



# TAK£ 500 Reflective Learning Report

September 2021

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*This report was prepared by Community Places as part of the Carnegie Trust Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland Project.*

## 1. Executive Summary

This report draws together reflective learning from the Tak£ 500 Participatory Budgeting process. A number of sources of information and data are presented and include findings and analysis from: PB Working Group workshops and meetings; peer assessment of the Tak£ 500 process against standards for engagement endorsed in the Community Planning Partnership's Engagement Strategy; survey analysis from participants who voted in the Tak£ 500 PB process; groups who were successful in securing PB funds; and learning from support sessions and three Celebration and Reflection Events.

The Tak£ 500 PB process created a space to consider the challenges set out in the Partnership's Engagement Strategy of designing engagement which is inclusive, deliberative and ultimately has impact. The findings presented support a strong case for embedding Participatory Budgeting as a way of working with local communities in order to support citizens to have a direct say on the issues which affect their daily lives. There is clear acknowledgement that inclusive processes such as PB which animate participative democracy and lead to more responsive services which have impact and are better tailored to local needs have heightened importance as society moves towards renewal and transformation post COVID-19.

This report presents substantial evidence of the positive impacts which have been delivered through the Tak£ 500 PB process including clear support from PB voters, successful project recipients and the PB Working Group to provide repeat opportunities for PB across the borough. There is also a clear interest in exploring further how PB could be mainstreamed across the Community Planning Partnership to support and empower communities to have a greater say on service design and delivery, including decision-making powers on public resources.



## 2. Why Participatory Budgeting?

The decision to undertake and support a participatory budgeting process was agreed and set out in the Strategic Community Planning Partnership's '[Our Community Engagement Strategy](#)' (p.25). This was a purposeful decision to empower local communities, in line with Community Planning Partners' commitment to achieving the Confident Community long-term outcome that "Everyone has opportunities to engage in community life and shape decisions – we have a strong sense of community belonging and take pride in our area." From the outset, central to the planning and delivery of the process was a focus on strong partnership working, co-production and co-design. As part of the Carnegie Trust Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland project Community Places provided support to the PB process.

Initial planning for the Tak£ 500 PB process was undertaken through in-room workshop meetings during February and March 2020. The PB Working Group<sup>1</sup> agreed that the PB process would be delivered within the Cushier District Electoral Area (DEA) through a market stall approach, focus on the theme of Health and Wellbeing and in particular, the Public Health Associations' [TAKE 5](#) steps to wellbeing message.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities of the PB Working Group

As part of the design process for the TAK£ 500 process the working group members discussed and agreed the roles and responsibilities of the group. These included:

- To design and manage the process
- Agree principles and set the rules to guide the process
- Support involvement in the process
- Oversee the decision-making event: promotion, organisation and delivery
- Monitor funding arrangements
- Evaluation – reflect and learn
- Report to the Strategic Community Planning Partnership

## 4. Tak£ 500 Shared Purpose

The working group considered and agreed the shared purpose for the Tak£ 500 process. This included: involving the community in decision-making around project funding and council decisions; accessing new groups especially those who might not apply for existing funding opportunities; encouraging the community to become more empowered; giving

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1 for PB Working Group Membership

people a sense of ownership and responsibility for investment in their area; releasing finance to the community for innovative projects without a burdensome process; helping shape local areas and encouraging local projects; clarifying for partners what the perceived need is in communities; strengthening relationships, partnership working and networking; and working more innovatively.

## 5. Shared Principles

The working group identified a number of shared principles which would underpin their approach to developing the process, taking key decisions and implementing the Tak£ 500 process.



## 6. Re-designing Tak£ 500 in response to COVID-19

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic the process was halted in March 2020. The PB working group reconvened in August 2020 to explore how the Tak£ 500 process could be adapted and taken forward. Partners were in agreement that in light of the pandemic and crucially how local communities had responded, coming together to support each other, that it was even more important to deliver the PB process with the emphasis on genuinely empowering communities. The decision was taken by the working group to shift the process on-line and to use the Council's Citizen Space Platform to facilitate the PB project. This meant that the reach of the PB process could now be extended, rather than being delivered in only one DEA it could now be delivered across the whole borough (7 DEAs).

The number of Community Planning Partners participating also increased with a total of 16 partners, including 7 Community and Voluntary Sector Panel Members, contributing to the process and 10 Community Planning Partners pooling together a combined budget of £33,000. The Tak£ 500 PB project was launched in September 2020 with project delivery and support ongoing. An emphasis was placed on providing support to the local community to get involved with a dedicated [web](#) presence, social media campaign, posters, 3 information workshops delivered, named contact details from across partners to respond to questions about the process and the creation of an animated video promoting both the TAKE 5 message and the Tak£ 500 PB process.



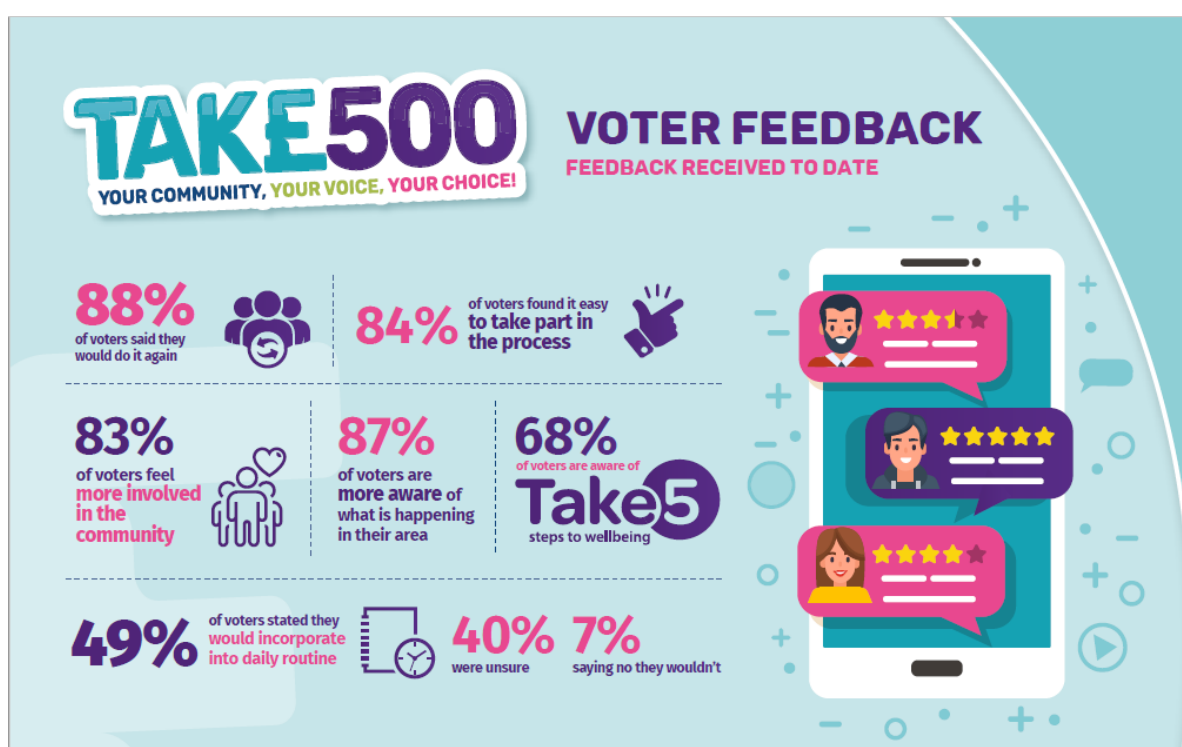
**Figure 1: TAK£500 Key Statistics**

107 community proposals were received with each meeting the set criteria and being invited to Stage 2 where they were asked to submit a short video of their project idea. 23 groups chose not to move on to Stage 2 which suggests that the preparation of a video combined with changing restrictions and the introduction of circuit breakers may have presented a barrier to participation. 84 Videos were received and uploaded onto Citizen Space for the on-line public vote. Residents aged 8 and above could vote with each person being allocated 7 votes to support the ideas they wanted to see happen within their respective area. In total, 4604 votes were cast of these 3623 were eligible votes. 981 votes after verification were invalid due to incorrect postcodes or postcodes from outside of the permitted DEA and/or

beyond the Council Area. 66 project ideas (79%) received support from the wider community across the 7 DEAs with a total of £32,874 distributed. Representatives of the PB Working Group also came together to deliver an on-line support workshop to the projects which were unsuccessful, signposting to other potential sources of funding and support. Positively, a number of these projects have been able to secure support to implement their project ideas. A Celebration Event will be planned when COVID-19 restrictions allow potentially in Summer 2021.

## 7. Voter Feedback

After participants voted on-line, they were invited to answer a number of short questions. The feedback gathered was overwhelming positive with 845 of voters finding it easy to take part in the process; 88% of voters said they would do it again; 87% of voters are more aware of what is happening in their local area; and 83% of voters feel more involved in the community. In relation to the Take 5 Steps to well-being, 68% of voters were more aware of the Take 5 messages and 49% said they would be incorporating Take 5 into their daily routine.



**Figure 2: TAKE500 Voter Feedback**

Other comments related to the voting process with respondents finding it challenging to have to spread votes and really think about the project ideas which they wanted to support. Others suggested that the votes could be allocated via a ranking system rather than each vote having the same weight. There was also a perception the schools participating in the

process had an advantage given the wide reach within the community that they have. However, having to spread multiple votes across projects ensures that each person who may have voted for a school also had other votes which had to be dispersed across the other project ideas in the relevant DEA. It was suggested by several respondents that it would be beneficial to be able to vote for project ideas in DEAs other than the one the voter resided in. This would enable voters to support services which they use and benefit from across the whole borough area.

It was noted that a written description would be useful alongside each of the videos to help with navigation and to make it easier to decide which projects to support. It was also noted that some older people or those who were less tech savvy may have found it challenging to participate in the on-line process. Others noted that they had technical issues watching the video submissions. Some comments highlighted that they felt the process required a lot of input for the sum of money involved. There were numerous comments supporting the various groups submitting ideas and the valuable work which they do in their communities. There were also numerous comments from respondents noting that they had really enjoyed participating in the PB process, that they found the process easy to use and that they would like to see it happen again. A number of respondents also commented that the TAKE 5 message had really helped them to deal with lock downs especially, the Connect theme.

*"I felt under pressure to watch all the videos, quite time consuming, perhaps a short written summary of each application would have been better and quicker."*

*"The take five message has helped me throughout lockdown especially the connect message."*

*"Why do you have to vote for 7 projects? I only support 3-4"*

*"Process for voting needs to be simplified. Require participants to create short videos, under a minute."*

*"I would have preferred to vote for one, or even give my chosen cause all 7 votes."*

*"Everyone has done so well - the videos and ideas are fantastic... best wishes to all the groups."*

*"Ordinary people from all age groups taking an active part informing the wider Armagh Community of their local interests. Good luck to every one of them."*

*"It's great to find out what is going on in the local area and projects in one area could easily be repeated in another area. We can certainly learn from each other and improve our own areas."*

*"For a small amount of money this council initiative will surely add many benefits to so many people. it sure has to be something that can be done again and again!"*



## 8. Reflective Learning of the PB Working Group

This section of the report draws together the reflections and learning of a PB Working Group established to design, plan and implement the TAKE 500 PB process in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council. Comments and response were garnered from a number of sources including:

- Evaluation Planning Workshop
- Reflective Learning Workshop
- Zoom Polls
- On-line Survey

During a Reflective Learning Workshop the PB Working Group members were asked to reflect on one or two words which described their experience and involvement in the Take 500 PB process. As illustrated in the image below partnership, engaging and learning were core features of their participation in the process.



**Figure 3: Menti Word Cloud**

## 9. Measuring the process against Standards for Community Engagement – what worked and what didn't?

The TAKE 500 process presented an opportunity to apply the Seven Standards for Engagement, which were endorsed by the Strategic Community Planning Partnership and a central aspect of the Partnership's [Engagement Strategy](#). Measuring the process against the standards enabled the working group to assess and improve impact and benchmark for good practice. It also offered the space to consider the challenges set out in the

Engagement Strategy of designing processes which are inclusive and diverse, create spaces for deliberation and ultimately have impact.



**Figure 4: Seven Standards for Engagement, SCDC**

For each of the seven standards the group was asked to score themselves on a scale of 1 to 6 where, 1 was Unsatisfactory and 6 was Excellent. As the working group members worked through each standard it was acknowledged that the Tak£ 500 process had been undertaken in exceptional circumstances and that the combined efforts of each partner had developed a strong shared sense of ownership of the process and that the variety and range of partners on the working group had enhanced the ability to perform on each standard.

### **Inclusion Standard – How well did we involve people and organisations that are affected by the engagement?**

***The group agreed a score of 4.5: between Good and Very Good.***

It was noted that the cross-sector representation of partners involved in the working group helped to ensure that a wide range of people were informed and had the opportunity to get involved in the process. Participants stated that the group challenged themselves to really

think outside of the box and to draw on their combined networks to reach, support and access a wide range of groups across the council area. Efforts were made to draw on each partners' social media channels, campaigns, and networks to open and broaden inclusion and a detailed Communications Strategy supported these efforts. It was also noted that there was an appetite from the community to do something different and that PB felt like an innovative and interesting approach to get involved with.

The group reflected that a number of decisions were explicitly taken to widen inclusion, reduce barriers to participation and to ensure that as many people as possible were able to get involved in the process. For example, agreeing that the lower age limit of 8 years to get involved in either submitting an idea or voting widened engagement from younger people and schools and identifying sponsor organisations and connecting them with unconstituted groups to support their involvement.

It was recognised that the requirement to move the planned in-room PB process on-line may have had an impact on the participation of some older people who may not have had access to digital devices or feel as confident to get involved. To address this issue, concerted efforts were made by individuals within the working group to reach out to older people and offer support to get involved and stay involved. This resulted in at least one group of older people who had considered dropping out staying in the process. Advice and support were also sought from the Age Friendly Officer to maximise participation from older people and a video was prepared to support groups to prepare their video submissions.

### **Support Standard – How good were we at identifying any barriers to participation?**

#### ***The Group agreed a score of 5: Very Good***

During the planning process the working group carefully considered the support needs of potential participants. Key actions were undertaken to mitigate barriers to participation including, information and support sessions to hear directly from participants; the decision to support non-constituted groups to get involved by linking them with a local sponsor; the provision of named contact details including mobile numbers on the application form and website for each partner organisation on the working group; the development of a Technical Support Video to upskill and share tips with citizens on how to best communicate their idea to garner support from the wider community; sharing information with schools to encourage their participation; extending timescales to give groups more time to prepare and submit Stage 2 videos. The group reflected that the timing of the process and timescales in the middle of a pandemic and the occurrence of lockdowns and circuit breakers throughout the process no doubt hampered the participation of some community members who were

responding to the crisis or who were unable to meet due to COVID. It also wasn't possible to meet with groups face to face to provide support because of the restrictions imposed to reduce the spread of the virus but efforts were made to contact groups via on-line information and support sessions and telephone calls. Partners also contributed to a workshop for those groups who were unsuccessful, this was an opportunity to sign post to other sources of funding and establish contact with statutory and community and voluntary sector representatives. Members of the working group highlighted that if there is an opportunity to repeat the PB process a key learning point is to hold in-room events or to adopt a blended approach of in-room and digital.

