

KEY POINTS

- The profile of participatory budgeting (PB) in Scotland has never been higher. With increasing profile and resource allocation to PB comes greater scrutiny of PB processes and impacts.
- The range, diversity and context-driven nature of impacts from PB make evaluation challenging. There has been an onus on community-based practitioners to fulfil the monitoring and evaluation requirements associated with PB funding.
- A 2016 review of almost 60 PB processes in Scotland showed that there was a lack of information detailing PB processes. The review recommended an emphasis on capturing PB narratives including community context, community engagement and representation within PB, the democratic process utilised, the types of projects funded through PB and the impacts of PB.
- A PB 'logic model', or flowchart, has been developed to support community-based PB practitioners and community members involved in PB to address the gaps in the understanding of PB implementation.
- PB evaluations should capture the dialogue and deliberation within the adopted democratic process. It is also important to note that PB impacts to community members will result from the *PB process* as well as from the funded *PB projects*.
- The logic model is flexible and adaptive; it is designed to be a useful starting place and point of reflection for practitioners and community members involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of PB.

INTRODUCTION

Participatory budgeting (PB) is a process that enables and empowers citizens to decide how to spend public money¹. In essence PB is about community members shaping local services to more effectively meet local priorities and aspirations. PB is driven by the desire to deepen democracy, and to reallocate public money at a community level to services and initiatives identified as priorities by residents². PB started in Brazil in 1989 and has now spread to over 1,500 localities across the globe with around 3,000 PB processes having taken place³. The profile and coverage of PB within Scotland has increased over the past few years; from half a dozen known PB processes in 2010, to at least 58 having taken place by 2016. Alongside this grassroots growth within Scotland's communities, there has also been increasing political, legislative and investment support for PB⁴.

The elevation of PB from its peripheral, organic beginnings to its emergence as a national policy tool brings with it many challenges. One such set of challenges concern capturing important PB implementation learning and how to nurture and share this 'learning by doing' across local and national PB networks. Very few PB processes in Scotland to date have had the resources or expertise to enable them to carry out effective evaluations. PB funding often comes with monitoring and evaluation requirements, and to date, there has often been an onus on community-based practitioners to fulfil these requirements⁴. Evaluation of PB can be extremely challenging. PB is a varied, complex and context-driven process; and is and should be unique to each community within which it is implemented. To this end, great care must be taken when generalising PB learning across regions or even the nation as a whole⁵.

In 2016 the Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH) and What Works Scotland (WWS) conducted a review of almost 60 of Scotland's 'first generation of participatory budgeting'⁴. With a specific focus on evaluation, some of the learning points from the review were that PB information was inconsistent; there was a need for quality narrative concerning the details of the PB processes that were implemented; key issues such as community context and representation, the detail of the democratic process involved (including dialogue and deliberation) as well as reporting of project and process impacts were often lacking within monitoring and evaluation of PB.

This briefing paper aims to support community-based PB practitioners in addressing these gaps in our understanding of PB implementation across Scotland. What is proposed in this paper is not designed to be a prescriptive framework as to how to assess PB – the community members involved in PB will have their own views as to what effective PB looks like and what the key learning from its implementation is. However this paper aims to be a useful starting place and point of reflection for

community-based practitioners and community members involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of PB. This paper draws on previous GCPH publications and collaborative publications by the GCPH and WWS, but also upon international PB studies, evaluations and commentary. The product of this synthesis is that the evaluation of PB can be conceptualised across a flow diagram or “logic model” with five distinct stages:

- 1. Participatory budgeting context**
- 2. Community engagement**
- 3. Democratic process**
- 4. Projects funded**
- 5. Impacts**

PURPOSE AND AIMS

The purpose of this paper is to support community-based public and third sector practitioners, community groups and community members to evaluate PB and contribute to the learning about this method of community participation and local democratic practice. The paper presents a logic model with five key sequential stages within which to consider the evaluation and planning of PB.

