison role. This partnership working enabled food, medicines and other essential support to be provided within our communities, responding rapidly to need as it arose. This demonstrates the resilience within our communities and the extent of support that can be delivered to people through partnership working.
- 3.4 The third sector is made up of a diverse range of types of organisations including community organisations, voluntary organisations, service providers and social enterprises. There were organisations from all parts of the third sector involved in the response and this composite approach helped to ensure everyone in our communities had access to appropriate support.
- 3.5 We need to learn from what was different during the COVID-19 situation and why that worked. This will help to maintain and build on the positive relationships and shared accountability we currently have with our communities.

#### 4. Resetting our relationship with Communities

- 4.1 During the pandemic we had a different relationship with our communities and the third sector that we want to retain and build on going forward. This will further develop resilience and capacity within communities to address issues alongside the public sector and to support individuals through difficult life experiences as we all have during the pandemic.
- 4.2 The Carnegie Trust's **Building Back Better**<sup>1</sup> report encourages government to take responsibility to use what we have learned not just to repair the immediate damage but to also consider if its economic, social and democratic structures are fit for the future.
- 4.3 Their report highlights that COVID-19 had a much higher and lasting impact on those facing inequalities. It encourages governments to rethink their role, become an enabling state<sup>2</sup> and redesign and restructure *all* of its services and systems with wellbeing at the centre.
- 4.4 An enabling state works alongside communities and people to fundamentally address inequality through supporting people to participate fully, help one another, and ensure people feel they have permission to take control over their lives and communities. Much like we did during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/carnegie\\_uk\\_trust/2020/07/22155840/LOW-RES-4643-CUKT-Building-Back-for-the-Better-A4.pdf](https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/carnegie_uk_trust/2020/07/22155840/LOW-RES-4643-CUKT-Building-Back-for-the-Better-A4.pdf) [Accessed August 2020]

<sup>2</sup> [https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/carnegie\\_uk\\_trust/2019/07/26092551/LOW-RES-3570-ES-Summary-Report-Overview.pdf](https://d1ssu070pg2v9i.cloudfront.net/pex/carnegie_uk_trust/2019/07/26092551/LOW-RES-3570-ES-Summary-Report-Overview.pdf) [Accessed August 2020]

## 5. Enabling Community Action

### 5.1 During the pandemic the Council behaved as an enabling state:

- Stepped back, listened to and supported community led action;
- Worked with already mobilised community organisers and leaders to jointly develop and coordinate community support;
- Did not direct how support developed;
- Worked differently with CVS Falkirk to make and maintain connections and communications with communities;
- Provided professional guidance and expertise as needed;
- Provided simple quick access to financial support for the third sector;
- Facilitated a multi-sector Co-ordination Group to solve problems rather than overseeing strategies;
- Created a valuable information and referral point between public and third sector services.

### 5.2 What we learned:

- The public sector and communities share priorities but see things from a different perspective – where we see an inequality, they see a neighbour they want to help;
- The third sector supports people and shares a sense of responsibility with the Council to do so;
- The public and third sectors connect as and when needed rather than through ongoing relationships;
- Problem solving and delivering tasks together regularly in a practical, themed, and organised manner created a cross sector 'team' that built relationships, understanding and trust - this looked, felt and sounded different to all involved;
- Working together to resolve problems, changed our collaborative behaviours more effectively than planning together has;
- The absence of a planned approach to working with communities during the pandemic helped create a new relationship with communities which felt different to everyone;
- As collaborative decision making was not in place prior to COVID, full empowerment was at times difficult, particularly where people were more used to more directive ways of working;
- Some individuals asked CVS and the Council to take more control of the community response. Resisting this and supporting a more empowered approach is a leadership challenge to explore with Community and Council leaders. This requires a willingness to go through difficult periods of uncertainty to explore new, more effective ways of working;
- As noted, this different relationship required navigation and exploration to work within and not to revert back to previous ways of working;
- The approach benefited from CVS Falkirk's input as an independent connection, co-ordination and information point;
- The absence of a plan led to a high level of support and provision;
- Stronger third sector lead organisations with greater independence from Council would have helped co-ordinate the response and made access to funding easier;

- Community organisations can gather better information on issues within their communities than Council can obtain through ‘reach out’ engagement techniques;
- There is an opportunity to improve understanding and use of evidence and data across sectors to direct work and plan services in a shared manner.

