|  |
| --- |
| **YOUR COMMUNITY – YOU DECIDE !****€300,000 – Your Ideas – Your Call** |

**What is Participatory Budgeting?**

*Participatory Budgeting is a local democratic process which facilitates citizens in a local community to directly decide how to spend a portion of a public budget in their area. It gives people direct power to determine spending priorities to improve their community.*

**How does it work?**

*In this instance South Dublin County Council has allocated €300,000 for the Lucan-Palmerstown area. Residents through a combination of locally facilitated workshops and an online consultation portal* [*www.sdcc.ie/pb*](http://www.sdcc.ie/pb) *are invited to submit their spending priorities for this budget. This is extra discretionary money. In the first instance proposals will be assessed in terms of their community benefit. This assessment will be conducted by a panel of elected councillors and council staff. Selected proposals will then be costed and re-presented to the public on the website* [*www.sdcc.ie/pb*](http://www.sdcc.ie/pb) *. The public will then vote for their priorities up to the value of €300,000. Following the closure of the voting period those proposals receiving the highest vote with a combined value of €300,000, will be chosen to proceed to completion within the following 12 month period.*

**Next Steps**

*The initiative was launched at a public event in the Clarion Hotel Liffey Valley on 28th February. Throughout the month of March the initiative will be widely publicised on local and social media. Workshops will be held at the following local venues to facilitate the generation of ideas:*

* *Tuesday 7th March: Adamstown – St. John the Evangelist School -7pm to 10pm*
* *Wednesday 8th March: Palmerstown- Palmerstown Community School - 6.30pm to 9.30pm*
* *Monday 13th March: Lucan-Lucan Leisure Centre - 7pm to 10pm*

*Where people are unable to attend workshops, they can make proposal online at* [*www.sdcc.ie/pb*](http://www.sdcc.ie/pb)

**How do I get involved?**

*It is important that the local community use this unique opportunity to directly influence the spending of €300,000 additional money on proposals to improve your area as a place to live and enjoy.*

***You can:***

* *Attend a workshop and submit your proposal to help facilitate a joint community proposal.*
* *Go online at* [*www.sdcc.ie/pb*](http://www.sdcc.ie/pb) *yourself or with members of your community to submit your proposals.*
* *Through your daily, community and social media contacts, spread the message that this opportunity is available. #sdccpb*

**FAQs**

**Is this new?**

*Participatory Budgeting as a concept is not new. It was first developed in Brazil in 1989 and has since been used across the US and Western Europe. This is the first time this process has been embarked upon in Ireland, so it is a first in this regard.*

**Does it mean extra money for my area?**

*Yes. This is €300,000 additional real money over and above the normal yearly budget for your area.*

**It is only for Lucan-Palmerstown?**

*Yes. There are six electoral areas in South Dublin County. It was decided to pilot this initiative in one area. Lucan was chosen by lot at a public meeting of the Council.*

**Is this not the job of Elected Councillors?**

*It is the function of the Councillors to adopt the Annual Budget of South Dublin County Council, including the identification of spending priorities. While Councillors are elected by the people to represent their views and work on their behalf, this is an ongoing process of consultative decision making. In this instance, the Councillors decided to set aside €300,000 extra discretionary funds to allow citizens to directly identify their own priorities for their community. This initiative is in the interests of enhanced democracy and citizen consultation.*

**Will this process be dominated by the loudest voices?**

*It is a valid concern in any public consultation process that certain groups already established may be better positioned to get their views across. Every effort will be made to ensure this process is fully inclusive, through open workshops and online consultation. In addition specific focus group meetings will be held with the active aged, youth, new communities and disability and community health interests. The public have a real opportunity to spend real money for the betterment of their community – so* ***everyone*** *is urged to get involved.*

**Why should I bother?**

*Participatory Budgeting gives you and your neighbours the power to improve your area as a place to live, work and play. It is empowering, civic minded and fun. It is also educational, fair and transparent.*

**What can the money be used for?**

*Local Councils provide an extensive range of services for the benefit of its citizens. A summary list of services is available* [*here*](http://www.sdcc.ie/the-council/access-to-information/publication-scheme/functions-and-services) *Proposals for the use of the €300,000 may seek to extend or improve these services. In general, proposals should seek to benefit the community to the broadest possible extent, rather than groups, organisations or individuals. This is* ***not*** *a grant scheme and there already exists a wide range of grant schemes for this purpose, such as those listed below:*

* *Community Grants Scheme*
* *Community Initiative Fund*
* *Festivals and Summer Projects*

**When/How can I vote?**

*During March 2017 proposals are to be submitted for consideration. In early April 2017 proposals having been assessed and selected, will be costed and put forward for a public vote. This vote can be submitted online at* [*www.sdcc.ie/pb*](http://www.sdcc.ie/pb) *. There will also be a number of voting stations set up locally for people to vote in paper format, if they do not have access to the internet/ computer. These locations and the date to cast your vote will be announced closer to the time.*

**How will I know the outcome of the vote?**

*The results will be announced online and publically at a community and media event.*

**When will the €300,000 be expended?**

*Within 12 months of proposals being agreed.*