### **Planning Standard: How clear were we about the purpose for the engagement?**

#### ***The Group agreed a score of 5: Very Good***

At the outset of the process the working group considered and agreed a common purpose (see p.2) of the PB process with all members committed to using Participatory Budgeting to reach out and empower communities to have a direct say in prioritising how health and well-being could be positively addressed in their communities. The group reflected that while the planned approach, of an in-room PB process within a single DEA, had to be entirely rethought that the overall purpose remained the same. Indeed, it was felt that making the decision to move the process on-line and extending it to a borough wide process had in fact enabled the purpose of the process to be widened across the Council area. It was felt the representativeness of the working group including members from the Community and Voluntary sector enriched and informed the overall shared purpose of the PB process. It was noted that the Marketing and Communications Strategy supported clarity on the shared key messages for all partners and consistency in getting the message out to the public. It was noted that the working group could have decided to cancel or delay the PB process given the restrictions and challenges presented by the pandemic. Instead, partners re-committed and doubled efforts to ensure that the process moved forward recognising the importance of the process in light of COVID-19.

### **Working Together Standard – How well did we work together to achieve the aims of the engagement?**

#### ***The Group agreed a score of 5: Very Good***

A clear strength of the Working Group was the approach it adopted to working together. There was a clear willingness and commitment from all partners to support and drive the Tak£ 500 process. The group recognised the benefits of pooling financial and in-kind



resources together. The knowledge and learning of members of the group who had previous experience of PB was shared to enrich the design and implementation of Tak£ 500. Planning and Implementation meetings and workshops were consistently well attended, members actively participated and were willing to lead and support key tasks. It was felt that there was a clear understanding of roles, effective communication and a strong sense of shared ownership of the Tak£ 500 process. Partners demonstrated commitment throughout the process despite demands on their time and a flexible approach was adopted by members, especially those working directly with the community in response to the pandemic. The group reflected that the leadership, co-ordination role and support from the Community Planning team had been invaluable especially in the transition to a digital PB process. The ongoing support of Community Places through the Carnegie UK Trust was also recognised and valued. It was noted that the group was able to adapt quickly to the ongoing circumstances and impacts of the pandemic, responding to challenges and snags immediately and communicating these effectively amongst all partners. While this may have created additional administration and time pressures on the process these were managed effectively through the leadership and co-ordination role of the Community Planning Team.

#### Methods Standard: How good were our methods of engagement?

##### ***The Group agreed a score of 5: Very Good***

It was noted that the decision to undertake and support a participatory budgeting process was a clear effort to empower local communities to shape local priorities and have a direct say on decisions which affect their lives and areas. Furthermore, a variety of methods were drawn on to support people to get involved in the decision-making process. The group reflected that the adaptability and range of approaches adopted in responding to the level of change in the process from in-room to online was outstanding. The group noted that the Take 5 message was a very appealing hook and that the scope of the themes really connected to people especially in the context of COVID-19 and its impacts on mental health and wellbeing. It was felt that the statistics relating to the reach and engagement with the process, including the number of applications, the number of votes and social media reach had demonstrated that the methods applied had been effective in engaging people.

## **Communications Standard: How well did we communicate with the people, organisation and communities affected by the engagement?**

### ***The Group agreed a score of 4: Good***

It was agreed that communication between partners was very good and that this provided a strong foundation for communicating externally with other organisations and communities affected by the engagement. Again, the co-ordination role played by the Community Planning team was highlighted helping to direct partners to where support was needed and to respond to queries. It was recognised that due to working from home it may have been more difficult to directly contact partners, but this only resulted in a slight delay with partners responding quickly when they could. It was noted that a number of groups in the PB process may have been surprised about the second stage of the application process, the video submission. Around 23 groups chose not to proceed to the stage 2 video submission, despite the production of the technical support video and offers of help from across the partnership. It was recognised that the shift to a digital process made this stage 2 process necessary and did introduce an additional barrier that would not have existed in an in-room market-stall approach. On the more positive side, groups despite initially finding the idea of producing a video daunting noted that it was quite easy and enjoyable and that it was very interesting watching all of the videos from the other groups.

It was felt that communicating about the process and value of participatory budgeting particularly, the voting and empowerment elements, and the TAKE 5 message would have been improved through face-to-face contact and events, but these were not feasible given the implications of COVID-19. After the voting and verification process, groups and organisations found out quickly which ideas and projects had been successful. Working Group members noted that the planned Celebration Event(s) will also be an important stage in communicating the wider impacts of the TAKE 500 process. Due to COVID-19 these are yet to happen, but it is hoped that events will be able to take place outdoors over Summer 2021.

## **Impact Standard: How well did we assess the impact of the engagement and use what we have learned to improve our future community engagement?**

### ***The Group agreed a score of 4: Good***

It was noted that the Celebration Event(s) will be an essential element of assessing and communicating the impacts of the PB process. It was suggested that it would be useful to share photographs of the activities carried out to demonstrate the difference and impacts

that have been delivered within the community. Working Group members highlighted that the number of people who had been engaged and who stayed engaged with the process was an indication that the community was more involved. It was also stressed that through the voting element of PB citizens had a direct say in decision-making and had prioritised and supported projects and services which would deliver local health and well-being outcomes. It was emphasised that processes were robust including creating space to reflect together on learning and drawing on quality standards to assess the impact of the Tak£ 500 PB process. There was agreement that the Tak£ 500 process had built a solid foundation to design and implement future PB processes which would continue to widen impacts across the partnership.

## 10. Emerging Lessons

The Working Group utilised Google Jamboards (See Appendix 2) to consider the key lessons learned focusing on the positive aspects and things which worked well in the planning and delivery of TAK£ 500 and the aspects which could have been improved or any barriers that were encountered. A number of issues emerged:

### What worked well

- The PB process was a key action set out within the Community Planning Partnership's Community Engagement Strategy. This partnership approach to delivery was important.
- The on-line process enabled a greater reach and wider geography across the Council area with the process shifting from one DEA to borough wide.
- Sharing the 'Take 5' message was extremely positive and timely given the implications of COVID-19 on well-being.
- The group worked flexibly and was able to adapt and respond quickly.
- Good example of partners pooling resources together to have a greater combined impact and to reach more groups and communities.
- Partners gelled well despite only being able to meet face to face twice due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- Partners who had previous experience of PB were very willing to share their experience and expertise and help shape the process.
- Having representatives from the CVS on the working group reduced barriers to inclusion and supported and encouraged people in the community to find out more and get involved.
- Support from Community Planning Team and Community Places – PB Works to guide the process.

### What could have been improved

- The opportunity to meet, talk and connect face to face with partners and community groups. However, this was not possible given the restrictions in place due to COVID-19. It was noted that the group dealt well with this putting in place a number of support sessions and were committed to ensuring that the PB process would happen despite the challenges caused by the pandemic.
- Project ideas had to be pitched on-line through video submission rather than through a market stall approach. This may have made it harder for people to get their passion across or to garner support for new ideas.
- Limitations with the digital technology. Although it was stressed that the support from the Council tech team and the ability to use Citizen Space had made the shift to an on-line process much more manageable. Downloading and uploading the videos and related information to Citizen Space was time intensive particularly when working from home with slower internet speeds and when dates had to be pushed back to reflect circuit breaker restrictions.
- As part of the process it was agreed that voters could only support ideas from within their own District Electoral Area (DEA). This meant that some voters were unable to support project ideas which they may have benefited from or services which they would have used outside of their DEA. It was suggested that in a repeat PB process voters should be able to choose which DEAs they want to vote within or be able to vote in a number of DEAs if they choose to. It was noted that if this was an option in the future consideration would need to be given to the number of votes each person has to allocate.

### 11. Polls: Participation, Knowledge and Future Involvement

At the end of the reflective workshop a number of polls were run. The first asked participants to consider how well the shared purpose and principles agreed at the outset of the TAK£ 500 process had been met. All of the respondents agreed that these had been met with 83% (10) participants noting 'Very Good' and 17% (2) noting 'Good'. The second question asked participants to consider whether they had enough input into the process as a member of the working group. All of the participants (12) answered yes. The third and fourth questions asked participants to consider whether their knowledge and competencies in PB had improved as a result of their involvement in Tak£ 500. Overwhelmingly, all of the respondents agreed that they had increased their knowledge of PB and participative democracy and that they felt better equipped to plan and organise a future PB project. Finally, participants were asked whether they would consider being part of a PB Working



Group again, Resoundingly, all respondents stated that yes, they would get involved again as part of a PB Working Group. (See Appendix 3 for Poll Results).

In order to capture more detailed responses from members of the working group a SurveyMonkey was designed and distributed. Fourteen members of the working group participated in the survey. A summary of the results is presented below and in full at Appendix 4.

### Knowledge of and skills in Participatory Budgeting

All respondents (14: 100%) asserted that as a result of participating in Tak£ 500 they have increased their knowledge of participatory budgeting and participatory democracy more broadly. Comments reflected on the opportunity to apply the theory of PB to the delivery of a PB process; learning how to design and amend the process in response to community needs; new digital and on-line skills; those that were completely new to PB beforehand; those who felt more confident to undertake another PB process; and adapting to the challenges of COVID-19.

*“Yes, this is the first time I have been involved in a PB process. I feel that this has been a learning curve in how to administer this type of funding. It has provided me with practical knowledge if I was to carry out the process again.”*

*“I’ve increased my awareness of the capabilities of using a digital platform for PB through this process.”*

*“Yes - have been involved in a few projects in different LGD's but this is the first mainly online. I had my doubts about the viability initially but can't believe how well it went given the current circumstances.”*

### Lessons Learned

Respondents shared the following lessons:

- Time for planning and preparation.
- Importance of being flexible and responsive in planning and implementation.
- Tak£ 5 Theme was very relevant to communities.
- Exemplified the benefits of community involvement – community centred PB project.
- Strength of partnership working and joint decision making.
- Interest from the community to get involved in decision making through PB.
- Thinking more creatively about funding and how we can reduce barriers to how we allocate resources.
- A lot of administration for the lead partner.

- Supports community to know what is happening in their area and what the needs and priorities of different groups are.
- Challenges of on-line or digital processes for older people or those less tech-savvy.
- Opportunity to run a separate PB process for Schools.
- Learning from partners with previous PB knowledge and expertise.
- Support from Community Places – PB Works.

*“Lessons have all been positive including how to deliver PB remotely during a pandemic to working as a partnership remotely to deliver a project.”*

*“That a partnership approach does work and promotes the ability to facilitate a community centered PB project and facilitate groups to overcome barriers to accessing funding.”*

*“Working together has made it much easier as decision-making is a joint process and pulls more resources together to reach a common goal. There are lots of organisations out there that have never applied for funding or have been involved in Council projects.”*

*“There is a need to be flexible and adapt if required. We could easily have agreed to postpone but going ahead was the right decision. There has been a lot of learning on how things can be done differently although there is still a need for face-to-face contact for sharing of information and development of relationships both between partners difficult to reach groups and participants.”*

### Improvements to the process to inform a repeat PB process

Respondents noted that COVID-19 permitting it would be beneficial if the next PB process could happen in-room with people meeting and interacting face to face. All respondents felt that given the challenges presented by the pandemic that the process had gone remarkably well. Others noted potential design changes for example, that the available budgets could be extended with some larger pots of money to encourage a more sustainable approach to project ideas; a more open voting system to enable groups to vote in a number of DEAs; and an alternative to the video submission as this deterred some groups from continuing with the process especially older people.

*“Nothing really, would just be great if we could do more face-to-face interaction if current restrictions were not in place.”*

*“If COVID is removed from the situation a blended approach would work. It would be important for partners to meet face to face near the start of the process and at the end. I think meetings in between could be virtual.”*

*“Have different levels of spending power in the budget with large to small amounts. Small amounts being the most with 1 or 2 larger valued projects. Too many small may get to a lot of groups but amount is too little for a longer sustainable project.”*

*“Voting system criteria could be more open as DEAs prevents some groups voting for their preferred and most accessible activity/project.”*

*“I think there needs to be an alternative to the video making element as conversations have highlighted that this deterred people from going forward.”*

*“I don't think this process could have been improved due to the Covid-19 lockdown scenario that we were facing.”*

### Participation in Tak£ 500 and delivery of organisational outcomes

The majority of respondents highlighted that they felt their participation in the Tak£ 500 process had helped to deliver their organisational outcomes. For example, it was noted that participation helped in the delivery of: the Get Moving ABC Framework, A Shared Neighbourhood Programme in Banbridge, The Community Planning Partnership's Engagement Strategy; mental health early intervention and prevention, a Community Development Programme and in awareness of the Take 5 Ways to well-being. It was also highlighted that it supported the investment in grassroots sport, identified groups at a local level, enabled wider participation in community planning and fostered vibrant sustainable communities.

*“Yes - One of the outcomes of the Housing Executive is to 'Foster vibrant sustainable communities' and this process, through the supported schemes helps the organisation to deliver on this commitment.”*

*“Yes, very much so. Clanmil are funded by DFC to deliver a TBUC/ Shared Neighbourhood programme in Banbridge. This project fits with our objectives.”*

*“Yes. With the Take 5 ways to well-being theme the project played a key role in Mental Health early intervention and prevention across ABC a substantial area of the SHSCT.”*

*“Yes, it has been a good process for us to be involved in as targeted grass roots groups.”*  
*“Yes, it contributed to the delivery of our Get Moving ABC Framework.”*

*“Yes, the PB process helped the Council as a partner in the Community Planning Partnership to move along the spectrum of engagement as outlined in 'Our Community Engagement Strategy' to really empower local communities.”*

### PB as a process and technique to empower people and communities in decision-making

All respondents highlighted that empowering communities and providing opportunities for the community to make decisions that affect them is central to Participatory Budgeting and the Tak£ 500 process. There was widespread support and commitment to see PB processes replicated and embedded, to give communities voice, to give people more confidence in

democracy, to enable communities to take decisions that matter to them, to develop ideas that benefit the whole community and to align PB to community development and local government spending.

*“PB is key to giving community power to shape and direct provision in their local communities and engagement with statutory services to ultimately improve access and feasibility of service provision locally.”*

*“I believe the PB is the future of how funding is provided to give ownership back to communities and help them make decisions of what happens in their areas. It gives people more of a voice than just voting for elected representatives.”*

*“I think this is a great way of organisations pooling resources to provide the community with the opportunity to make decisions that affect them.”*

*“The stats on the numbers of people and groups looking to find out about and participate in Take500 shows PB is effective. The process makes groups think about what they are doing and could do if finance is available and even for those groups that were unsuccessful this is empowering.”*

*“I think it is ever evolving and although marketed as a simplified process for the applicant and funder its administration burden can be rather heavy. Although it drills down into what the local community want and need instead of it always being a one-way process from the funder to the applicant.”*

*“I think it should and I hope will be a significant avenue for community development and local government spending.”*

### Addition of other partners

Respondents noted that it would be beneficial to include additional representatives from the Community and Voluntary Sector and to also include representatives from the Business or Private sector. It was highlighted that the success of the process may attract other partners for a repeat PB process and that the particular theme and location of future PB processes would help to inform and determine the relevant partners who should participate.

