



AGENDA ITEM NO. 4

Extraordinary Meeting of the Bishopston, Cotham, Redland Neighbourhood Partnership

Wednesday 16th September 2015

Title: Allocation of NP funds for Participatory Budgeting Exercise at the BCR NP community fair

Report of: Andrew McGrath – Neighbourhood Coordinator

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To **agree** to designate up to £1,000 of the community fair budget to a Participatory Budgeting exercise on the day of the event

1. Participatory Budgeting.

BCR NP is holding a community fair on Saturday 19th September 2015. The event is being held in the community rooms of St Michael and All Saints Church on Pigsty Hill, Gloucester Road.

The reason for this extra Neighbourhood Committee meeting being held is to ensure that the NP complies with BCC audit requirements. The Neighbourhood Committee is **requested to agree** to up to £1,000 of the event's budget being used to hold a Participatory Budgeting (PB) exercise as part of the day's activities. The funding for the community fair is coming from the £2,000 allocated for a community event at the 20th October 2014 NP meeting. No 'new' money is being requested. When this funding was allocated it wasn't stipulated (or known) that up to £1,000 of it would be spent via a PB exercise. This is a recent idea. As the final decision on which groups receive funding is to be made by attendees at the event, it needs to be shown clearly that the Neighbourhood Committee is in agreement with this process and method of allocating up to £1,000 of the NP's funds.

Although PB has never previously been used by any NP in Bristol, it is a well-established method for distributing grants to local community organisations. The difference between PB and the usual method by which

the NP distributes small grants is that the final decision on which grants are awarded is made by people attending the event. PB exercises are competitive, with applicant organisations competing against each other for all or part of a designated amount of funding.

All applicant organisations are expected to attend the event and to have a stall setting out what their plans for spending the requested funding are. They will also be given the opportunity to explain to attendees what their plans are via a short presentation on the day. Attendees then vote for their preferred projects. Each attendee will be given 4 votes (sticky dots), which they place on a voting board containing each applicant organisation's name. The whole exercise is very open and transparent. Shortly after the presentations are over, voting will end. The votes will be counted and the winning projects will be announced.

Attendees will be able to use their 4 voting dots as they wish. They can vote for 4 separate projects or vote 4 times for one project (or any variation between).

The grant budget available is a maximum of £1,000. The maximum amount each applicant organisation can request is £250. Therefore there should be at least four successful organisations, possibly more, depending on the amounts requested. The budget will be allocated to projects in strictly descending order of number of votes cast until an allocation would otherwise have exceeded the budget, even if this means less than £1000 is allocated in total. The total amount applied for by all the organisations will not be known until shortly before this extra committee meeting.

The main characteristics of PB exercises are that they should be simple, transparent and fun. One of the reasons for ensuring the method of allocation has been agreed by the Neighbourhood Committee prior to the event is so that payments to successful organisations can be made as speedily as possible. Successful organisations will be asked to sign their funding agreements (and other necessary forms) on the day so that payments can be processed in the following week.