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

What is Participatory Budgeting?

Participatory Budgeting is a local democratic process that facilitates citizens in a local community to decide how to spend a portion of a public budget in their area. It gives people the 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 Clondalkin Electoral Area. Residents, through a combination of locally facilitated workshops and an online consultation portal, 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. A panel of elected councillors and council staff will conduct this assessment. Selected proposals will then be costed and re-presented to the public on the website ([www.southdublin.ie/haveyoursay](http://www.southdublin.ie/haveyoursay)). 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 will be launched at a public event in The Round Tower, Clondalkin on Tuesday, the 27th of 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 13th March: Rowlagh Community Centre, Clondalkin from 7.00pm
* Thursday 15th March: Green Isle Hotel, Clondalkin from 7.00pm
* Tuesday 20th March: St. Finian's Community Centre, Newcastle from 7.00pm
* Thursday 22nd March: Rathcoole Community Centre from 7.00pm

Where people are unable to attend workshops, they can make a proposal online.

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 their area as a place to live and enjoy.

They can do so by:

* Attending a workshop and submit proposals that may help facilitate a joint community proposal.
* Go online at [www.southdublin.ie/haveyoursay](http://www.southdublin.ie/haveyoursay) themselves or with members of their community to submit their proposals.
* Spread the message that this opportunity is available to their daily, community and social media contacts and use the Have Your Say hashtag #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. South Dublin County Council is the first local authority in Ireland to utilise this process, 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.

Is it only for Clondalkin?

The Clondalkin Electoral Area has been chosen for this initiative for 2018. There are six electoral areas in South Dublin County. It was decided to pilot this initiative in Lucan in 2017 with Clondalkin chosen by lot at the Annual Budget Council Meeting in November. The remaining electoral areas will each be given their opportunity in the coming years.

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 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 might be better positioned to get across their views. Every effort will be made to ensure this process is fully inclusive through open workshops and online consultation. In addition, efforts will be made to engage the active aged, youth, new communities, disability, and community health interests. The public has 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 and April 2018, proposals are to be submitted for consideration. In May, proposals, having been assessed and selected, will be costed and put forward for a public vote. This vote can be submitted online (link will be provided to elected members when the website is open to the public). 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 their 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 in June.

When will the €300,000 be expended?

Within 12 months of proposals being agreed.