### 5.3 The above findings mirror discussion emerging from the participatory budgeting Hackathons:

- Who is really driving the process of participatory budgeting?
- Is co-production really understood in the same way by everyone involved?
- Third sector leaders and the Council need a different relationship and participatory budgeting is a tool to develop this;
  - Sharing responsibility with communities,
  - Identifying where decisions are made that affect communities,
  - Being clear where communities can be involved in decision making and where they cannot.
- Conflict of interest when the public sector is involved in ‘regulating’ participatory budgeting choices. Communities should collaborate to set parameters;
- Potential conflict between the public sector culture to always achieve a positive result and a community’s desire to ‘do and try out’. What will happen when a ‘wrong’ decision is made with public funding?
- Is the council accountable if something goes wrong in a participatory budgeting funded project?
- Tension between the Council’s need for scrutiny of public funds and their ‘accountability’ for the citizens that the projects support. Monitoring projects as ‘commissioned’ services once the decisions are made will defeat the purpose of public responsibility and accountability.

### 5.4 The above issues were highlighted as an issue during COVID19. What are the Council’s legal and statutory duties when public funding is being used to fund community activity and how far do those duties extend into the community activity? This must be clarified to avoid Council accountability being used as a lever to assert authority in a community setting.

## 6. What we must do next

### 6.1 We must review and adapt our approaches, processes and systems to build on the improved relationships and shared accountability with our communities and not revert to previous approaches. This work must continue to look, sound and feel different, to both communities and to the Council, demonstrating that we are doing things differently both internally and externally.

### 6.2 This includes:

#### **Internally**

- Changing the language that we use to reflect shared ownership and accountability for communities and public funding;

- Clarifying roles and responsibilities of CVS Falkirk and the Council to make sure groups are appropriately supported as robust, independent organisations;
- Providing co-ordination and support across the Council for mainstreaming how the Council works with communities through the Sprint Team;
- Ensuring all Council staff are organised in a locality manner and working regularly with communities;
- Building all Council staff's knowledge of localities and communities;
- Ensuring CLD staff are not perceived as the Council's only contact point with communities;
- Ensuring the Council is not indirectly influencing community decision making through providing support;
- Setting clear messages for Council staff and community leaders of entrepreneurialism, shared priorities, the value of community leadership and of working collaboratively at all levels;
- Reviewing how strategic planning partnerships and locality planning groups are designed, structured, organised and led, adopting a shared accountability approach;
- Ensuring the Council has a clear statement on empowerment, including its legal and statutory duties, when passing public funds or public accountability onto communities. All Council staff and representatives need to know the Council's legal duties so these responsibilities are not assumed or asserted incorrectly in a collaborative setting.

#### **Externally:**

- Working with community organisations to develop a strong foundation of lead organisations who can lead community development and support 'reach in' engagement, bringing diverse views from within their communities;
- Identifying opportunities to relinquish control and allow communities to be involved in shared decision making;
- Clarifying with Council and Community leaders what the accountabilities of the various partners are prior to entering into any resource sharing arrangements;
- Building ongoing and frequent joint working practices with community organisations;
- Investing time and resources in working alongside community groups to resolve issues as partners;
- Improving the understanding, skills, openness and transparency of joint working across sectors.

6.3 This change from directive to collaborative leadership will impact services across the whole Council but particularly will change how we carry out Locality planning, Community Development and Engagement and Consultation.

## **7. The Falkirk Plan and Locality Planning**

This new model of working with and alongside community would see the forthcoming development of the Falkirk Plan as opportunity to start an ongoing conversation with community leaders and volunteers about the inequalities in Falkirk's communities and how we will all work together to address them.

This conversation will not just ask community bodies what their priorities are; it will also be a space for them to consider how they want to focus their attention, resources and efforts as key partners in the Falkirk Plan alongside the Community Planning Partnership.