The five stages of the logic model are flexible and adaptive, they are broad and raise considerations which are applicable within the majority of PB settings. The logic model is presented as a guide to the process/evaluation with scope to be adaptive and flexible to each process rather than as a rigid structure to impose on all PB processes. Each process is individual and will have its own identity, authenticity and vibrancy which must be embraced in order to realise an evaluation of any quality.

This paper also aims to increase local and national government level strategic awareness and discussion concerning PB implementation and evaluation, and to support thinking as to the impacts of the approach on participants and communities. The paper also aims to inform the development of policy which nurtures approaches like PB as part of the community empowerment agenda.

APPROACH

This paper draws together key ideas and insights regarding the evaluation of PB, drawing heavily on the learning from three key publications concerning PB in Scotland; one GCPH publication⁵ and two collaborative publications by WWS and the GCPH^{4,6}. The paper also considers the 2017 WWS toolkit for evaluating PB initiatives in Glasgow⁷. Wider PB studies, evaluations and commentary have also been considered as appropriate. This involved UK-based PB research and evidence; however, international studies have also been used where no UK-focused alternatives can be found.

Research papers reviewed include both quantitative and qualitative designs, evaluations, grey literature, and published expert commentary concerning PB and its evaluation. The literature was assessed in terms of methodological quality, credibility of source, currency and relevance to Scottish perspectives on PB. In total, approximately 60 sources were reviewed in detail with the 22 most relevant sources being directly cited within this paper.

A flexible template for planning and evaluation

PB practitioners should seek to plan the process before implementation begins and to record an account of the overall PB process as it happens. The ‘PB process’ refers to all the actionable steps which are logically progressed as part of the PB implementation sequence. It is our experience that diagrammatic representations of processes, such as “logic modelling” (which can also be thought of as a flowchart) can be useful in planning, implementation and evaluation⁸. The aim of using a logic model is to support PB practitioners in communicating the narrative of the process and their learning to wider audiences such as funders, including local and national government. However it is also important to caution from the outset that logic modelling is likely to depict a somewhat linear and simplified account of PB processes and community contexts and a limited range of potential impacts.

Figure 1 depicts the logic model, which is proposed as a broad starting point for practitioners to consider and assess the development, evaluation and reporting of their own PB processes. The headings are designed to be self-explanatory and intuitive to practitioners. A brief descriptor of each stage is provided with some fictional PB examples to illustrate key points.

Figure 1: Flexible PB process ‘logic model’ for planning and evaluation.



1. PB context

It is important when planning or evaluating a PB process to develop a coherent narrative relating to the context within which PB processes are implemented; this is a clear priority in addressing the gaps in evidence and understanding seen in Scotland to date⁴. With greater resource being allocated to PB nationally and heightening scrutiny of processes and impacts, those responsible for PB monitoring and evaluation should document details of this context at the beginning of the process and throughout.

Vision and aims

Both the PB process and its evaluation will benefit from a clear vision and aims from the outset, and by defining the community to be served by the PB process. Vision means having a high level of collective understanding at the beginning, for the overall scope of the project and the direction that the PB process will take. This should be informed by the other dimensions of the context (see Stage 1). Other PB processes have described the vision in terms of the community of interest e.g. ‘A healthier, more empowered Dalmarnock’ and/or the PB process, e.g. ‘An inclusive, accessible PB process to empower the residents of Dalmarnock’. Project aims should align with the vision but may include more details as to what the PB process specifically aims to achieve.

Community

Most PB is likely to involve a geographic community (based within a place or neighbourhood) and as a result of decisions made through the democratic process (see Stage 3), may become targeted towards a certain community demographic (asylum seekers or older people for example) and may also prioritise a certain community theme (such as reducing antisocial behaviour or enhancing employability)⁹. From an evaluative perspective it is important to be able articulate how the decision made through the PB process relates to the community context and how it will improve circumstances for residents or conditions within the area.

Leadership

It is important to be clear who is leading the PB process and what the parameters of the leadership are. Will the PB process be led by professionals or will community groups and members take on the process leadership? At this early stage it is important to have clarity on who will facilitate the PB process. It is highly beneficial if PB facilitators have a good knowledge of the community but ideally they would be independent of the local groups and organisations involved.