*“Yes, additional partners could contribute to the success of PB and would be dictated by geographical proximity and remit of particular PB project.”*

*“Yes, I am sure there is. The success of this process will lend itself to increased partner involvement.”*

### Personal Reflections

Working group member were invited to share their personal reflections of participating in the process:



*“Well managed and thought-out process that made a difference to communities.”*

*“I have been able to develop new links and working relationships with both partner organisations and the community.”*

*“A positive experience building on cross sectoral relationships and developing a base to continue joint working going forward in response to community need.”*

*“Community decides... Community spends... Community benefits.”*

*“A fantastic opportunity for our community to get involved, to take ownership and assist to improve the health & wellbeing of our individuals.”*

*“A challenging, innovative but mostly well worth it funding process that gets to the heart of what the local community need.”*

*“We did not have a project in on this round but learning from it will allow a more focused approach to the future projects we as an organisation might take on.”*

*“Involvement in this process has been beneficial to me in my role as a community development worker and to the communities I support. It has given individuals and groups the opportunity to see small ideas grow and develop.”*

*“TAK£500 was an amazing opportunity for the ABC Council area and the many awarded groups.”*

*“It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit.” – Harry Truman*

*“A professional initiative that was hopefully as rewarding for participants as it was as a funder.”*

*“Rewarding.”*

*“Outstanding cooperation from enthusiastic stakeholders to help deliver the Take 5 message to the wider community during a very difficult period which required prompt change actions.”*

### Support and commitment for further PB processes

There was widespread support from respondents to see further PB processes developed and commitment to their active involvement in any future PB processes. It was also hoped that in post-covid times the process could take place face to face to maximise community involvement and create and strengthen connections within and between communities and service providers. Respondents again acknowledged the support received from the Community Planning Team members and Community Places - PB Works through Carnegie UK Trust which aided the planning, co-ordination, and implementation of the process during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*“Great partnership working, strong, effective CP/PB team and really would like to do it again. Evolved seamlessly and helped each other through the process.”*

*I really enjoyed the process of PB and to see how communities wanted to create a better lifestyle and helping each other get through a very difficult year.”*

*“The overall project was very good. It was hampered by the C-19 restrictions, but hopefully future deliveries will not face the same constraints and will be able to promote more community involvement. A process well done! I look forward to being a part of the next one.”*

*“Obviously with COVID the process had to be changed and adapted and it did work well. However, it would be a better and more inclusive process if done on a face-to-face level (marketplace). Well done to Michelle, Lynn and Louise for the delivery of a successful PB Project!!”*

## 12. Tak£500 Successful Groups' Feedback

In order to capture feedback and learning from the Tak£500 PB process the successful groups were asked to complete a short on-line survey via the Council's Citizens Hub. The survey was open for four weeks between Thursday 24 June and Wednesday 21 July 2021 38 groups responded to the survey, a response rate of 62%. A summary of the key findings are collated below across thematic areas followed by a more detailed presentation and analysis.

### Summary of Tak£500 Successful Groups' Feedback

#### Taking part in Tak£500

- 92% felt that it was easy to take part in the Tak£500 process
- 100% agreed there was adequate support to participate in Tak£500
- Zoom support session welcomed: enjoyable connecting with and hearing from other participating groups.
- 92% more aware of the Tak£500 message
- 87% noted that the groups and ideas which they voted for received funding
- Respondents noted that knowing people in the community had voted for their idea made them feel honoured, valued, pleased to have community support, provided a sense of recognition, community spirit and inclusion, and part of something. A number of respondents noted that these positive feelings were particularly important given the challenging year communities had faced as a result of COVID-19.
- 84% noted that they felt more aware of what is happening in their area
- 79% strongly agreed or agreed that their project had benefited their community or area

### Connect

- 92% strongly agreed or agreed that it had raised awareness of their group within the community
- 68% strongly agreed or agreed that they had created connections with new groups and individuals
- 81% strongly agreed or agreed that their project delivery had created new connections within the community
- 84% strongly agreed or agreed that they had created stronger connections with the Council and service providers

### Be Active

- 89% agreed that taking part had enabled them to try something new
- 87% strongly agreed or agreed that their project delivery had made a positive change in the community
- 87% strongly agreed or agreed that their project delivery had improved mental and physical health and well-being

### Keep Learning

- 73% strongly agreed or agreed that they had learned new skills
- 73% strongly agreed or agreed that their project delivery had increased confidence within the community
- 89% strongly agreed or agreed that they had increased their confidence as a group
- 79% strongly agreed or agreed that their community had learned new skills

### Give

- 87% strongly agreed or agreed that by participating they had provided an opportunity to give to others

### Take Notice

- 79% strongly agreed or agreed that they had become more mindful

### Voice and Empowerment

- 82% strongly agreed or agreed that they had a greater voice in how resources are allocated in their area

- 84% strongly agreed or agreed that they felt more empowered by creating positive change in the community
- 82% strongly agreed or agreed that they had addressed needs in the community
- 87% strongly agreed or agreed that their participation had supported them to access resources to address needs in the community
- 92% strongly agreed or agreed that they had been supported to access resources to make a positive change in the community

### Impacts of COVID-19

- Project was a lifeline for the community during what was a very difficult time due to the restrictions and isolation caused by COVID-19

### Future of PB across the Council area

- 79% considered it Very Important to have a say on how resources are allocated in their area
- 92% would take part in another PB process

### Suggestions to improve future PB processes

- Simplified one stage process, preparation of a video was daunting for some, although others welcomed and enjoyed the challenge
- Voting options across DEAs not restricted to the area you live in, may want to support a project idea outside of your area
- More opportunities for groups to come together, to create supportive connections and exchange learning

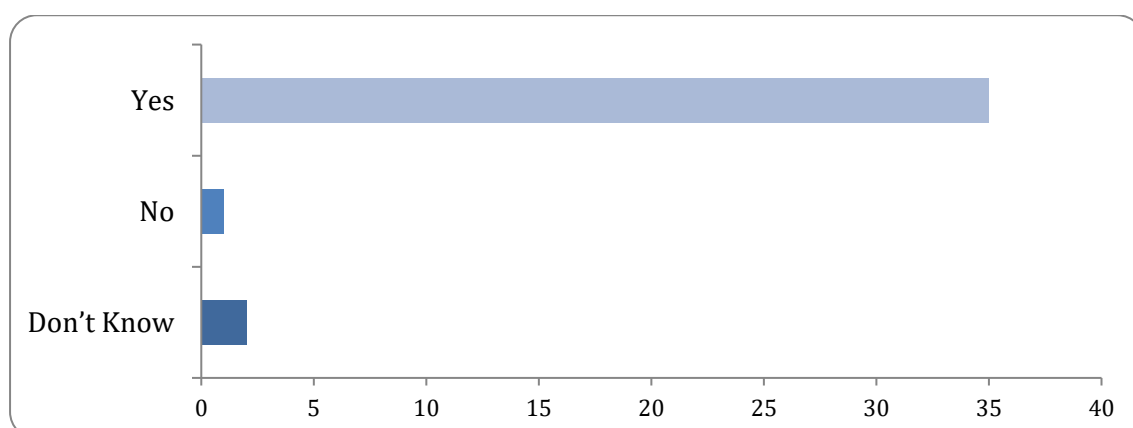
### Detailed Presentation and Analysis of Feedback

#### Did you find it easy to take part in the Tak£500 PB process?

92% (35) of group respondents noted that they found it easy to take part in the Tak£500 PB process, with only one group answering 'No' and two other groups indicating that they Didn't Know.







Option	Total	Percent
Yes	35	92.11%
No	1	2.63%
Don't Know	2	5.26%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Did you feel there was adequate support to help your group submit an idea for the Tak£500 process?

All of the respondents (38) agreed that there was adequate support to help their group submit an idea to the Tak£500 process. A number of suggestions were made on how the support could be improved for future PB processes and largely centered on the two-stage application process, including the requirement to prepare a video and the on-line voting. Respondents noted that a simplified one stage process would be preferable and would take into consideration the time constraints of volunteers. Others noted that they found the process straight forward. One respondent noted that they had found the Zoom Support session informative and that they had enjoyed connecting and hearing from other participating groups. They suggested that future processes would be enhanced if there were more opportunities for groups to come together, to create supportive connections and exchange learning during the process. Others noted that the requirement to vote within a single DEA had caused confusion for some people, especially those who wanted to support projects which were located within the Borough but outside of the area where they lived. They suggested that consideration should be given to enabling limited cross boundary voting.

*"Making the video was a bit daunting for us older folk, but thankfully we had younger members to give their guidance and advice."*

*"No, it was very straightforward."*

*"The initial zoom was very informative, and it was nice to hear about other group projects. We could perhaps have had an avenue for supporting each other more along the journey. This may have been useful for the smaller groups who had fewer able-bodied advocates. It would have provided opportunity for linking community groups and learning from one another as well as encouraging each other."*

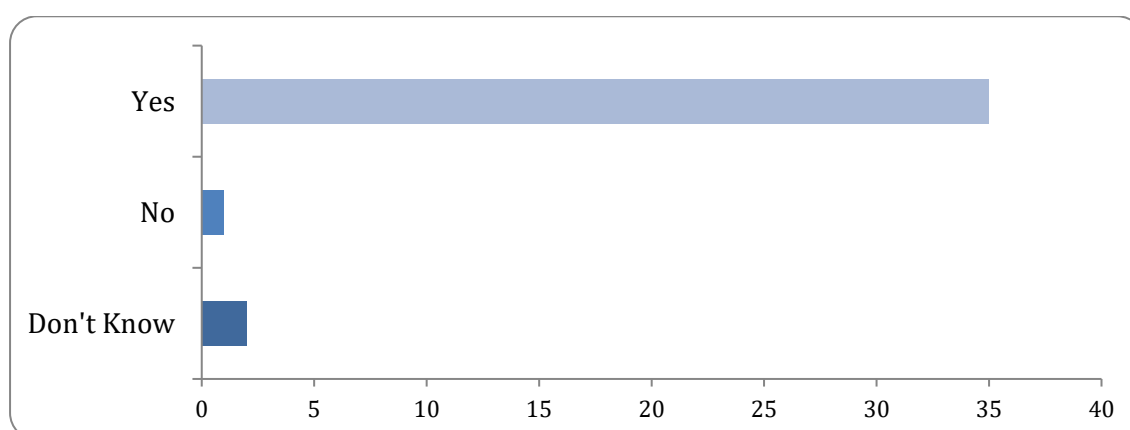
*"Brilliant support throughout the process."*

*"There seemed to be confusion about people not being able to vote for their projects because they lived outside the geographical limits - perhaps the voting system could be amended to permit limited cross boundary voting - within reason of course."*

## Are you more aware of the Take 5 message after taking part in the Tak£500 PB process?

### Aware of Take 5 message

92% (35) of respondents asserted that they were now more aware of the Take 5 message having participated in the Tak£500 PB process.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	35	92.11%
No	1	2.63%
Don't Know	2	5.26%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

68% (26) were more aware of Take 5 activities and a number of respondents shared their plans to continue to embed Take 5 activities within their groups to support wellbeing and build connections within local communities. Others noted that participating in the PB process had helped them to reflect and recognise the role that their group plays in supporting well-being.

*"We plan to continue our project and hope to use the 5 steps as a basis for other activities planned to support wellbeing."*

*"We hope to build on the connections already made through taking part in the wild flowers project and get more pupils from our school community involved as well as renewing connections with members of the local community who have the expertise to help move our ideas forward."*

*"Connect, keep learning and be active - 3 of the main elements of climbing."*

*"The aspect of giving, to include the older members of our community."*

*"This grant has been a catalyst for the community to put forward suggestions for future projects and activities which we will endeavor to develop."*

*"Providing ways for young people to look after their mental health and wellbeing, continually referring to and explaining the take 5 message."*

*"I think the 5 messages are already embedded in club ethos and activity. I recognised this when we put together our narrative for the application. This spurred us on to invest time in keeping the club going as we realised what an important role club plays in members lives not only for the athletics but for general well-being. The project prompted us to reflect on this and appreciate it more."*

### Did any of the groups/ideas which you voted for receive funding?

87% (33) respondents noted that the groups and ideas which they had voted for received funding. 13% (5) were unaware.

### How did it make you feel that people in your community voted for your idea?

Participants were asked how it had made them feel that others in the community had voted for their idea. Respondents noted that it made them feel honoured, valued, pleased to have community support, provided a sense of recognition, community spirit and inclusion, part of something. A number of respondents noted that these positive feelings were particularly important given the challenging year communities had faced as a result of COVID-19.

*"We were honoured to have been awarded this funding and to have been able to use it to promote wellbeing and support our pupils, parents, staff and wider community at this time."*

*"Amazing, we felt included and felt like we were part of something!"*

*"We were delighted that the local community recognised the importance of what we were trying to do and backed us with their votes."*

*"Fantastic! It was great to make people aware of our group and we were very grateful for the community to vote."*

*"It was a great confidence builder for the young people and it made them realise that all their hard work and efforts had been worth it. It also showed them that what they were looking to achieve through the Take£500 grant was looked upon by the community as a positive and well worth idea."*

*"It gave everyone a little buzz following a tough year. The kids had a ball making the video."*

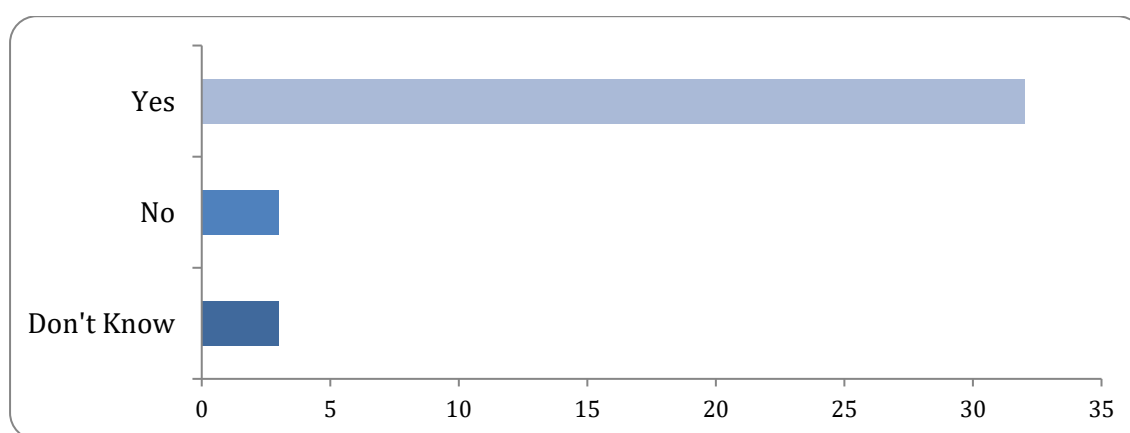
*"We were pleased, proud and happy to see our walking club being highlighted especially at the very lonely, isolated days of the pandemic."*

*"It was extremely uplifting and really sent a positive message to us as a community group and we/our idea was valued."*

*"Positive. A sense of community spirit."*

### Do you feel more aware about what is happening in your area?

84% (32) respondents noted that they felt more aware of what is happening in their area having participated in Tak£500.

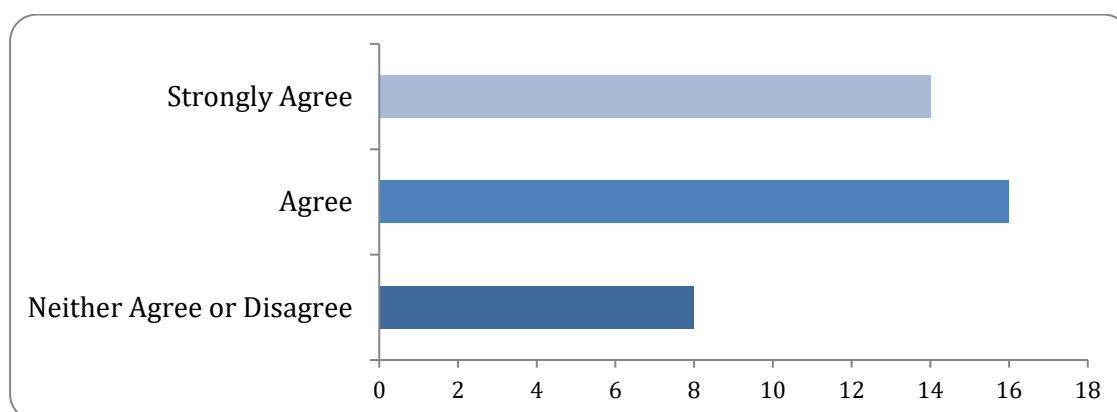


Option	Total	Percent
Yes	32	84.21%
No	3	7.89%
Don't Know	3	7.89%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### In relation to how delivering your project has benefited your community/area?