- 7.1 Community participation is not an activity or an aim of the Falkirk Plan, but a foundational building block and approach that is necessary to achieve positives change. The community engagement work in the third sector will be communicated and co-ordinated through CVS Falkirk, supported by the CPIG Engagement Sub-group. Community organisations will reach into communities. The milestones for development of the Falkirk Plan are as follows:

SOLD Evaluation Report Draft	Complete
Strategic Needs Assessment	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
Engagement Planning Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree engagement priorities;</li> <li>• Create toolkit and coms for engagement;</li> <li>• Support third sector leaders to plan and delivery engagement;</li> <li>• Identify gaps in demographics and work to target their input.</li> </ul>	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
Collate Engagement Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define Engagement dates, groups and activities with third sector;</li> <li>• Co-ordinate support from CPIG members.</li> </ul>	October 2020
Undertake Engagement	October- November 2020
Analysis of Findings	November – December 2020
Draft Priorities and COVID-19 Recovery Actions	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2020
Feedback, confirm analysis and draft plan	January – February 2021
Final Draft Formal Public Consultation (online)	February 2021
Final Plan	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021

- 7.2 As we learned during the pandemic, community participation and its collaboration with public services can deliver a very personalised, flexible and locally adaptive practical support response at a neighbourhood level. During the pandemic, this resulted in a deeper reach in to support the vulnerable people in all of Falkirk's communities.

7.3 Going forward, our role in Locality Planning will be to support communities to develop plans, addressing the issues important to the people in that area. We will provide support to anchor organisations within communities to allow them to carry out engagement and develop actions and 'reach in' to engage with their communities using their localised expertise.

7.4 Support from the Council will include:

- Clear and open information about Council's approach to community empowerment;
- Access to data about the area;
- Clarity over locality spend and preparation of locality budgets;
- Local decision making audits;
- Training on statutory requirements and accountabilities of locality planning;
- Policy and evaluation support, particularly in relation to inequalities;
- Resources, including supporting community organisations to employ their own development workers;
- Ensuring independent support for communities to prepare to engage in locality planning through the Third Sector Interface;
- Working alongside communities to learn and experiment, creating innovative solutions;
- Commitment to adapt Council services to align to the plans.

7.5 All Council departments and services will need to plan, deliver and evaluate services on a locality basis and inform the points noted in 7.5. This represents a significant change to the way this is currently done.

7.6 Details of how we will approach locality planning will be further developed for approval by the Community Planning Board.

7.7 The implementation of Community Choices (participatory budgeting) will be key to our work with communities. Community Choices will get communities involved in deciding how money is spent within their communities. Appendix 1 provides more detail on the roll out of Community Choices in Falkirk. This paper was considered by the Local Governance Review Panel on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

## **8. Community Development**

8.1 We need to ensure that the communities we are working with have the resources and ability to participate in locality planning.

8.2 Involving Council staff in the start-up, development, management or leadership of third sector organisations and community assets can create a dependency with the unintended outcome of reducing capacity and skills within Communities.

8.3 Going forward the Council needs to support community led development that prioritises the development of governance skills and independent leadership of the third sector.



This will grow a stable base of community anchor organisations across Falkirk's communities and give them the capacity, knowledge and confidence to engage with the Council on issues relevant to them through a reach-in model.

8.4 This approach is characterised by;

- Community Anchor Organisations employing and managing their own community development staff;
- Inclusive, well governed, independent local community infrastructure/anchor organisations;
- Active local social networks, volunteers, groups and activities;
- Community led engagement plans and chosen engagement tools;
- Community formed action plans;
- Regular, enabling professional support and investment from all partners;
- Community inquiry and framing of the issues affecting their communities.

8.5 Going forward CVS will provide independent, professional guidance and support in the start-up, development and management of third sector organisations. They will assist organisations in employing staff and their duties as an employer. This will equip communities to develop their own community intelligence and social capital to engage in community planning, participatory budgeting and improvement activity.

8.6 The Council's Community Learning and Development Team could provide professional expertise in community engagement techniques and inclusive engagement tools. These Engagement experts need to offer this guidance to all Anchor Organisations in an enabling and consultative manner and not participate in or lead in the delivery of locally led engagement plans.

8.7 The above team need to work very closely with other parts of the Council that engage with Communities and this should be co-ordinated via the Communities workstream.

### **Mainstreaming Engagement and Participation**

8.8 Across the Council engagement and consultation takes place in many different ways from formal statutory consultations to service redesign and co-production.

8.9 We will move towards partnership engagement and co-production with communities of geography and interest. Additionally, we will support community organisations to take forward engagement, reaching into their own communities and sharing their findings and ideas for change. This recognises the greater impact this reach-in approach would have, particularly in getting views from those we often refer to as 'hard to reach', while simultaneously supporting the role of community leaders and building community capital and knowledge.