Resources

Clarity as to the financial resources (and in-kind contributions from partner agencies involved, if appropriate, e.g. staff time) allocated to the overall process and the funding available for PB projects, is beneficial for all concerned and for the evaluation.

Timescales

It is also helpful to be clear on the anticipated timescales for the spending of resources and for the overall PB process. Furthermore it is important to consider the ambition for how long the PB funded projects will be in operation.

Planning

Effective PB is underpinned by robust planning and again it is important to be clear who is leading the planning and who will contribute to it. Evaluators of PB processes should be involved in planning and recording an accurate account of key planning decisions as they occur. Particularly worthwhile is a focus on how community members feed into PB planning.

2. Community engagement

Basic counts

Community-based evaluations of PB should seek to capture the number of people attending awareness-raising events; the amount of people and/or groups (and the remit of the groups) taking part in the development and submission of PB proposals; the number of people participating in the overall PB process and finally the number of community members voting within the democratic process. Not all of these steps will be applicable in all PB community-based contexts; there may be more or fewer steps depending on the scale of the PB planned. These basic counts of key information should be reasonably straightforward for practitioners to gather.

Profile data

Alongside this basic count of participants, some pragmatic assessment of community representation within the overall PB process should be conducted¹⁰. A useful starting point here is to consider the characteristics of the place or neighbourhood within which PB is being implemented. Community data, such as the profiles developed by the GCPH for communities within Glasgow City^a or those developed by the Scottish Public Health Observatory^b, are useful in profiling community demographics and a range of indicators which can assist practitioners in tailoring community engagement efforts, including the preparation of marketing materials used to advertise the PB process and its participatory nature.

Marketing

Awareness raising of PB processes can be enhanced by producing marketing materials, such as flyers, posters, leaflets, online and social media content and briefings for local press and community groups. These materials should make clear what PB is, how it can benefit the community and community members, the resource available to the community, how to get involved and what commitments are expected if they do get involved, where to meet and who to contact with any questions.

Access and inclusion

Based on the community profile data, some projects may require PB marketing materials to be translated into different languages to reflect and engage their diverse community. The accessibility of marketing materials and indeed community venues where PB meetings are to be hosted should be assessed particularly for elderly,

^a Understanding Glasgow www.understandingglasgow.com

^b Further profiles including public health information for all of Scotland can be accessed from the SCOTPHO website: <http://www.scotpho.org.uk/comparative-health/profiles/online-profiles-tool>

disabled or socially isolated community members, for example. Existing community groups and community planning partners can provide invaluable insight and support in planning accessible and inclusive PB marketing materials and overall PB processes.

Representation

The way in which the representativeness of those participating in PB is assessed can be challenging – for example it would not be accurate, let alone appropriate or ethical to assess the characteristics of PB participants based on their appearance. However the use of a socio-demographic survey with each new participant within the PB process may be deemed too intrusive or off-putting for some, especially during their initial contact with PB practitioners.

Another layer of complexity here is that even if the community members involved in a PB process are representative in socio-demographic terms – care must be taken to ensure that all voices are heard, not just the most vocal, who may not represent everyone's views⁵. This emphasises the importance of the quality of facilitation within the PB process to ensure equitable contributions within decision-making. Where possible, evaluators should seek to capture this important narrative concerning community representation throughout the PB process.

Pragmatism and realism

It is a core value of PB that community representation is a priority. While this should be pursued, it must also be tempered with pragmatism within evaluations, and considered within the context of the overall PB process, in particular, the timescales and resources available. It is also important to be realistic within representative forms of democracy such as PB. For example, a manageable PB group of 20 people cannot ever truly represent the diversity of demographics, views and opinions within a community of 10,000 people. Section 3 describes the democratic process in more detail but a pragmatic question should be; based on the profile data and tailored design of the marketing materials – are there any significant omissions within the demographics of the PB group?

