



# INTRODUCTION TO PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN THE BOROUGH OF GREAT YARMOUTH

## What is Participatory Budgeting?

Participatory Budgeting (PB) directly involves local people in making decisions on the priorities and spending of a defined public budget. PB can be defined by geographical area (whether that's neighbourhood or larger) or by theme. It involves engaging residents, community groups and representatives of all parts of the community to discuss and vote on spending priorities; make spending proposals, and vote on them; as well as giving local people a role in the scrutiny and monitoring of the process and results, to inform subsequent PB decisions on an annual or repeatable basis.

PB is most effective when conducted in an inclusive way helping bring real change in the relationship between citizens, communities, local Council officials and elected Councillors.

## What are the main aims of Participatory Budgeting?

The main aims are as follows:

- Engage communities in Participatory Budgeting (PB) process.
- Encourage members of the community to have a say in how money is spent
- Encourage communities to feel they are part of the area and in local decision making
- To engage with Councillors as well as the community

## What are the benefits of Participatory Budgeting?

- It helps bring diverse people together, supporting community cohesion
- It helps to raise people's understanding of the complexities of public budget setting and deciding between competing priorities
- It can lead to real improvements in the way local people, elected Councillors and Council officials work together

By empowering people, devolving more decisions on spending public budgets in this way, services can be better tailored to local circumstances, and improved resident satisfaction with them is likely to result.

## What is happening in Great Yarmouth?

There have been several examples of PB in Norfolk over the last few years and Great Yarmouth Borough Council decided to have its own pilot PB exercise “Your Borough, Your Say” using Community Cohesion funding and money allocated from Norfolk County Strategic Partnership’s own PB exercise “Your Norfolk, Your Decision”.

It was decided that the following would each be allocated £10,000 to undertake a PB exercise in the Borough this year:

Magdalen, Shrublands & Elmhurst Court Neighbourhood Board	) Norfolk
Belton Parish Council	) Ambition
Older People’s Network	) Funding
Martham Parish Council	) Community
Cobholm, Southtown & Halfway House Neighbourhood Board	) Cohesion
South and Central Yarmouth Neighbourhood Board	) Funding

If this pilot exercise is successful, it is hoped that further funds will be made available in the future to roll out PB to other areas.

The Borough Council is assessed annually as part of the Norfolk Comprehensive Area Assessment on various national indicators and PB will help towards improving our performance against the following indicators in particular:

- NI1 – the % People who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together
- NI4 – the % of people who feel that they can influence decisions in their locality.