- 8.10 Under the Communities workstream, we are currently establishing a temporary team to support Council services to improve the way they engage with communities, taking a much more participative approach, supporting co-production of services.
- 8.11 This team will support the co-ordination of Community Engagement across the Council, as well as increase the skills and confidence of all Council staff to work alongside communities more frequently.

## **9. Resources**

- 9.1 Continuing to build a better way of working with our communities will require resources within the Council. In addition to the Communities team that will support a change in the way the Council engages with communities, we are also recruiting a Community Planning Co-ordinator and a Community Choices Development Officer. We expect to have the full team in place by the end of the year.

## **10. Financial**

- 10.1 Changing the way we work with communities could offer the opportunity to redesign how services are delivered, with communities being more directly involved in delivering the services that are important to them. This is delivering on mainstreaming Community Choices (participatory budgeting) where we could share budgets and decision making with communities.
- 10.2 Falkirk Council has agreed to allocate £3m to capital projects over the next two years by Community Choices. In addition, services will be asked to identify all money within their budgets that could be subject to Community Choices.
- 10.3 A report providing an update on the development of Community Choices is included as Appendix 1.

## **11. Legal**

- 11.1 This approach will support us to fulfil our duties as set out in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

## **12. Risk**

- 12.1 Working together to provide support during the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly improved the Council's relationship with our communities. We have an opportunity to build on this. Failing to do so and reverting back to previous ways of working will diminish the good relationships that have developed and will impair our ability to successfully carry out locality planning and community choices (participatory budgeting).

### **13. Equalities**

- 13.1 Working with communities on engagement through reach-in community led engagement will allow us to better understand the needs of everyone in our communities and will therefore improve our ability to properly access the impact of future decisions in terms of poverty and equalities.

### **14. Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

- 14.1 Working more closely with our communities may allow a more sustainable approach to be taken to addressing issues within communities. For example, as part of the community food provision during the COVID-19 pandemic, a community food purchasing scheme has been established making use of local food providers.

### **15. Conclusions**

- 15.1 Responding to the COVID 19 pandemic in partnership with our communities has resulted in a significant improvement in our relationships as well as supporting people throughout the crisis. We have an opportunity to build on this and change our ways of working so that we continue to work in true partnership with our communities going forward.

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Director of Corporate and Housing Services

Date: 8 September 2020

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Community Choices report for Local Governance Review Policy Development Panel, 15.09.20

### **List of Background Papers:**

None

**Title:** Community Choices – Progress  
**Meeting:** Local Governance Review Policy Development Panel  
**Date:** 15 September 2020  
**Submitted By:** Director of Corporate and Housing Services

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress in developing the Council's Participatory Budgeting/Community Choices framework and proposes the next steps that should be taken to implement this scheme.
- 1.2 Once approved by the Local Governance Review Panel, the Community Choices framework set out in this report will form part of an overarching report to the Emergency Executive on Enabled Communities.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Local Governance Review Policy Development Panel is asked to:-
  - (1) **Note the proposals regarding the implementation of a Community Choices small grants scheme, and the distribution of £1m capital funding in 2020/21 at ward level according to levels of child poverty**
  - (2) **Agree that services will identify all money that could be subject to Community Choices**
  - (3) **Note that the Community Choices framework set out in this report will form the basis of a wider report to the Emergency Executive on Enabled Communities.**

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 Participatory Budgeting is an approach that seeks to mobilise, include and empower individuals and communities to engage people in the management of public resources. For Falkirk we propose to call Participatory Budgeting Community Choices. This name received positive feedback from members of the public at a workshop in March 2020. Participants felt that Community Choices gives communities and other external partners a clearer and more meaningful understanding of the scheme's purpose.