3. Democratic process

Design

It is important within the evaluation to compile a clear account of the democratic process – that is, the collective discussion and agreement on community priorities, development of project funding proposals and the voting mechanism whereby community members decide on the projects to fund¹¹. Previous publications by the GCPH and WWS have articulated the range of options regarding the design of the democratic process at the heart of PB, and these should be considered by PB practitioners and those with the responsibility for reporting or evaluating the process⁶. These include simple questions such as:

- Who will facilitate the process?
- Who will make the proposals?
- Who will participate?
- What type of participation are you aiming for?
- What voting methods will be used?
- Who will make the final decisions?
- Where does PB fit in the wider local democratic system?

Evaluators should pay particular attention to how community members have shaped these decisions and how the choices made reflect the project's vision and aims (see Stage 1).

Facilitation

Effective democratic processes within PB are characterised as being based on strong facilitation which emphasises inclusive, equitable participation. Furthermore, within facilitation, there should be a real emphasis on promoting quality, reciprocal dialogue and deliberation (between community members, elected representatives and professionals involved). Facilitators must also demonstrate clear accessible communication, and ideally a solid understanding of the life and experiences of those living within the community and of the overall PB process¹².

Participation

Community representation and participation should be assessed regularly within the overall democratic process, attention should be paid to the demographics of participants who have consistently engaged throughout, but particularly on the lead up to the democratic process and in terms of the nature of the proposals

being developed and voted on. PB facilitators, practitioners and evaluators have a role to play in questioning the democracy and legitimacy of the PB participation throughout. As described within Stage 2, equity of participation within the democratic process is vital. Facilitation of the process should promote equal contributions from everyone taking part within dialogue and deliberation; ensuring that professionals and community members are on an equal footing, breaking down ‘jargon’ or technical terminology, and ensuring that no one agenda is able to dominate or divert the discussion away from the things that truly matter to the community. The PB facilitator should encourage regular reflections within the PB group to support participation. To enable this, the following questions are key:

- Are there any groups within the community that have been absent from the PB process so far?
- Are there any priorities identified or funding proposals being developed that may inadvertently diminish participation and increase inequalities? (Are there barriers to PB participation for already disadvantaged or marginalised community members?)
- If barriers are identified, can these be overcome within the constraints of the PB context (such as the time or resource available)?

Democratic processes may be postponed or even rerun in order to address some important community engagement and representation concerns such as the demographics of those taking part in funding proposals or voting. Similarly postponing or rerunning a democratic process might be advisable if a misconception or misinformation was identified relating to the understanding of community context (such as community profile information or assets) at the outset which has impacted on the subsequent steps (dialogue and deliberation, priority setting, proposal development)¹³. This illustrates how the depicted logic model should be flexible and even multidirectional at times.

Dialogue and deliberation

PB practitioners and evaluators should place emphasis on promoting meaningful dialogue and robust deliberation between community members, public sector and third sector organisations involved and elected representatives. Dialogue and deliberation underpin the collective learning that takes place within effective PB. PB processes should enable regular opportunities to bring together a range of backgrounds, perspectives, experience and expertise. Evaluations should capture and be able to articulate the focus and nature of the dialogue and deliberation and ideally begin to assess and communicate the benefits for everyone involved.

As a result of the dialogue and deliberation, community members are likely to become more aware of the perspectives of others in their community as well as the opportunities, pressures and constraints of public and third sector working. Professionals should seek to learn more about the aspirations, assets, priority issues and nuances of life within the defined community¹². From this point onwards everyone involved is likely to be in a stronger place to work together in the future and some of the skills development (such as listening, reflecting, discussion, prioritising and co-operating) will be transferable to other settings, such as the workplace or in home life.

Transparency and accountability

It is vital that there is a transparent and accountable means of supporting community members and groups in the development of funding proposals and the voting system adopted when allocating PB funds⁵. Again evaluators should capture this detail, making clear what worked well and where improvements could have been made. The basis for transparency and accountability is on strong facilitation and clear, inclusive and accessible communication surrounding the PB process overall. Much of the insight gained from the marketing dimension of community engagement may still be applicable within the democratic process; in terms of effective, tailored forms of communication for specific demographics within the community.