79% (30) of respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that their project has benefited their community or area.

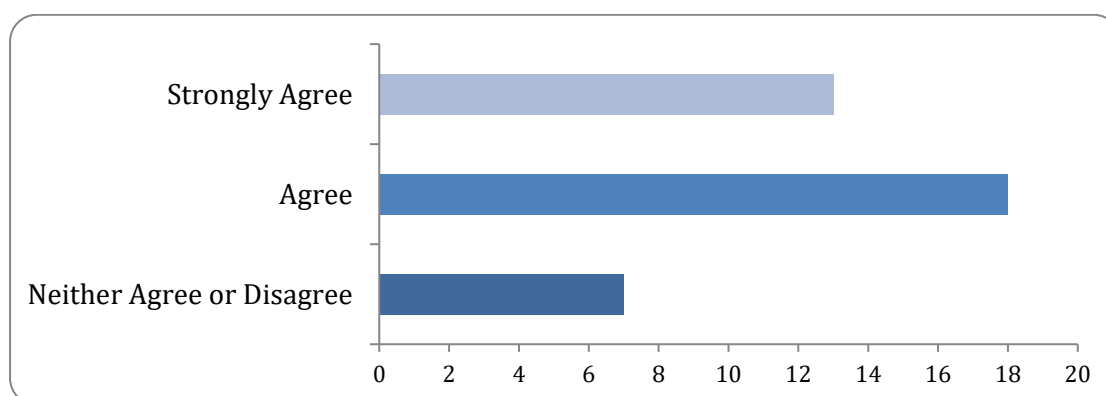
## Reduced Isolation and Loneliness



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	14	36.84%
Agree	16	42.11%
Neither Agree or Disagree	8	21.05%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

## Created new connections within the community

81% (31) of respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that their project delivery had created new connections within the community. 18% (7) neither agreed or disagreed.

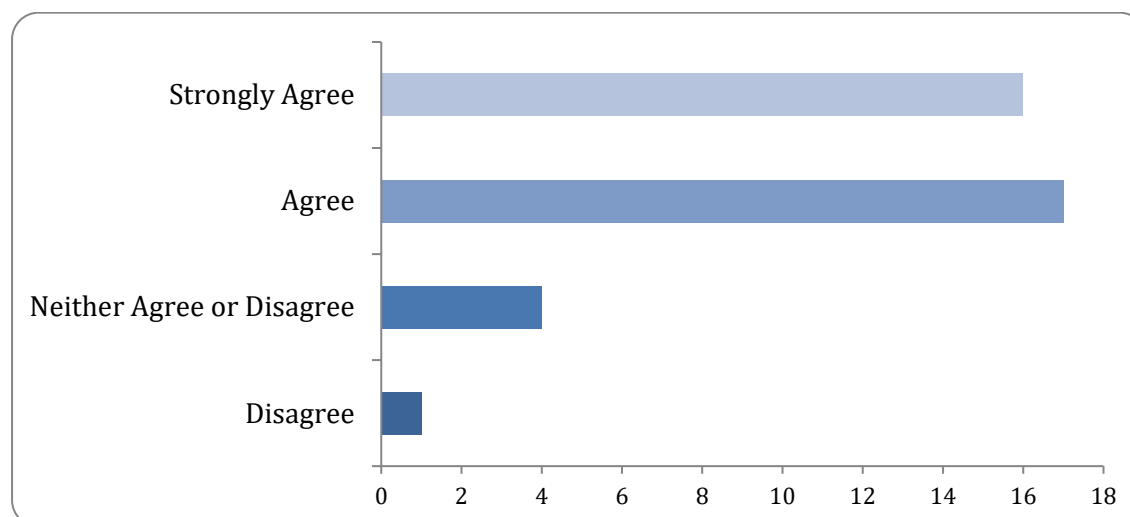


Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	13	34.21%
Agree	18	47.37%
Neither Agree or Disagree	7	18.42%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%



### Strengthened connections within the community

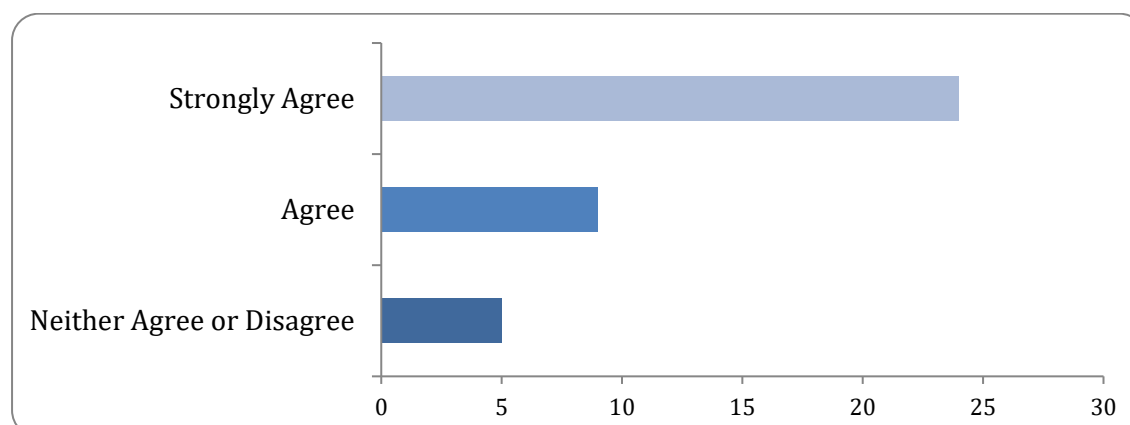
87% (33) of respondents asserted that delivering their project had strengthened connections within the community. One respondent disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	16	42.11%
Agree	17	44.74%
Neither Agree or Disagree	4	10.53%
Disagree	1	2.63%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Improved mental and physical health and well-being

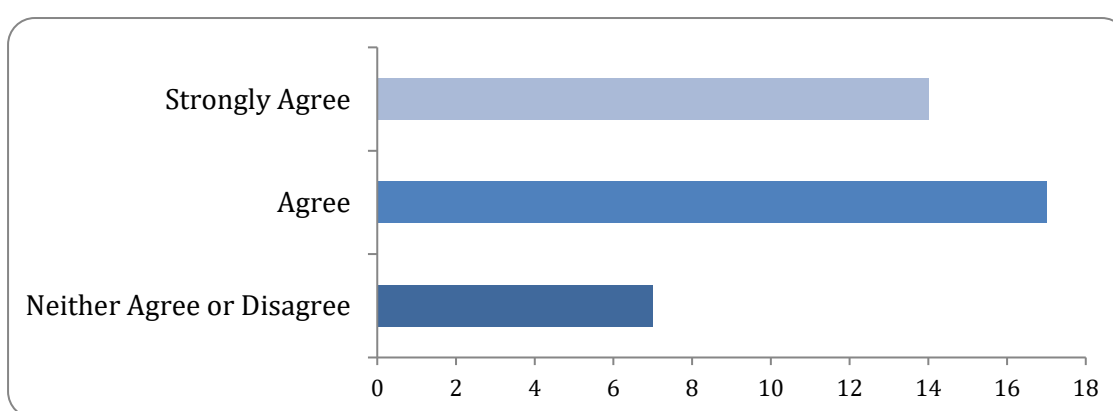
87% (33) of respondents highlighted that their project delivery had improved mental and physical health and wellbeing.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	24	63.16%
Agree	9	23.68%
Neither Agree or Disagree	5	13.16%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Addressed needs in the community

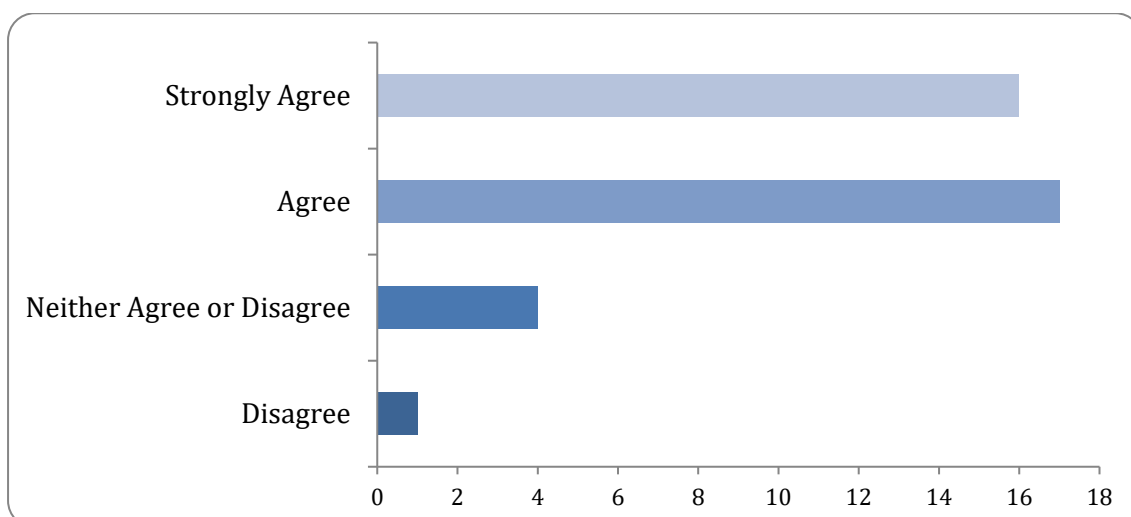
82% (31) of respondents felt that they had addressed needs in the community through their project delivery. A further 18% (7) neither agreed nor disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	14	36.84%
Agree	17	44.74%
Neither Agree or Disagree	7	18.42%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Made a positive change in the community

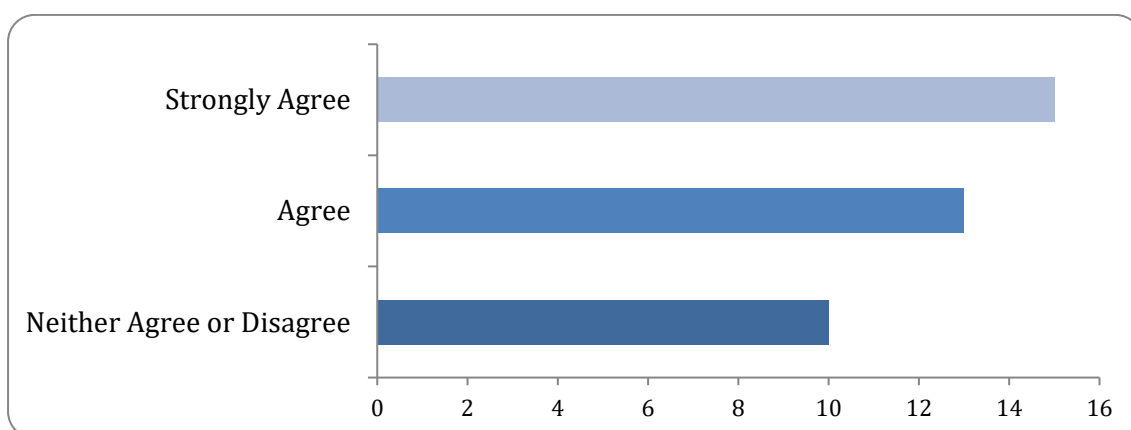
87% (33) of respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that their project delivery had made a positive change in the community. 11% (4) Neither Agreed or Disagreed; and one respondent disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	16	42.11%
Agree	17	44.74%
Neither Agree or Disagree	4	10.53%
Disagree	1	2.63%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Increased confidence

73% (28) of respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that their project implementation had increased confidence within the community. A further 26% (10) groups Neither Agreed nor Disagreed.

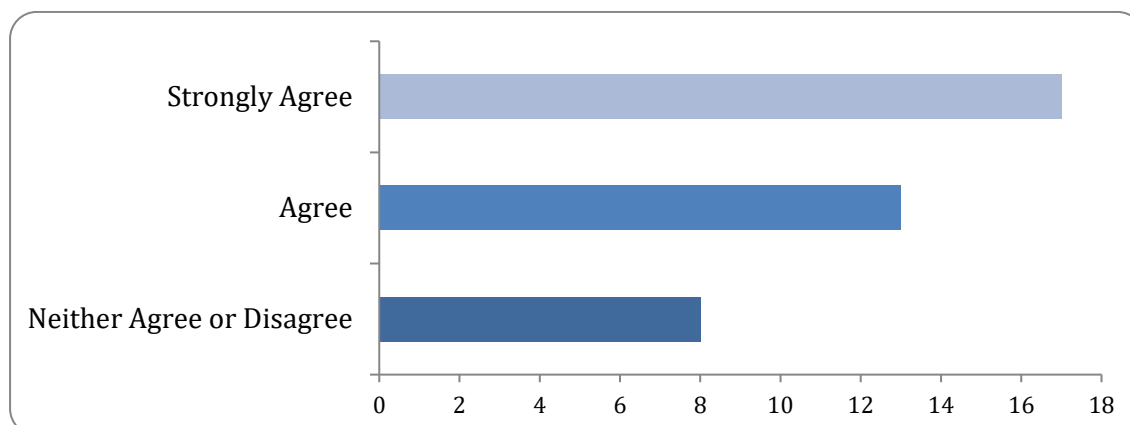


Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	15	39.47%
Agree	13	34.21%
Neither Agree or Disagree	10	26.32%
Disagree	0	0.00%

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	0	0.00%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%

### Learned new skills

79% (30) respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that their community had learned new skills through their project delivery. 21% (8) Neither Agreed or Disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	17	44.74%
<b>Agree</b>	13	34.21%
<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	8	21.05%
<b>Disagree</b>	0	0.00%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	0	0.00%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%

Respondents provided additional comments and reflections on other achievements secured through the delivery of their projects including consideration of the effects felt as a result of COVID 19; development of greater trust; successfully accessing resources for the first time; and instilling a sense of pride and positive action.

*"Our community is rural and isolated. Due to the covid factor, Mass had been cancelled Kids were in and out of School- providing the Christmas display really gave everyone a lift. A lot of the community couldn't believe ABC Council had awarded us the opportunity as in the past we have been rejected for grants with council. It definitely built better trust- thank you."*

*"Because of Covid restrictions we were not able to have many community members in our sensory garden, but it was much used and developed by pupils and staff."*

*"With the climbing center being closed due to covid it was hard to reach out to new people within the community that don't know about our climbing club. We did manage to take some new members bouldering with the mats we purchased, and the current club members also got great use out of them. It was really great for these people to get outside and continue to*

*climb in a new environment. Hopefully when things open up a bit more for our club, we will be able to connect further."*

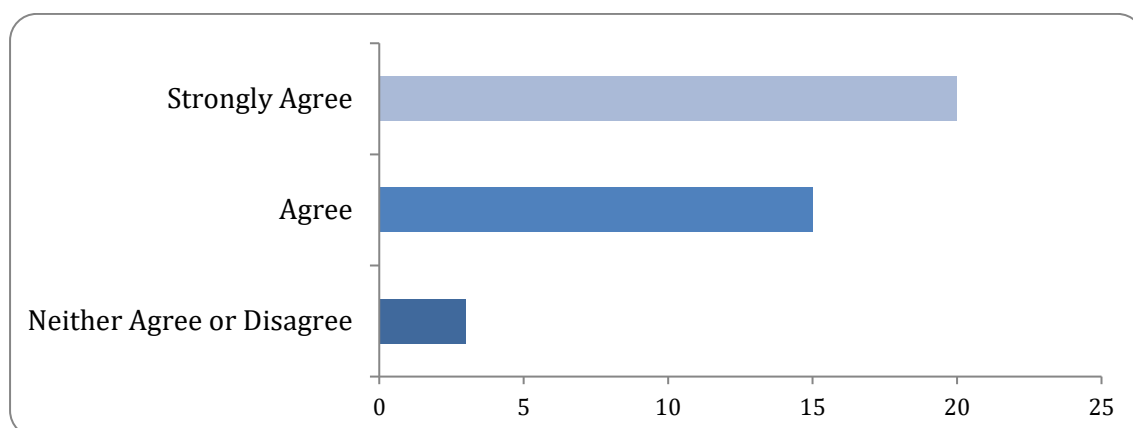
*"Help instill a sense of real pride within our members and our community from all age groups. Which I feel is quite a unique accomplishment to achieve."*

*"It was great to be part of a positive initiative when everyone was challenged with covid impact. Thank you so much for facilitating! The guidance for making and submitting the video was great and email responses to queries were promptly and helpful. Thanks to all the council team involved!"*

**This was the Community Planning Partnerships first PB project where local residents and communities were able to put forward ideas and the public selected the project ideas that were funded.**

#### **Participating in PB Project - Raised awareness of our group within the community**

92% (35) of the respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that their participation in the PB project had raised awareness of their group within the community. 8% (3) groups Neither Agreed or Disagreed.