- 3.2 Falkirk Council has agreed to implement Community Choices in line with the agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA, stating that at least 1% of local authority budgets should be subject to a Community Choices participatory budgeting approach for the financial year 2020/21.
- 3.3 The Executive agreed a report in April 2019, subject to more detailed development, that outlined a set of proposals for a Council Participatory Budgeting scheme. The approach proposed the following three elements:
- A grant funded approach supporting community-based projects
  - A place-based approach where geographic budgets are established for a defined range of services
  - A mainstream approach where we seek to redesign services in partnership with the people who use them.
- 3.4 The Executive requested that the Local Governance Review Policy Development Panel (PDP) hold a session on Participatory Budgeting, considering each element in turn and making recommendations to the Executive on how the scheme would work. The PDP heard from colleagues in Dundee and North Ayrshire who shared their experiences of running Participatory Budgeting projects. Dundee highlighted the need for projects to be deliverable, and for strategic oversight and buy-in from senior management. North Ayrshire delivered a limited place-based scheme through locality partnerships and emphasised the importance of creating a brand and advertising the scheme across the Council area.
- 3.5 On February 26, 2020, as part of the additional capital proposals, and funded by the further council tax increase of 1.84%, a provision of £3m over the next two years was approved for Participatory Budgeting/Community Choices projects across the Falkirk area.
- 3.6 In March 2020, COSLA briefed Falkirk Council officers on what was being asked of councils and provided examples of what other local authorities were doing. Again, the need for corporate buy-in and leadership in rolling out Participatory Budgeting was reinforced. COSLA confirmed that whilst the amount of budget to be allocated by Community Choices is calculated as 1% of total revenue expenditure, excluding Council Tax, there is flexibility in how is achieved. Community choices budget spend can include activities related to capital budget, the Housing Revenue Account and education budgets.
- 3.7 In designing Community Choices, officers have engaged with communities and third sector partners across the Council area. In particular, the Council of the Future and Community Planning teams co-organised an 'Enabled Communities hackathon', where officers, community representatives and third sector partners discussed what Community Choices might look like in Falkirk. Unfortunately, the final workshop was postponed due to Lockdown.

- 3.8 Covid-19 has inevitably had an impact in developing Community Choices, with officers prioritising responding to the lockdown. However, it also provided an opportunity to work in partnership with Communities. A participatory approach was taken over the allocation of some of the Emergency Food Fund money. £78k was allocated to CVS Falkirk who worked with local community food providers to agree how that funding should be spent to provide people with fresh produce. A 'social grocer' was established with community groups placing orders on a weekly basis which were purchased collectively, benefiting from bulk ordering prices and using local supplier where possible.

#### **4. Considerations**

- 4.1 In response to Covid-19, COSLA will meet with the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government in early September to discuss a proposal for a revised approach to the delivery of the Participatory Budgeting 1% framework agreement. It is proposed that the 1% target should be pushed back until the fiscal year 2022/23 at the earliest.
- 4.2 The Council is refreshing its Corporate Plan to reflect new priorities post COVID. Three new priorities have been identified - Communities, Enterprise and Innovation. Community Choices has a significant role to play in the delivery of our Communities priority.

Under our Communities priority, we have committed to:

- Work to protect and improve the health and wellbeing of all
- Ask, listen and act on what our communities tell us
- Cut red tape to make it easier for communities to make decisions for themselves
- Build on new strengths created within our communities
- Work in partnership with communities to ensure decisions and services are right for them
- Form stronger ties with our communities and partners to improve the lives of our most vulnerable
- Raise aspirations and help everyone live independent and fulfilling lives
- Ensure children and young people thrive in their education/training
- Safeguard our green spaces and maintain a transport infrastructure that is second to none
- Ensure people feel safe within their community and live in high quality housing.

#### **5. Proposals**

- 5.1 A framework needs to be created that clearly outlines how each element of the Council's Community Choices programme will operate. It is proposed that we develop this in partnership with our Communities, asking them how they would like this to be delivered. The following outlines what the framework will cover including suggestions to start the discussion with communities:

## I. Grant Funded Approach: c £100k

- Based on particular themes identified as priorities for Communities and Council – this could include:
  - Addressing inequalities and disadvantage
    - Digital exclusion
    - Holiday Food Provision
  - Developing Community Resilience
- Projects can be proposed by Council services and third sector community groups
- A limit of funding for individual grants will be agreed for each theme
- Public voting will be carried out online with Community organisations and services supporting people to cast their vote
- Timescales and frequency of grant funding schemes to be agreed with Communities

## II. Place-based approach:

- All service budgets where allocation of spend is not determined by statutory duties will be considered
- A phased approach will be taken to rolling this out with the allocated capital funding likely to be the first delivered
- The first budget to be considered will be the Community Choices Capital allocation
- Budgets will be considered at ward level
- Place based forums of Community representatives will be set up to oversee spend in each ward
- Decision making will be supported by public online voting where possible
- Timescales for review of budget allocations will be agreed with Place based Forums