Group reflections

An important juncture within the PB process for evaluators is immediately after the democratic process has finished. This represents a fruitful time to gather the views of PB participants; those who have voted, those who have submitted funded projects and those involved in the planning, support and facilitation of the PB process. This includes elected members, the public and third sector workers involved and community members¹⁴.

Focus groups involving a mix of these stakeholders can be particularly effective in reflecting on the PB process overall, the democratic process specifically and also to capture views on the funded projects¹⁵. This mix of focus group participants is likely to generate some diverse perspectives and insightful discussions. A key area of investigation within the focus groups is how the focus group participants' views have evolved through taking part in the PB process. Practitioners and evaluators should aim for a concise focus group schedule; effective prompts should be brief and should aim to stimulate detailed discussions from which further questions should evolve naturally. Some suggested prompts or questions are:

- What are the aspirations for [defined community]?
- What are the priority areas that need action within [defined community]?
- Has taking part in this PB process affected your view of [defined community] and its potential moving forward?
- What were the positives from this PB process?
- What could have been done better within this PB process?
- Do you think the range of views within [defined community] were reflected in the PB discussions and funding proposals that were developed?
- What are your views on the PB voting and funding decision-making?
- Are the final agreed PB projects what you expected?
- Do you think the funded projects are likely to impact on the aspirations and priorities within [defined community]?
- Have your views of others involved in the PB process changed?

4. Projects funded

Project narratives

It is important that those responsible for PB evaluation and monitoring capture narratives that are able to articulate the connective sequence between the preceding three stages in the logic model (see Stages 1, 2 and 3) and how these stages relate to the funded projects and the anticipated impacts. It is important to make clear how the community context and vision for the PB process shaped the community engagement and representation efforts and how these fed into the democratic process, resulting in the decision-making that led to the projects being funded. Going full circle and returning to the start of the logic model (right to left arrow at bottom of Figure 1), evaluators can then articulate how these projects are anticipated to impact on the community context. Most evaluations of PB processes in Scotland to date have lacked these important details.

If sufficient information is gathered by PB practitioners throughout the process in relation to the bulleted points in each stage of the logic model then it should be a straightforward task to pull together a convincing, concise and clear PB process narrative which aligns, ultimately, with the projects funded.

Assets and aspirations

A useful consideration in this narrative is how the funded projects utilise and build upon the assets within the community and the aspirations of the PB group. It may be, however, that the PB projects respond to an identified deficit or a theme or specific issue that has been damaging to the community. Either way it is an enduring pillar of global PB that the funded projects reflect locally defined issues and decision-making².

Much of the detail relating to community assets, aspirations or deficits should already have been gathered within stages one to three within the logic model and it is then a case of linking and aligning them coherently to the funded PB projects.

Sustainability, governance and management

Key considerations within the democratic process and subsequent funded projects (stages three and four) are their sustainability, governance and management. PB practitioners and facilitators should build discussion of these issues into the democratic process during dialogue and deliberation. The financial sustainability of funded projects or interventions should be considered, indeed, some PB projects are social enterprises which will generate their own income in time. Others may seek other funding sources as the PB funding expires. It may also be the case that some projects are deemed to have a limited timescale from the outset, and that this is appropriate for the circumstances.

Governance of PB funding is also important but may be considered as not essential for smaller awards. Constituted bodies such as established community groups may utilise existing governance structures which can accommodate the administration of the PB spend and project management. PB steering groups are often established to oversee both governance and management accountability. Un-constituted groups or individuals may need support in constituting themselves; such as drafting an agreement detailing the group's purpose and way of working and setting up a bank account. PB project groups that are considering registering with the Charity Commission in the future may wish to adapt one of the Commission's approved model constitutions^c.

Value

A recurring theme within Scottish social policy, which supports approaches like PB, is that community members are better placed than professionals to understand the priorities, needs and aspirations of the area and its citizens, as well as the types and characteristics of projects or interventions which will be effective locally. Social policy also supports the notion that communities might be able to deliver some projects, interventions or services in a more cost effective manner than the public sector^{16,17}. Both these points relate to the economic 'value' of PB funded projects.