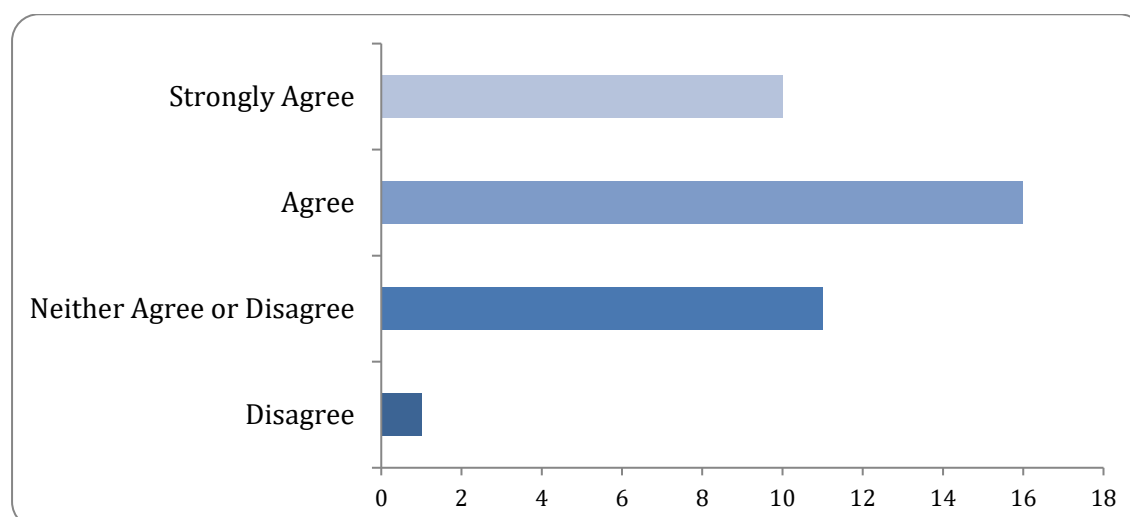


Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	20	52.63%
Agree	15	39.47%
Neither Agree or Disagree	3	7.89%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%



### Participating in PB Project - Created connections with new groups and individuals

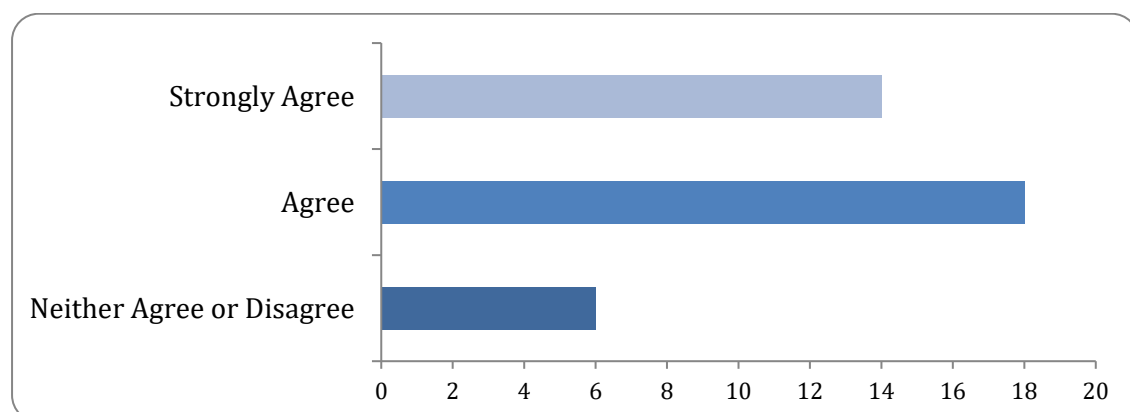
68% (26) of group respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that they had created connections with new groups and individuals. 29% (11) Neither Agreed or Disagreed and one respondent Disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	26.32%
Agree	16	42.11%
Neither Agree or Disagree	11	28.95%
Disagree	1	2.63%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Participating in PB Project - Created stronger connections with the Council and service providers

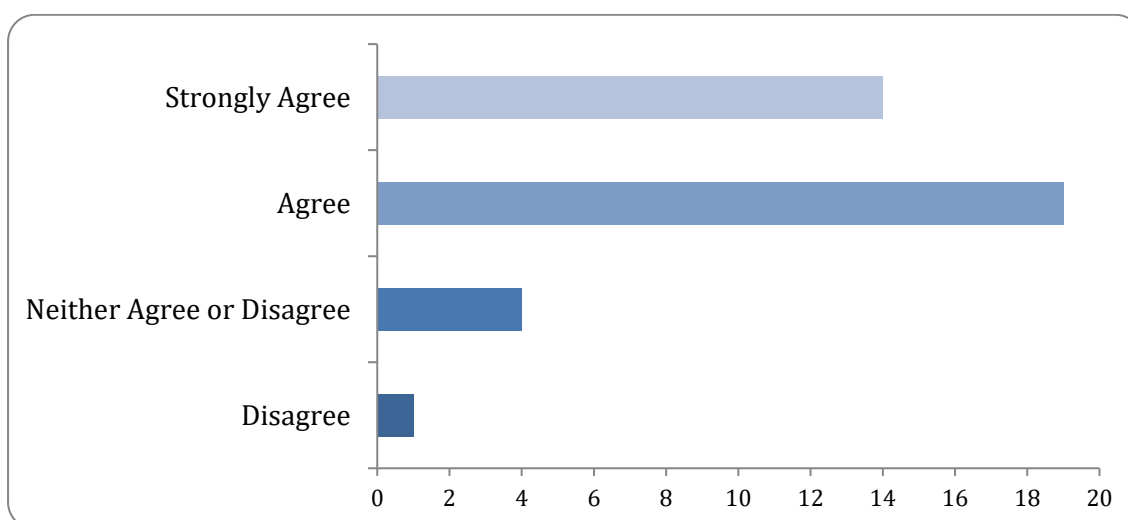
84% (32) of respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that their participation in the PB project had created stronger connections with the Council and service providers. 16% (6) Neither Agreed nor Disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	14	36.84%
Agree	18	47.37%
Neither Agree or Disagree	6	15.79%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Participating in PB Project - Supported to access resources to address needs in the community

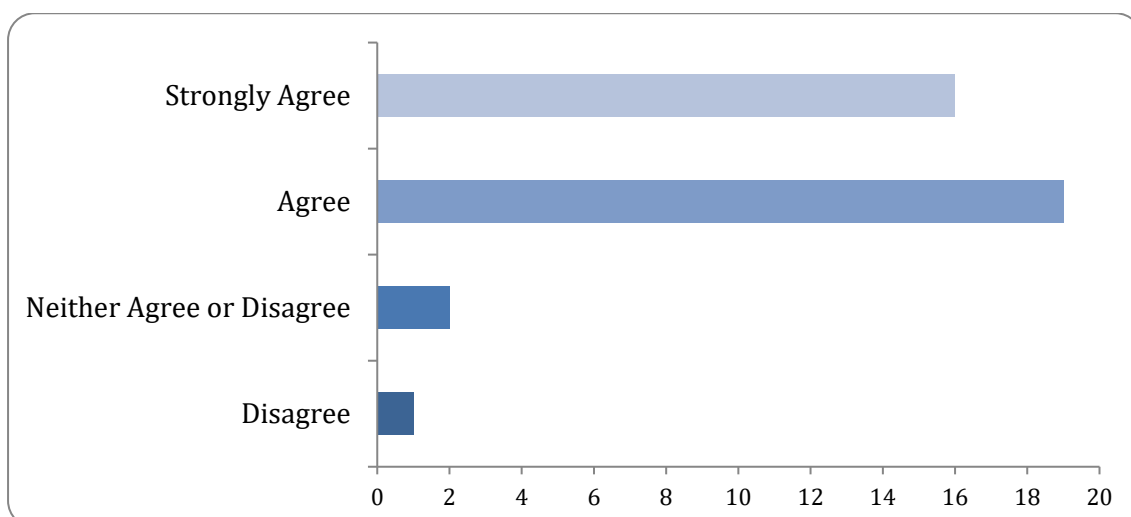
87% (33) of group respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that their participation had supported them to access resources to address needs in the community. 11% (4) Neither Agreed or Disagreed and one respondent disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	14	36.84%
Agree	19	50.00%
Neither Agree or Disagree	4	10.53%
Disagree	1	2.63%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Participating in PB Project - Supported to access resources to make a positive change in the community

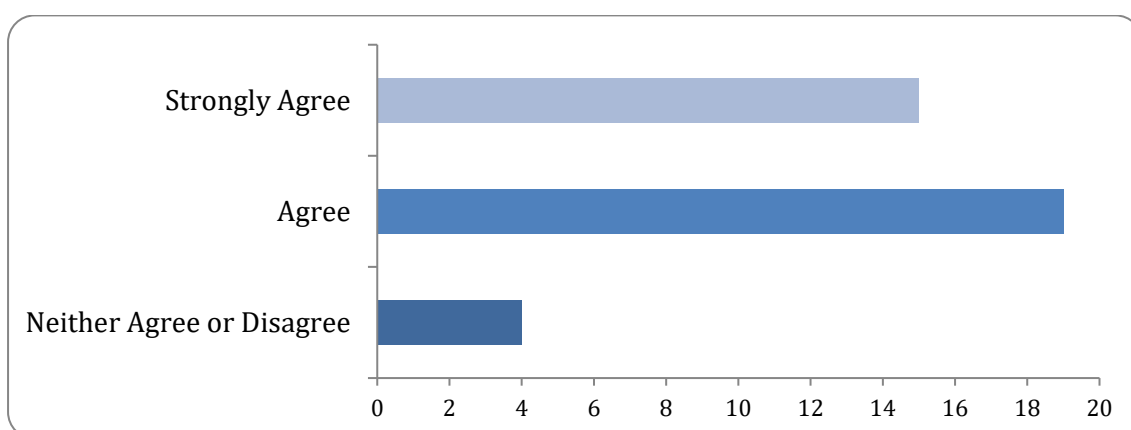
92% (35) of respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that they had been supported to access resources to make a positive change in the community. 5% (2) Neither Agreed or Disagreed. One respondent Disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	16	42.11%
Agree	19	50.00%
Neither Agree or Disagree	2	5.26%
Disagree	1	2.63%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Participating in PB Project - Increased our confidence as a group

89% (34) of respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that through participating in the PB project they had increased their confidence as a group. 11% (4) Neither Agreed or Disagreed.

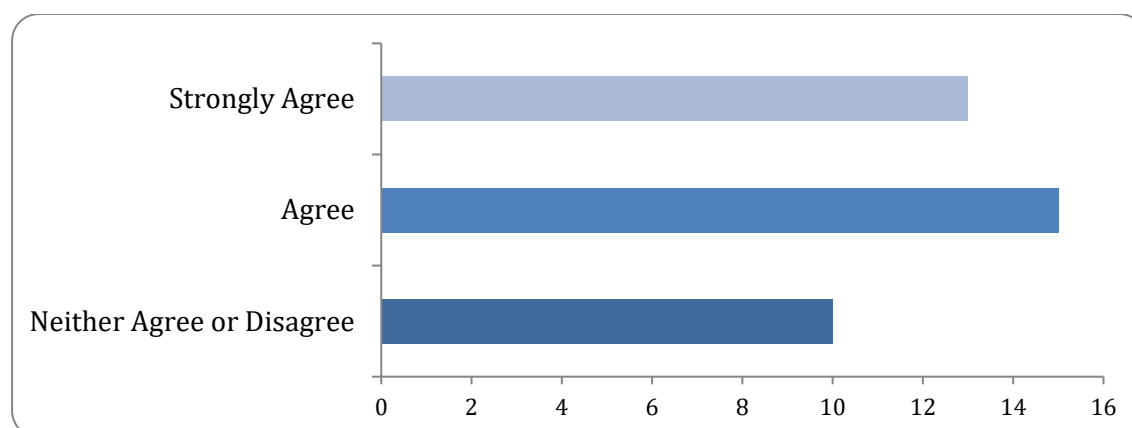


Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	15	39.47%
Agree	19	50.00%
Neither Agree or Disagree	4	10.53%

<b>Disagree</b>	0	0.00%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	0	0.00%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%

### Participating in PB Project - Learned new skills

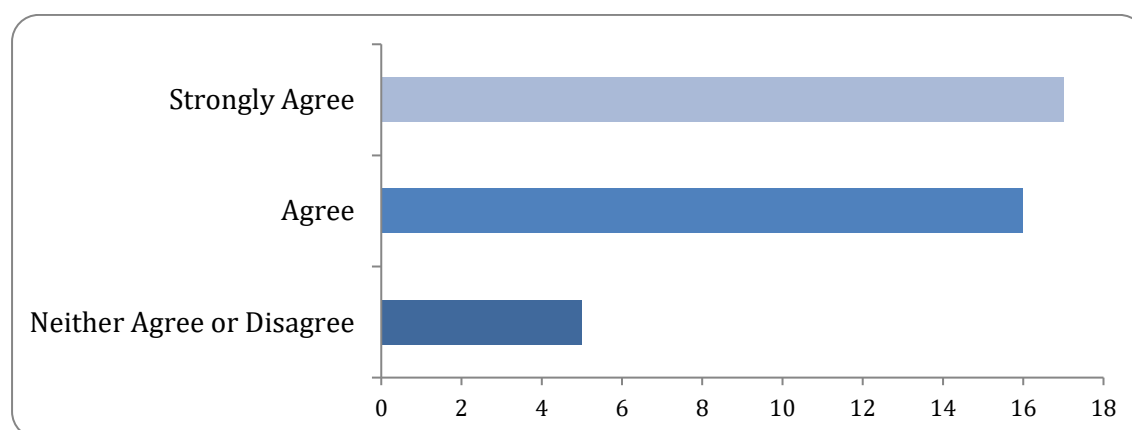
73% (28) of respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that they had learned new skills through participating in the PB Project. 26% (10) Neither Agreed nor Disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	13	34.21%
<b>Agree</b>	15	39.47%
<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	10	26.32%
<b>Disagree</b>	0	0.00%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	0	0.00%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%

### Participating in PB Project - Opportunity to give to others

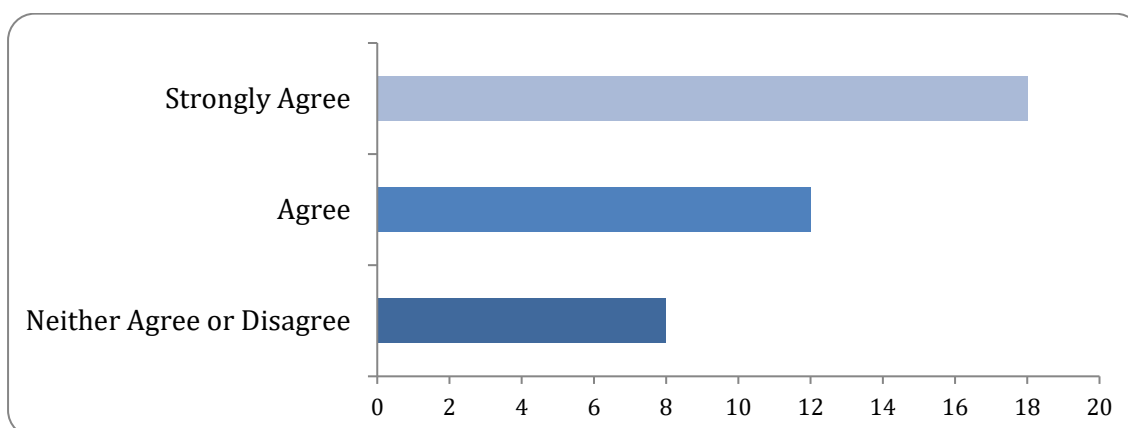
87% (33) of group respondents were in agreement that their participation had provided an opportunity to give to others. 13% (5) Neither Agreed or Disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	17	44.74%
Agree	16	42.11%
Neither Agree or Disagree	5	13.16%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Participating in PB Project - Become more mindful

79% (30) of group respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that they had become more mindful as a result of taking part in the PB Project. A further 21% (8) Neither Agreed or Disagreed.