## III. Mainstream approach – co-produced or service redesign

- People have a much deeper influence on the services they receive
- Gives us a much deeper understanding of the needs of people who use our services
- Makes sure that services meet the needs of those using them.
- It is a longer term piece of work that will be shaped by how both the grants funded and place-based approaches are received and engaged with by communities
- Already starting to work in this way in some areas, for example Additional Support Needs redesign, Covid-19 Emergency Food Fund and design of the Garry Place hostel

- 5.2 The £1m for capital spend on Community Choices for 2020/21, and this should be redistributed to communities at the earliest opportunity. It is proposed that this is allocated at ward level and distributed according to the number of children in poverty in each ward. Capital investment is about investing in our future and improving services and resources in our communities. By allocating this money according to child poverty, the Council investment in communities would help address the impact of child poverty – for example, by improving community facilities and infrastructure. This would help to build a better future for those in greatest need.
- 5.3 By allocating the capital funding in this way the Council will give a clear public declaration of its commitment to tackling child poverty. The proposed allocation by ward is shown below:

Ward	% children in relative poverty (2018/19)	No children in poverty	Year 1	Year 2
Bo'ness & Blackness	18	485	£95,042	£190,084
Grangemouth	23	611	£119,733	£239,467
Denny & Banknock	18	629	£123,261	£246,522
Carse, Kinnaird and Tryst	14	566	£110,915	£221,830
Bonnybridge and Larbert	13	408	£79,953	£159,906
Falkirk North	26	984	£192,828	£385,655
Falkirk South	19	480	£94,062	£188,125
Lower Braes	14	376	£73,682	£147,364
Upper Braes	17	564	£110,523	£221,046
<b>Total</b>	NA	5103	£1,000,000	£2,000,000

- 5.4 In order to progress the place-based approach with revenue budget, Directors are required within their service remits to identify service budgets where allocation of spend is not determined by statutory requirements/duties.
- 5.5 The mainstreaming approach to community choices/participatory budgeting will be developed as part of how we change our ways of working with our communities and overseen by the Enabling Communities workstream.
- 5.6 These proposals will be taken to the PDP for its comment and approval, followed by a report to the Executive.
- 5.7 Recruitment of a dedicated Community Choices officer is underway and they will be supported by the Community Planning Coordinator, also under recruitment.
- 5.8 The three strands of the Community Choices are at varying stages of development. A phased approach to the introduction of Community Choices is recommended. The framework for the small grants scheme and Capital Allocation should be finalised and delivered this year.



## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1. This report provides more details on proposals to implement a Council Participatory Budgeting framework. Council services and external stakeholders including community representatives will be engaged in the detailed development and subsequent implementation.

## **7. Implications**

### **Financial**

- 7.1 Community Choices will impact on a minimum of 1% or £2.9m of the Council's revenue budget by the end of 2021. As part of the additional capital proposals and funded by the further council tax increase of 1.84%, a provision of £3m over the next two years was approved for Community Choices projects across the Falkirk area.

### **Resources**

- 7.2 This is a new requirement on the Council and needs to be supported by all Council services as well as the Health and Social Care Partnership.

### **Legal**

- 7.3 This report progresses the Council towards complying with the Scottish Government agreement with COSLA to subject 1% of our revenue budget to Participatory Budgeting by the end of 2021.

### **Risk**

- 7.4 Failure to consider the reports and its recommendations will delay progress towards meeting the Council's 1% Participatory Budgeting obligations. There is also a risk posed by savings within the Council's medium-term financial plan regarding CLD which the service feels will limit its ability to support Participatory Budgeting.

### **Equalities**

- 7.5 An EPIA will be required on each element of the Community Choices scheme as we develop a detailed framework.

### **Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

- 7.6 A sustainability assessment will be required on each element of the Community Choices scheme as we develop a detailed framework.

## **8. Conclusions**

- 8.1 Whilst local authorities await updated guidance from COSLA and the Scottish Government regarding Participatory Budgeting, this report outlines proposals and next steps towards developing the Council's Community Choices scheme.

Following consideration by the Local Governance Review PDP this report will be sent to the Emergency Executive as part of a wider Enabled Communities report.

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Chief Executive/Director of Service

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**Date:** 4 September 2020

## **APPENDICES**

List any appendices; or if none state 'None.'

### **List of Background Papers:**

**The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:**

- None