Particularly strong examples of PB evaluations have been able to demonstrate how community-led decision-making has led to more effective, sustainable and cost efficient interventions and projects compared with public sector service delivery alone¹⁸. This may be difficult to quantify (or may not be appropriate) for many PB practitioners and evaluators, however it may be beneficial to at least contextualise the investment in PB-funded projects. For example the costs of a youth alcohol and drugs diversionary project within a defined community could be described against approximate costs for police and community safety services call outs and arrests, and the costs of repairing youth vandalism within the community.

^c Setting up a charity: model governing documents, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-up-a-charity-model-governing-documents>

5. Impacts

The potential impacts of PB on participants within Scotland will be diverse and largely dependent on the context, scale and depth of PB developed and the types of projects funded. The impacts of PB can be expansive, including how public services operate and are organised and how local democratic structures function. For the purpose of this paper we will focus on the more immediate and pragmatic impacts within the community. It is important for practitioners and evaluators to recognise at the outset that there will be two layers of PB impacts; firstly, impacts as a result of taking part in the *PB process* and secondly; specific impacts resulting from the *PB-funded projects*.

These represent potentially two different groups and two different areas of evaluative enquiry.

Impacts resulting from taking part in the PB process will be for the community members participating in the process and potentially for the elected representatives, public and third sector professionals involved. Impacts resulting from the funded projects will predominantly be among community members or groups who directly uptake and benefit from the local, funded projects.

Process impacts

Considering first the specific impacts of being involved in a PB process in Scotland, we can see that similar forms of PB in other countries have been shown to enhance aspects of wellbeing and social connectedness, such as; confidence, aspiration, empowerment, sense of control, social capital, knowledge and skills¹⁹.

Participation

PB is a process of deepening democracy, promoting social justice and increasing participation in community life and society¹. These indirect effects of the PB process are important and must also be considered within PB evaluations. For example if there was sufficient evaluation resource it would be worthwhile to know if increases in volunteering rates, participation in community groups, community council membership, and local and national election voter turnout had occurred within communities where there had been significant PB processes and investments. Local authorities and community planning partners may be able to support PB evaluations by providing such information at a community level.

Wellbeing and social capital

There are a range of survey questions and formats which practitioners may consider using within their PB process to assess impacts to wellbeing^d, social capital and civic participation, including voting^e. Permissions should be sought from survey authors before use. PB practitioners may wish to omit some survey questions as they see fit, and as meets their evaluation needs. To ensure reliable findings it would be best to undertake the survey with participants before the PB process is underway and then again once the PB process is completed. The realities of PB delivery mean that these two time points may not be clearly defined in all processes.

To assess the longevity of these impacts to wellbeing and social capital it would be worthwhile repeating the survey with the original PB participants at a significant interval after the PB process has been completed, such as six months or a year. Ideally such surveys could be accompanied by some qualitative approaches, such as interviews or focus groups with PB participants to capture the narrative of their experiences of PB and what aspects of being part of the process they feel relate to their wellbeing, social connectedness or how they feel about their community²⁰.

Ethical considerations

Where PB is being used in schools with children or young people, creative methodologies might be more appropriate where possible. Methodologies such as creative drawing can be effective in establishing an authentic dialogue with children concerning their feedback on a PB process. With this methodology children and young people might be asked to draw how they felt when taking part in PB, the voting exercise or how they felt about the funding decisions. The drawings are then a stimulus for evaluators to act as a co-interpreters of the image alongside the child or young person²¹.

Permissions and ethical approval will need to be considered by evaluators when researching the views of children and young people concerning PB. Within limited PB evaluation resource and timescales, a pragmatic choice may be for teachers to lead on these methodologies within class, collecting the pictorial outputs for PB evaluators. Indeed it is worthwhile for those responsible for PB evaluation or monitoring to draft a brief statement for community members, parents or guardians

^d Mental wellbeing survey; Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) available at: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/med/research/platform/wemwbs/wemwbs_14_item.pdf

^e Social Capital, Office for National Statistics (ONS) core 'Social Capital Harmonised Question Set', available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/social-capital-guide/the-social-capital-project/harmonised-question-set.pdf> (survey questions begin on pages 14 to 23)

and professionals to provide consent for their views to be included within the evaluation.