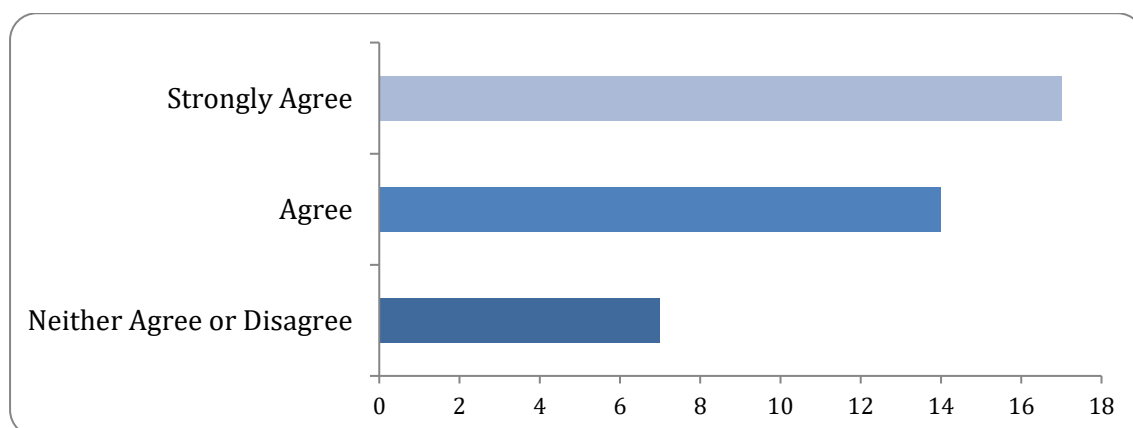


Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	18	47.37%
Agree	12	31.58%
Neither Agree or Disagree	8	21.05%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Participating in PB Project - A greater voice in how resources are allocated in our area

82% (31) of respondents either Strongly Agreed or Agreed that they had a greater voice in how resources are allocated in their area through participating in the project. A further 18% (7) Neither Agreed or Disagreed.



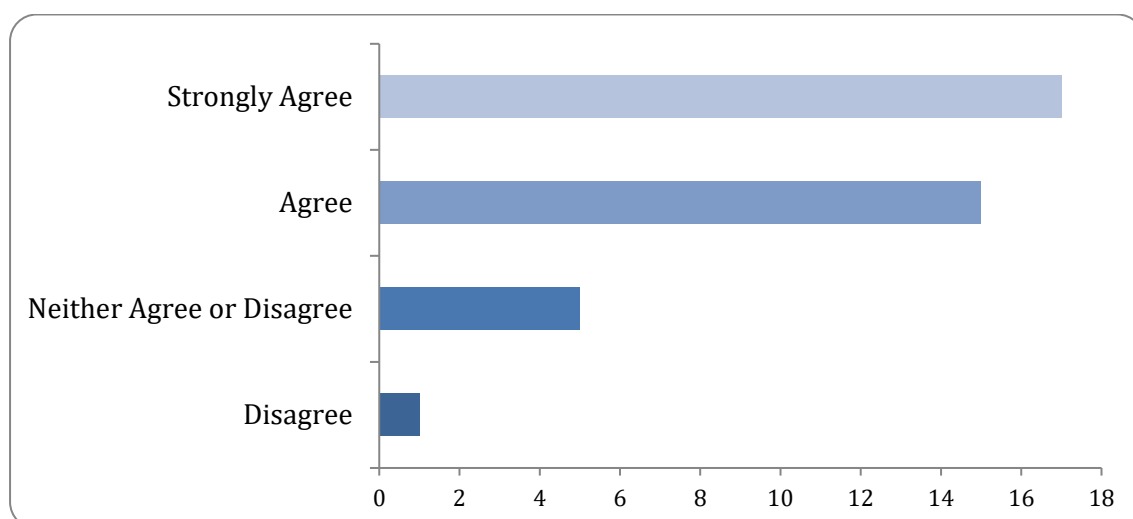


Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	17	44.74%
Agree	14	36.84%
Neither Agree or Disagree	7	18.42%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Participating in PB Project - Feel more empowered by creating positive change in the community

84% (32) of group respondents Strongly Agreed or Agreed that they felt more empowered by creating positive change in the community. A further 13% (5) Neither Agreed or Disagreed and one respondent Disagreed. An additional comment provided by one respondent acknowledged their participation as a positive experience.

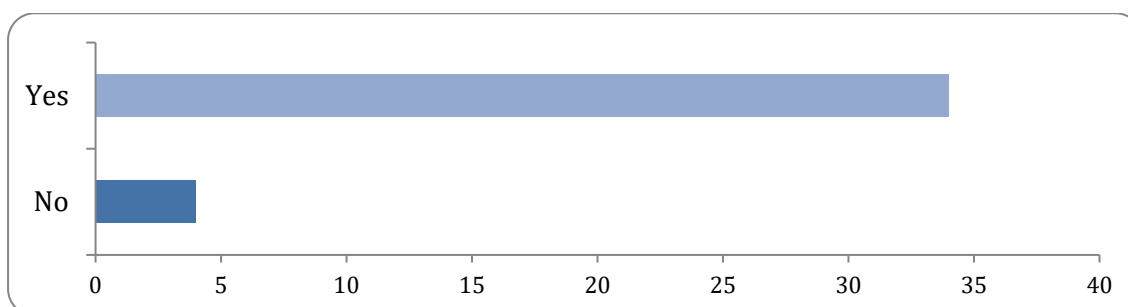
*"A positive experience all round thank you!"*



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	17	44.74%
Agree	15	39.47%
Neither Agree or Disagree	5	13.16%
Disagree	1	2.63%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Has taking part allowed your group to try something new?

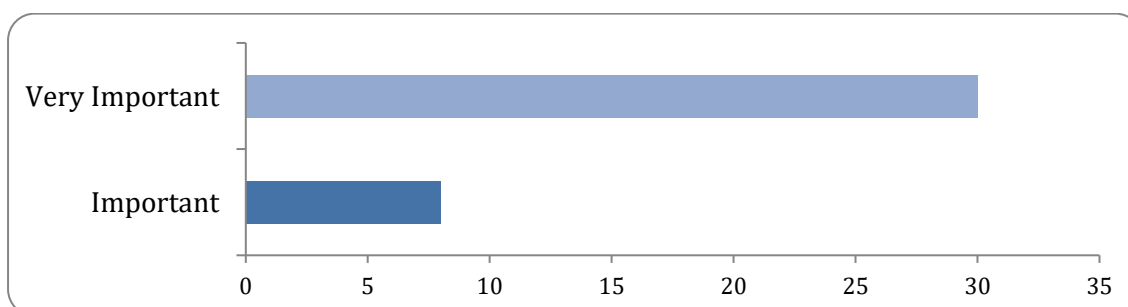
89% (34) of respondents agreed that taking part in the Tak£500 PB process had enabled their group to try something new. 11% (4) disagreed.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	34	89.47%
No	4	10.53%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### How important do you think it is to have a say on how resources are allocated in your area?

All of the respondents acknowledge the importance of being able to have a say on how resources are allocated in their area with 79% (30) considering it as Very Important and a further 21% (8) that it was Important.



## Please provide a short quote about your experience of participating in the Tak£500 PB process?

All of the respondents provided a short quote on their experience of participating in the TAK£500 PB process.

*"Taking part in the Take 500 PB process has increased the wellbeing and involvement of all those within our community. It has been an enriching experience which we have thoroughly enjoyed and gained much from." Railway Street Nursery School*

*"At a time when we were told to isolate fitness classes by zoom were a lifeline where people could connect together and have some fun. The highlight of the week for many." Emmanuel Church Lurgan*

*"It has been absolutely fantastic, for a lot of our clients they had been isolated so to bring clients together with ASD to play video games and form friendships, really made us feel amazing! Thank you for all your support." Stepping Stones NI*

*"It is great that the community got the opportunity to vote for projects that meant something to them. I believe it has empowered our community and if the scheme was to continue this would be even more obvious." Laurelvale Cricket Club*

*"This is a quote taken from a non-club member from our Facebook page as we think it sums up what we tried to do: "Well done to all involved, it's great to see the youth out enjoying themselves & a great day for it" Keady & District Angling Club*

*"Taking part in the Take£500 process developed real sense of purpose and togetherness between to students and members of staff involved. The success of the application and the practical benefits on the ground enthused us all." St. Patrick's High School Keady*

*"The participation gave us a sense of belonging, the club had not been able to meet to walk over the previous 12 months, this renewed contacts albeit virtually and raised hope and enthusiasm----and eventually elation in being awarded the money." Derrynoose Walking Club*

*"At times stressful but it has stimulated the Society to use current technology to widen the audience for its talks." Poyntzpass & District Local History Society*

*"A simple concept with much more gains than just financial." Ballyhegan Davitts GFC*

*"The process was very enlightening, helpful and rewarding. It prompted teamwork, increased participation of community with activities local and inspired confidence that the Council is interested in meeting the needs of the local Community from grassroots up. It could actually be advertised more widely as we just about heard in time to be part of it. Perhaps using multiple modes and social media avenues to spread the net would inform other interested groups. Keeping it simple and accessible to all also very important. Again, many thanks for your support." Dromore AC*

*"I enjoyed the process of tak£500. Application was simple and easy to fill out and importantly allowed for a wide range of projects to suit each groups needs. I enjoyed the promotional video aspect however I recognise this may have been difficult for some groups. The public vote was well advertised and helped all the groups promote their projects!" Na Piersaigh Eanach Mór*

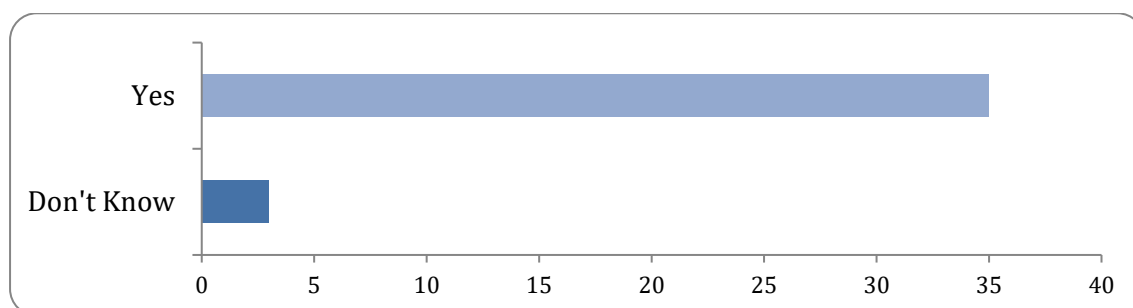
*"The process was very time consuming ..having to send videos and communications of what we were doing. We are voluntary group and for the financial funding that was given there was a lot of work put in." FOSPA*

*"It was a great confidence builder for the young people and it made them realise that all their hard work and efforts had been worth it. It also showed them that what they were looking to achieve through the Take£500 grant was looked upon by the community as a positive and well worth idea. Overall a great success." Annaghmore iRural Group*

*"The Tak£500 participatory budget approach I believe is a new and novel way of distributing funding. It was my first experience of voting being opened up to members of the community, as opposed to selection by a panel. The fact too that unconstituted groups could apply was extremely beneficial, particularly to our group. This approach certainly made us more aware of the number and variety of other groups across the Borough, and what their projects were about, which we otherwise would have been unaware off." Far From the Maddening Crowd*

### Would you take part in another PB process?

92% (35) of respondents would take part in another PB process while 8% (3) Didn't Know.



A number of respondents provided additional comments which acknowledged the support provided through the PB process; that their project wouldn't have happened without the process; and interest in developing further processes. Others noted time commitments and degree of work involved creating the video and raised the issue of voting being restricted to within individual DEAs.

*"The event wouldn't have happened without the funding, so we'd be keen to build on it & do something similar again."*

*"We would like to develop on what we have started in a small way."*

*"Yes, I would take part again as I feel it was very beneficial and worthwhile."*

*"Why not? It was financially and materially beneficial!"*

*"I felt that it was a lot of effort making the initial video for everyone to vote for, only for certain people to be allowed to vote for us."*

*"Support and financial input much appreciated"*

*"We would think positively about doing so."*

*"Would look at what work is required, and length of time needed from the group."*

### **Do you have any other comments about the TAK£500 PB process?**

Several respondents provided additional comments on the PB process which recognised the support provided and opportunity to get involved, referenced the impacts of Covid-19 and highlighted the issue of voting within a single DEA and preference to be able to vote across DEAs.

*"Look forward to future TAKE 500 projects."*

*"Excellent idea to give ownership to communities and help them to engage with each other."*

*"Great to see council money allocated to local groups, on the direction of local people's votes."*

*"The staff in the council were really supportive and professional in their approach. Sincere thanks due to them all."*

*"Other than making the application process a little simpler, we enjoyed being involved."*

*"It would be helpful for us and presumably other beneficiaries of the TAK£500 process to know if the ABC Council was pleased with the general outcomes."*

*"Thank you for supporting our rural community!"*

*"I felt that it would of been better if anyone could of voted for our project, not just people who lived in the local area who had a certain postcode. My family / friends were unable to vote as they lived outside the area, some of the parents and their families who actually attend our pre-school were unable to vote for our project as they lived outside the area too. I felt this put us at an unfair disadvantage compared to other groups..."*

*"The voting process was a complicated business and trying to get the community behind us to get votes to secure a successful application."*

*"We wish to extend a thank you for including our group in the Tak£500 programme."*

*"Members got so much from the project. Most especially at a time when social distancing was in place, we were able to get out and about in the countryside. A thoroughly enjoyable experience, favoured by lovely weather, we took a journey through landscape, memory and history."*



### 13. Celebration and Reflection Events

Three on-line celebration and reflection events took place between Tuesday 27 and Thursday 29 July 2021. The celebration and reflection events are an essential part of any PB process as they provide an important accountability and feedback process to all those who participated in the process. 50 community members attended the celebration events from across 32 successful groups with each sharing the positive impacts which their projects had made.