For those taking part in research methodologies such as focus groups or interviews which might be digitally recorded to help with accuracy in analysis; it is important to seek specific consent for the recording from research participants and to be clear how their views and quotes from the recordings might be used in a report, for example. It is also important to consider the security of where the data will be stored, who has access to the data and how long it will be stored. Practitioners and evaluators should familiarise themselves with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and adhere to the core principles of the regulation at all times. Useful guides and training for community based organisations are available^f.

Over and above written consent it is good practice to further seek the permission of a participant if there is an intention to use their quote in a report. It may be preferable to not directly attribute quotes to an evaluation participant by name within reports. Rather, categories of research participants could be developed and cited alongside the given quote, such as 'Local Authority worker', 'NHS worker', or 'Resident'. It may be that the ethics of a PB evaluation could be considered formally by an appropriate ethics committee aligned with the work, such as the NHS or a university if involved. Community planning partners involved in PB should be able to support and advise on ethical considerations associated with PB evaluations.

Project impacts

Turning now to the impacts from funded projects, impacts should of course mirror the project's aims. The impacts of a PB-funded employability programme for example, might be qualifications gained, volunteering experience and improving wellbeing in the short term for participants and ultimately securing employment. This example illustrates that project impacts might unfold over significant time periods. These types of specific project impacts should be assessed on a project-to-project basis.

Place impacts

Project impacts may also be considered from the point of view of community impacts or 'place' – that is, impacts to the physical environment of the community (wider definitions of place exist²²). Place-based PB projects might include removing graffiti, reducing dog fouling or developing a community garden within an unsightly, unused or derelict piece of land. The impacts of such work across a community may be positive but are likely to be diffuse, transient and hard to measure among community

^f Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations: Data protection & GDPR, available at: <https://scvo.org.uk/running-your-organisation/legislation/data-protection>

members¹⁴. If place-based PB projects utilise community members in their delivery then these participants may improve their wellbeing, social capital and skillsets.

Where appropriate, efforts to evaluate the impacts of PB-funded projects should potentially utilise the expertise of other community planning partners. For example a PB project designed to reduce antisocial behaviour might utilise information analysis possible within Police Scotland or community safety services to track the rate of police call outs and arrests relating to antisocial behaviour within a defined community over the period of the PB project. The Place Standard online tool provides a useful resource for considering and supporting the evaluation of the range of possible impacts on place⁹.

⁹ Place Standard. <https://www.placestandard.scot/>

DISCUSSION

The range of PB projects across Scotland is as diverse and vibrant as the very communities within which they are delivered. This is how effective PB should be; tailored to local contexts and bespoke to community priorities and aspirations. However this makes the monitoring and evaluation of PB challenging for community members, practitioners and academics alike, as there is no 'one size fits all' model for monitoring and evaluation.

The logic model proposed in this paper serves as a good starting point for PB and as an effective tool for reflection at key junctures within PB processes, raising some important considerations that may inform local PB implementation and evaluation.

The methods described in this paper are adaptable for a range of communities and forms of PB, the examples of PB projects and impacts offered is limited and should be considered for illustrative purposes only. The described impacts of PB processes on participant wellbeing and social capital is indicative of the types of PB seen in Scotland so far and is likely to be representative of Scottish PB over the next few years. However the overall range of impacts from PB across Scotland will be expansive and diverse. Scope exists to improve the methods and approaches to PB evaluation in Scotland and community-based practitioners and community members have a role in shaping and enhancing this discipline.

The present trajectory of PB in Scotland reflects a transition into an unprecedented policy, legislative, capacity building and investment landscape from which to further develop and embed processes across the country. With increasing profile and resource allocation comes greater scrutiny of the impacts and outcomes of the PB process. The resources and thinking presented in this paper are designed to support communities and PB practitioners through the PB process, to realise their PB ambitions and to achieve impact for their communities – while contributing to the national learning at this early stage of PB implementation in Scotland. We very much welcome feedback, discussion and debate on this paper and the logic model.

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