The Lord Mayor Glen Barr and Cllr Tim McClelland (Wednesday) welcomed participants and congratulated them on their participation in the TAKE500 PB process. The innovative and creative ideas which had emerged from within the community to address local needs were acknowledged. Both the Lord Mayor and Cllr McClelland expressed their enthusiasm about hearing directly from the successful groups of the positive change and impacts which their projects had made.

As part of embracing the TAKE 5 message, and to create a supportive environment everyone was invited to participate in a relaxation session this included Chi Me, breathing exercises and a tour of the body.

A number of key infographics providing an overview of the project were presented and a short video reminding everyone of the TAKE 5 message was played.

After everyone had introduced themselves, representatives from each group were invited to provide a summary of who they were, what their project idea was and the positive impacts which the project had delivered. Each representative described their projects with passion and enthusiasm and shared photographs and videos capturing their achievements. They emphasised the important role which the process had played in creating connections, bringing people together, having a bit of craic, reducing isolation, lifting spirits, developing new skills (especially on-line), reaching out, rebuilding confidence, engaging with new members and providing support to one another.

Participants listened with interest at the diverse range of projects and activities which were shared from connecting through sports and training, club activity, volunteering, families fishing, footballing toddlers, gardening and growing tips, music, innovation awards, Olympians, bursting balloons, local history buffs, gaming buses, defibrillators, Green Flag Awards, intergenerational connections, gifting, Christmas planters, tidy ups, Climate Change conferences, Eco Walks, budding actors, scarecrows, toy libraries, techno chanters, salvaging old materials and much much more.

Every group commented that taking part in TAK£500 had played an important part in helping them to respond to the challenges which their groups and communities faced as a result of COVID-19. Many of the groups had used the Tak£500 pot of money to buy equipment or technology to support them to continue to connect and meet safely, build confidence and motivate each other after feeling isolated and it was noted that Tak£500 had been a lifeline to them.

Participants asked if email addresses could be shared; they shared Facebook Page Details; and invited other groups to come and visit them. Participants asked whether there would be future opportunities to come together; more opportunities to get involved in PB across the borough; thanked the Community Planning Partnership for facilitating and supporting the process and encouraged the Partnership to repeat the process. One member of the Community and Voluntary Sector Panel shared their experience of how PB had been used to support communities in the Gorbals area of Glasgow and shared their ambitions that further opportunities for PB would be created here.

Another member expressed how inspired they were having heard about the innovative and creative ideas which had been delivered under extremely difficult circumstances. They asserted that it had demonstrated that the community are trusted partners who can take responsibility to decide how best to spend resources and really make the most of any money. They noted that they would like to see more public money in the hands of the community for community good. They shared that we can all go back to funders and show them how money can be used better by people on the ground.

Participants reflected on the huge amount which had been delivered with relatively small sums of money and noted that it had acted as a spark to ignite other benefits for example, inspiring club and group members to come together for clean ups, extending services and activities to new members, created connections with other groups who they were able to work with and provide support to, many of the projects were going to be continued and extended with groups inspired to do more. Everyone was inspired by what they had heard and there was a sense of energy, resilience, enthusiasm and achievement.

At the end of the three events participants were asked to provide some feedback on the event and the TAK£500 PB process. Participants were invited to share one or two words which described the positive impacts their projects had had on their area, community or group. As the word cloud below highlights there was a huge range of positive impacts identified – with ‘togetherness’ and ‘community’ at the heart of the message.



All the respondents (19) noted that they knew more about the other groups in the TAK£500 PB projects and the positive impacts they made.

All the respondents (20) would like to see more PB processes happening across the Council area.

## 14. Embedding PB going forward

Having participated in the Tak£ 500 PB process it is clear that the PB working group members and community planning partners are committed to embedding Participatory Budgeting as a way of working with local communities in order to support them to have a direct say on the issues which affect their daily lives. There is acknowledgement that processes such as PB which animate participative democracy and lead to more responsive services better tailored to local needs are even more vital as society moves towards renewal and transformation post COVID-19.

Learning from this process and international good practice<sup>2</sup> points to a number of gains from PB practice with participants feeling more empowered; more aware of what is happening in their local areas, feeling more involved, a sense of connection, improved transparency and locally directed health and wellbeing outcomes. Interestingly, the Improvement Service, 2015<sup>3</sup> found that when residents feel they have a meaningful say in how services are run in their neighbourhoods they are more willing to get involved in local affairs. There remain challenges to PB practice with Escobar et al. (2018)<sup>4</sup> pointing for the need to ensure authentic and deliberative forms of engagement with an emphasis on tackling inequalities to ensure that PB can become ‘transformational’ rather than ‘transactional’. The requirement to shift Tak£ 500 online made it more challenging to create spaces for deliberation as part of the process, while spaces were created on-line it was felt that face to face engagement would have enhanced this aspect of the PB process. Furthermore, this echoes the three challenges of engagement processes which seeks to empower, as set out in ‘Our Community Engagement Strategy’ as: Inclusive, Deliberative and ultimately has Impact. Escobar asserts that using mainstream budgets can lead to more significant changes to traditional service delivery mechanisms and is more likely to be sustainable and have wider impact.

A recent feasibility study from the Irish Institute of Public Administration<sup>5</sup> emphasises the pivotal role which leadership and buy-in at a local level plays in achieving maximum impact and outcomes through PB activity. The study concludes that “while PB should be locally led and tailored to suit the local context, a supportive and encouraging environment led by central government would provide fertile grounds for local authorities to experiment and

<sup>2</sup> Wampler et al, 2018 <https://www.transparency-initiative.org/blog/2094/participatory-budgeting-spreading-across-globe/>

<sup>3</sup> The Improvement Service. (2015). Elected members briefing note – Participatory Budgeting [http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/em\\_briefing\\_notes/EM-Briefing-participatory-budgeting.pdf](http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/em_briefing_notes/EM-Briefing-participatory-budgeting.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Escobar et al (2018) PB in Scotland. In Dias (Ed) Hope for Democracy, 30 Years of PB Worldwide <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/publications/hope-for-democracy-participatory-budgeting-in-scotland/>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.ipa.ie/fileUpload/Documents/CitizensEngagement\\_LocalGov\\_2019.pdf](https://www.ipa.ie/fileUpload/Documents/CitizensEngagement_LocalGov_2019.pdf)

enhance citizen engagement with the budget process (p.26).” Arguably, there is now an appetite from both service providers and communities to seize the opportunity to be ambitious and to ‘scale-up’ and draw on PB to support communities in COVID-19 recovery and transformation.

*“communities have acted quickly and creatively to support each other and if we run PB in the aftermath of the immediate response to Covid-19 it really says that we value what communities can do, especially the preventative effect of what they do in relation to social isolation and loneliness. PB can help us to invest in that and enables the community to decide where that investment goes as they know best.”*

**Jennie Dunlop, Community Planning Manager, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council**

## 15. Pathways to Embed PB

This report draws together substantial evidence of the positive impacts which have been delivered through the TAK£ 500 PB process and clear support from voters, those who delivered PB projects and the PB Working Group to develop further opportunities for PB across the borough. A number of proposed options to embed PB were presented and explored with the PB Working Group in August 2021.

### Preliminary Options

1. Repeat the PB Participatory Grant Making model with the Take 5 Theme
2. Repeat the PB Participatory Grant Making model with a different theme (theme could be directed by the community)
3. Take forward both a PB Participatory Grant Making model and additionally, develop a Mainstream PB process.
4. Undertake a Mainstream PB process.

The PB Working Group agreed that the options proposed were comprehensive and there was a clear preference and support for further exploration of Option 1 and Option 3. In relation to Option 1 it was noted that repeating the PB participatory grant making model would enable (subject to COVID 19 regulations) the face-to-face element of the PB process to take place. It was advanced that this would further promote and deepen opportunities for creating and strengthening connections with and between communities and furthermore, between communities and service providers across the borough. It was noted that repeating the process and drawing on the established Tak£ 500 brand would continue to grow awareness of the concept of participatory budgeting with communities. There was unanimous support for repeating the process with the 'Take 5' theme with the working group acknowledging that post covid the 'Take 5' message was even more pertinent.

In relation to Option 3, the working group members noted that they would welcome the opportunity to take forward both a participatory grant-making model and to develop a mainstream PB process. It was recognised that this would support a shift in both mindsets and practice that grant-making isn't the only way to allocate and deliver resources. It was advanced that pursuing a mainstream approach to PB would offer an opportunity to further evidence and capture the broader impacts of participatory budgeting and provide communities with the opportunity to influence service design and delivery and make decisions on larger sums of public funding. There was agreement from the working group that it would be beneficial to explore what a mainstream PB process might look like and how it could be delivered to inform decision-making on the future of PB across the borough.



Several processes where mainstream PB could be incorporated were referenced including the Armagh Place Plan and Housing for All Good Relations Plans.

The reflective learning from the Tak£ 500 process including the working groups' considerations of the options above will be presented to the Leadership and Community Engagement Sub-Committee on 15 September 2021. Following this the sub-committee will present key learning and take forward recommendations to the Strategic Community Planning Partnership for their consideration in late September 2021.

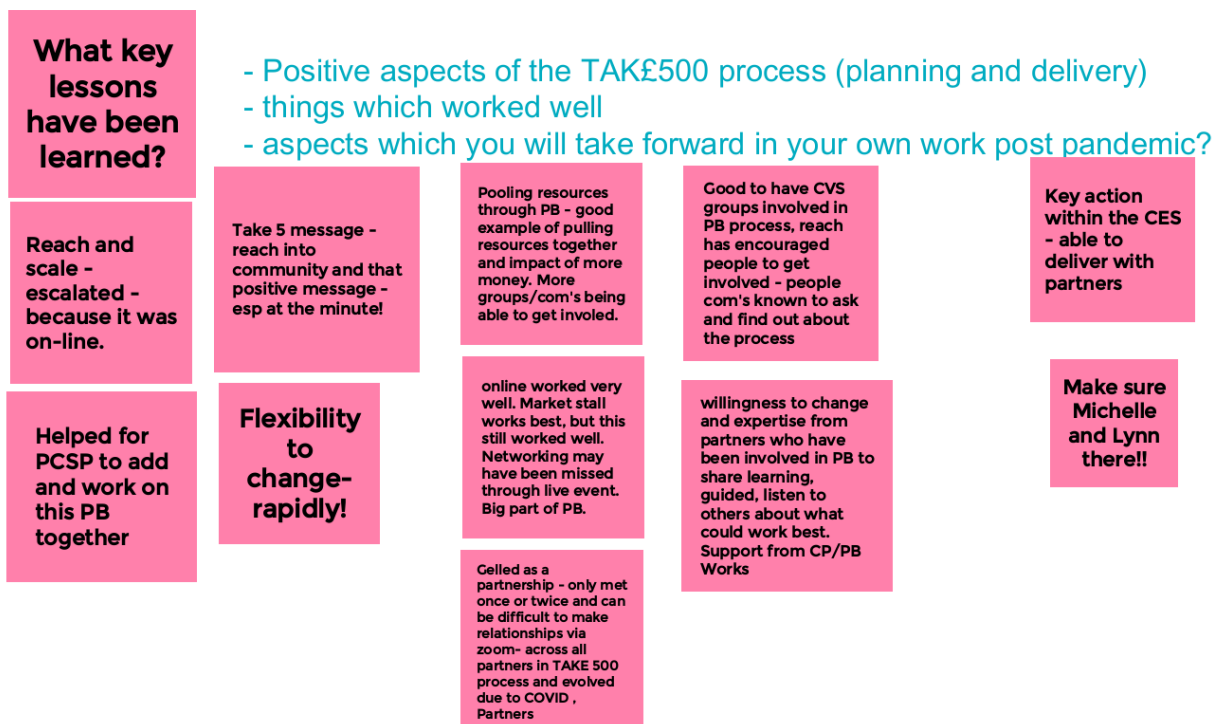


## Appendix 1: PB Working Group Members

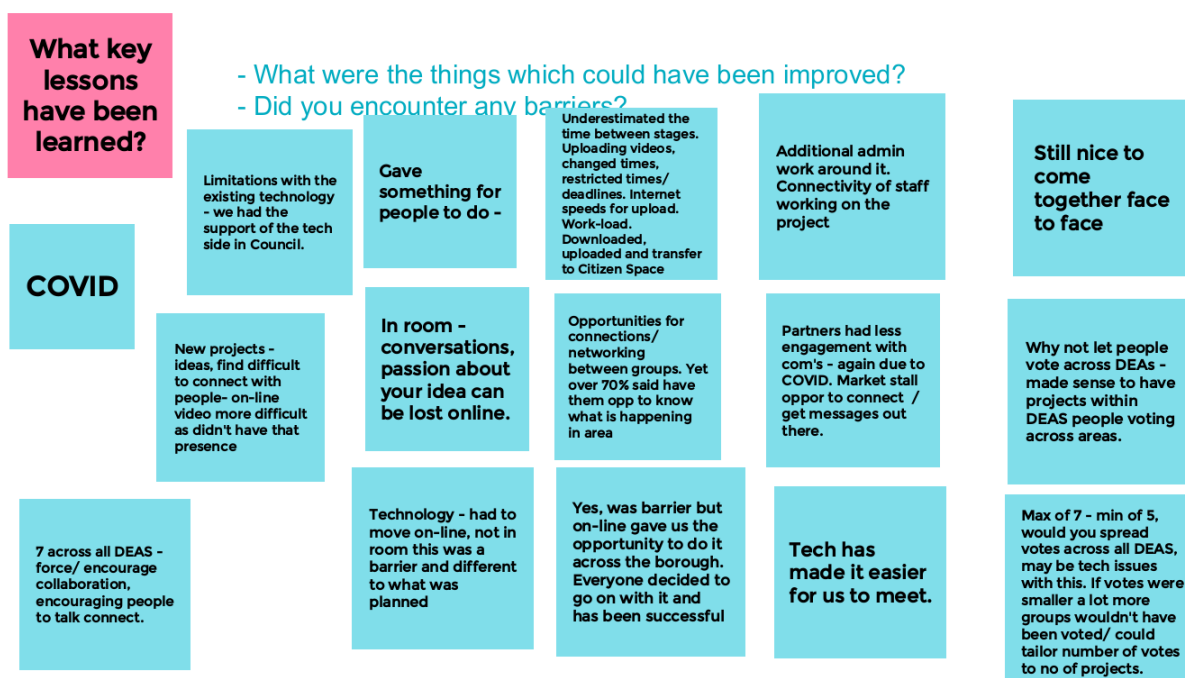
Clive Bowles, Portadown Rugby Club and Community and Voluntary Sector Panel  
 Eileen Campbell, Environmental Health, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
 Lynette Cooke, PCSP, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
 Edel Cunningham, Volunteer Now and Community and Voluntary Sector Panel  
 Damien Dean, Department for Communities  
 Elaine Devlin, Environmental Health, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
 Gillian Dewart, Health and Recreation, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
 Stephen Fields, West Armagh Consortium and Community and Voluntary Sector Panel  
 Marion Graham, Triangle Housing and Community and Voluntary Sector Panel  
 Michelle Hazlett, Northern Ireland Housing Executive  
 Austin Kelly –Clanmill Housing  
 Sophie Kyle, Community Development, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
 Gilbert Lee, Banbridge Twinning and Community and Voluntary Sector Panel  
 Chris Leech, Craigavon Area Foodbank and Community and Voluntary Sector Panel  
 Michelle Markey, Community Planning, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
 Claire McAuley, Sport NI  
 Louise O’Kane, Community Places  
 Tracey Powell, Southern Health and Social Care Trust  
 Stephen Reynolds, Northern Ireland Housing Executive  
 Simon Sloan, Department for Communities  
 Debbie Smith, Southern Health and Social Care Trust  
 Robert Stockley, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
 Health Improvement Team Officers involved in the implementation of the project: Frances Haughey and Mark Doran and Laura O’Hagan - Health and Recreation, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

## Appendix 2: Google Jam Boards What worked well? And What could have been improved

### What worked well



### What could have been improved?



### Appendix 3: Zoom Poll Results

**1. How well have we met the shared purposes and principles anticipated at the outset?**



**2. Did you feel you had enough input into the process as a member of the working group?**



**3. Do you feel you have increased your knowledge of PB and participatory democracy?**



**4. Do you feel better equipped to plan and organise a PB project in the future?**



**5. Would you be part of a PB Working Group again?**



## Appendix 4: TAK£ 500 PB Reflective Learning SurveyMonkey Results

TAK£500 PB - Reflective Learning

SurveyMonkey

### Q1 Do you feel you have increased your knowledge of Participatory Budgeting and participatory democracy? (please provide a few sentences of detail for each question)

Answered: 14 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Yes, I definitely know more about how PB works and the benefits of it.	5/4/2021 3:09 PM
2	Yes. previously been involved in the theory around PB. This was the first time being involved in the delivery of a PB project, so knowledge of PB has increased.	5/4/2021 10:21 AM
3	Yes, this was the first opportunity locally to get involved in a Participatory Budgeting project from initial meetings to evaluation, and experience amending process in response to community needs.	4/29/2021 5:18 PM
4	YES. It was a relatively new concept to the group but we have a better understanding of it now.	4/16/2021 11:41 AM
5	Yes. I found the process relatively straight forward considering this was the first one. I felt it was a fantastic opportunity for our communities to get involved.	4/14/2021 1:51 PM
6	Yes, this is the first time I have been involved in a PB process. I feel that this has been a learning curve in how to administer this type of funding. I had has provided me with practical knowledge if I was to carry out the process again.	4/14/2021 10:33 AM
7	Yes the knowledge gained on how the process works and the review of how it may go on in strength in the future was worth while	4/14/2021 9:37 AM
8	Yes, prior to this, I had no knowledge of how PB worked	3/30/2021 10:00 AM
9	Yes. PB is a new process to me so there was plenty of learning.	3/29/2021 4:58 PM
10	Yes I have improved my knowledge in PB, as this was the first PB Project i have been involved with and to learn the process and how democracy is important foe all.	3/29/2021 1:13 PM
11	Yes, I have learnt so much for this process - I had only been involved in a small PB process and used the presentation model.	3/29/2021 12:35 PM
12	Yes - have been involved in a few projects in different LGD's but this is the first mainly online. I had my doubts about the viability initially but can't believe how well it went given the current circumstances.	3/29/2021 12:25 PM
13	I've increased my awareness of the capabilities of using a digital platform for PB through this process	3/29/2021 12:13 PM
14	yes	3/29/2021 12:09 PM

### Q2 What key lessons have you learned from the TAK£500 PB process (please provide a few sentences of detail for each question)

Answered: 14 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	It requires a lot of planning and preparation.	5/4/2021 3:09 PM
2	Lessons have all been positive including how to deliver PB remotely during a pandemic to working as a partnership remotely to deliver a project	5/4/2021 10:21 AM
3	That a partnership approach does work and promotes the ability to facilitate a community centered PB project and facilitate groups to overcome barriers to accessing funding.	4/29/2021 5:18 PM
4	The benefits of community involvement	4/16/2021 11:41 AM

TAKÉ500 PB - Reflective Learning		SurveyMonkey
5	I have learned that working in partnership with various stakeholders has been invaluable. Working with the community has given them a sense of pride and ownership in delivering their projects.	4/14/2021 1:51 PM
6	This process is in every case: evolving therefore you have to adapt processes to this. I can take away the confidence that the community will embrace this type of funding.	4/14/2021 10:33 AM
7	1. get criteria for worthwhile projects and the diverse nature of need. 2. It is a good method to target projects and let community panel see the process more clearly. 3. shows the other groups what needs are out in the community.	4/14/2021 9:37 AM
8	I think we need to make some changes in relation to "grouping" together certain sections, ie, schools section, as opposed to all groups together.	3/30/2021 10:00 AM
9	Importance of partnership working Good to have partners that had prior knowledge of PB Having Louise from Community Places involved was a great asset That it can be delivered virtually A lot of admin for the lead partner Its key to have a theme e.g. TAKE 5	3/29/2021 4:58 PM
10	I have learned that PB is a great opportunity for Organisations to apply for funding that they are very much in need of, I have learned that PB is a fair and easy way to apply for funding.	3/29/2021 1:13 PM
11	Working together has made it much easier as decision-making is a joint process and pulls more resources together to reach a common goal. There are lots of organisations out there that have never applied for funding or have been involved in Council projects.	3/29/2021 12:35 PM
12	There is a need to be flexible and adapt if required. We could easily have agreed to postpone but going ahead was the right decision. There has been a lot of learning on how things can be done differently although there is still a need for face to face contact for sharing of information and development of relationships both between partners difficult to reach groups and participants.	3/29/2021 12:25 PM
13	Maybe not learned but confirmed my suspicions that older people and the digital unsavvy may be restricted in their involvement	3/29/2021 12:13 PM
14	cooperation of stakeholders is key	3/29/2021 12:09 PM

### Q3 What could have been improved, or could be done differently in the next PB process? (please provide a few sentences of detail for each question)

Answered: 14 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Hopefully the process can be face to face next time.	5/4/2021 3:09 PM
2	Nothing really, would just be great if we could do more face-to-face interaction if current restrictions were not in place.	5/4/2021 10:21 AM
3	Voting system criteria could be more open as DEA area's prevents some groups voting for their preferred and most accessible activity/project.	4/29/2021 5:18 PM
4	A difficult question to answer as Covid-19 prevented the intended procedure the delivery of the the project	4/16/2021 11:41 AM
5	I don't think there was much more that could be done. It is all a learning curve and i think the next one will run even smoother.	4/14/2021 1:51 PM
6	I don't this this process could have been improved due to the Covid-19 lockdown scenario that we were facing.	4/14/2021 10:33 AM
7	1. have different levels of spending power in the budget with large to small amounts. small amounts being the most with 1 or 2 large valued projects. 2. too many small may get to a lot of groups but amount is too little for a longer sustainable project	4/14/2021 9:37 AM
8	I think there needs to be an alternative to the video making element as conversations have highlighted that this deterred people from going forward.	3/30/2021 10:00 AM



TAK£500 PB - Reflective Learning		SurveyMonkey
9	Keeping the voluntary and community partners involved right through the process Good that it was Borough wide as more impact More accessible to groups such as older people Being able to vote across the DEAs	3/29/2021 4:58 PM
10	I think that the next PB process should be done the same as it was fair for all who joined.	3/29/2021 1:13 PM
11	If Covid-19 had not been here, face-to-face engagement and the market place would have been ideal. Perhaps voting across DEAs.	3/29/2021 12:35 PM
12	If COVID is removed from the situation a blended approach would work. It would be important for partners to meet face to face near the start of the process and at the end. I think meetings in between could be virtual.	3/29/2021 12:25 PM
13	I think it went well but there may be room for a bit of tinkering in the number of votes or how one spreads those across boundaries such as DEAs	3/29/2021 12:13 PM
14	nothing in the circumstances	3/29/2021 12:09 PM

### Q4 Did your involvement in the TAK£500 process help your organisation to deliver its outcomes? (please provide a few sentences of detail for each question)

Answered: 13 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Yes, it contributed to the delivery of our Get Moving ABC Framework.	5/4/2021 3:09 PM
2	Yes very much so. Clannmil are funded by DFC to deliver a TBUC/ Shared Neighbourhood programme in Banbridge. This project fits with our objectives	5/4/2021 10:21 AM
3	Yes. With the Take 5 ways to well-being theme the project played a key role in Mental Health early intervention and prevention across ABC a substantial area of the SHSCT.	4/29/2021 5:18 PM
4	Yes, our community development programme benefitted from the project	4/16/2021 11:41 AM
5	Yes, by providing those in the community a sense of leadership and by supporting their mental & physical health.	4/14/2021 1:51 PM
6	Yes it helps us invest in grassroots sport and take part in a community planning process.	4/14/2021 10:33 AM
7	The projects and their outcomes helps in decisions as to the long term outcomes a project might bring.	4/14/2021 9:37 AM
8	NA	3/30/2021 10:00 AM
9	Yes it has been a good process for us to be involved in as targeted grass roots groups. Heightened awareness of ranges of groups across the ABC area Raised awareness of the TAKE 5 message	3/29/2021 4:58 PM
10	Yes, we would probably not have taken on our PB online or across all of the DEAs.	3/29/2021 12:35 PM
11	Yes - One of the outcomes of the Housing Executive is to 'Foster vibrant sustainable communities' and this process, through the supported schemes helps the organisation to deliver on this commitment.	3/29/2021 12:25 PM
12	I hope so although I'm not in a position to comment atm	3/29/2021 12:13 PM
13	no - Banbridge Twinning	3/29/2021 12:09 PM



## Q5 Please provide a short quote on your experience of the TAKE500 PB process

Answered: 14 Skipped: 0

TAKE500 PB - Reflective Learning		SurveyMonkey
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Well managed and thought out process that made a difference to communities.	5/4/2021 3:09 PM
2	I have been able to develop new links and working relationships with both partner organisations and the community	5/4/2021 10:21 AM
3	A positive experience building on cross sectoral relationships and developing a base to continue joint working going forward in response to community need.	4/29/2021 5:18 PM
4	Community decides... Community spends... Community benefits.	4/16/2021 11:41 AM
5	A fantastic opportunity for our community to get involved, to take ownership and assist to improve the health & wellbeing of our individuals.	4/14/2021 1:51 PM
6	A challenging, innovative but mostly well worth it funding process that gets to the heart of what the local community need.	4/14/2021 10:33 AM
7	. We did not have a project in on this round but learning from it will allow a more focused approach to the future projects we as an organisation might take on.	4/14/2021 9:37 AM
8	NA	3/30/2021 10:00 AM
9	Involvement in this process has been beneficial to me in my role as a community development worker and to the communities I support. It has given individuals and groups the opportunity to see small ideas grow and develop.	3/29/2021 4:58 PM
10	TAKE500 was an amazing opportunity for the ABC Council area and the many awarded groups.	3/29/2021 1:13 PM
11	"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit." – Harry Truman	3/29/2021 12:35 PM
12	Rewarding	3/29/2021 12:25 PM
13	A professional initiative that was hopefully as rewarding for participants as it was as a funder	3/29/2021 12:13 PM
14	Outstanding cooperation from enthusiastic stakeholders to help deliver the Take 5 message to the wider community during a very difficult period which required prompt change actions	3/29/2021 12:09 PM

## Q6 What do you think of PB as a process and technique to empower people and communities in decision-making? (Please provide a few sentences in response to each question)

Answered: 14 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I think it's excellent at this.	5/4/2021 3:09 PM
2	I think this is a great way of organisations pooling resources to provide the community with the opportunity to make decisions that affect them	5/4/2021 10:21 AM
3	PB is key to giving community power to shape and direct provision in their local communities and engagement with statutory services to ultimately improve access and feasibility of service provision locally.	4/29/2021 5:18 PM
4	I think it should and I hope will be an significant avenue for community development and local government spending	4/16/2021 11:41 AM
5	The process is a fantastic opportunity to empower people and giving them the ownership to deliver on various projects of interest to them.	4/14/2021 1:51 PM
6	I think it is ever evolving and although marketed as a simplified process for the applicant and funder its administration burden can be rather heavy. Although it drills down into what the local community want and need instead of it always being a one way process from the funder to the applicant.	4/14/2021 10:33 AM
7	I think it is worthwhile as i said and give groups the freedom to pursue projects	4/14/2021 9:37 AM

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8	I think the PB process is an excellent process in empowering people and communities, was made more difficult this year as a result of Covid	3/30/2021 10:00 AM
9	It allows individuals and groups to develop ideas and grow them in order to benefit the wider community. Its a simple and straightforward process but does involve a lot of administration.	3/29/2021 4:58 PM
10	I think it is great to have PB which can include communities and the people in decision making for the things that matter the most to them and their community.	3/29/2021 1:13 PM
11	I believe the PB is the future of how funding is provided to give ownership back to communities and help them make decisions of what happens in their areas. It gives people more of a voice than just voting for elected reps.	3/29/2021 12:35 PM
12	The stats on the numbers of people and groups looking to find out about and participate in Take500 shows PB is effective. The process makes groups think about what they are doing and could do if finance is available and even for those groups that were unsuccessful this is empowering.	3/29/2021 12:25 PM
13	I'm a believer and TAKE500 has reiterated my belief	3/29/2021 12:13 PM
14	It is the future to allow the community to have a say in what effects them	3/29/2021 12:09 PM

## Q7 Are there other partners who could get involved in future PB processes?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 4

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Maybe more community voluntary sector reps.	5/4/2021 3:09 PM
2	Yes I am sure there is. The success of this process will lend itself to increased partner involvement.	5/4/2021 10:21 AM
3	Yes, additional partners could contribute to the success of PB and would be dictated by geographical proximity and remit of particular PB project.	4/29/2021 5:18 PM
4	More interest from the business sector.	4/16/2021 11:41 AM
5	If we can get business and large firms in the area to support with pot funding or even sponsored funding would be good.	4/14/2021 9:37 AM
6	While I cant think of them off hand , I am sure there is potential to include other partners	3/30/2021 10:00 AM
7	There were a lot of partners involved in this particular process. Very important to have the community and voluntary sector organisations on board too.	3/29/2021 4:58 PM
8	I think the number of groups involved was about right. There needs to be a limit to the numbers involved in steering the process and I think there was a good mix including CVS.	3/29/2021 12:25 PM
9	of course	3/29/2021 12:13 PM
10	no	3/29/2021 12:09 PM

## Q8 Please add any other comments or reflections

Answered: 11 Skipped: 3

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Well done on delivery of an excellent programme in a difficult time.	5/4/2021 3:09 PM
2	Well done to ABC council and their staff for the excellent way they co-ordinated this project during the restrictions	5/4/2021 10:21 AM
3	The overall project was very good. It was hampered by the C-19 restrictions but hopefully	4/16/2021 11:41 AM

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	future deliveries will not face the same constraints and will be able to promote more community involvement.	
4	A process well done! I look forward to being apart of the next one.	4/14/2021 1:51 PM
5	none	4/14/2021 9:37 AM
6	Obviously with COVID the process had to be changed and adapted and it did work well. However it would be a better and more inclusive process if done on a face to face level (market place). Well done to Michelle, Lynn and Louise for the delivery of a successful PB Project!!	3/29/2021 4:58 PM
7	I really enjoyed the process of PB and to see how communities wanted to create a better lifestyle and helping each other get through a very difficult year.	3/29/2021 1:13 PM
8	Great partnership working. strong, effective CP/PB team and really would like to do it again. Evolved seamlessly and helped each other through the process.	3/29/2021 12:35 PM
9	A very positive process. A lot of credit should go to Louise, Michelle and Lynn for making the process a success.	3/29/2021 12:25 PM
10	A big thanks to all those involved at all levels but special mention to the team at ABC	3/29/2021 12:13 PM
11	Very dependent upon Council admin support and will finance be available for future PB's if we are entering very difficult financial times	3/29/2021 12:09 PM