Toolkit for Using Participatory Budget as part of Cash Grant

U Decide Event

Date: 1st December 2009

Pay: WHALLEY RANGE WARD

Amount: Twelve thousand pounds only   **£12,000**

Funds will be available as part of the CASH grant budget from Manchester City Council

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"All community sectors getting involved in local decision making"

Quotes from Chorlton Resident involved in PB

Purpose of the Toolkit

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a mechanism of community engagement to devolve power or influence of public budgets to the community at a local level. Participatory Budgeting can be applied to any small grants or a main public budget. The purpose of this toolkit is to demonstrate how PB can be applied through the CASH grants process. In order to carry out PB effectively, a clear process is required and the toolkit sets out an approach, which has been developed in line with feedback from 12 national PB pilots and local pilots in Fallowfield, Whalley Range, Chorlton and Northenden. The toolkit can be used as a guide and be adapted to suit individual wards.

If you are interested in carrying out a "U Decide" event and would like further information, please contact Angela Hillas, Senior Programme Officer Community Engagement at a.hillas@manchester.gov.uk or on 0161 234 4093.

Thank you to everyone who contributed the development of the guide including Angela Hillas, Helen Parry and Jolanta Shields (Area Coordination and Third Sector Team) ward support officers Katrina Keane, Andrew Jones, Emma Molloy, Lorna Herbert and Sarah Wolfe, and Patrick Hanfling, Intergenerational Strategy Co-ordinator.

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1. Frequently Asked Questions

What is Participatory Budgeting (PB)?

> **"The chance to have a say in how money is spent in the community"**
> Quote from Chorlton Resident involved in PB

Participatory budgeting (PB) directly involves local people making decisions on spending priorities for a specific public budget. It is a powerful tool for engaging with communities and can be used to engage a broader spread of people, not just those who would normally get involved. There are various forms that PB can take. In Manchester Councillors, Ward Co-ordinators, and Support Officers have been encouraged to use CASH grants to engage residents and community groups to discuss and vote on spending priorities. This has been done through "U Decide" Events.

Nationally, a number of other PB models have evolved including community grants pots, a discreet pot of money for a particular area or theme, and funding for mainstream services, where residents vote on which public services should receive additional funding. PB has been used by PCT's Police authorities, central government departments, New Deal for Communities, housing associations and schools.

Why hold a "U Decide" Event?

> **"Glad to get involved about funding decisions and being involved as a resident"**
> Quote from Northenden Resident involved in PB

From April 2009 all council services have a "duty to involve"[1] residents and communities in local decision-making. There are many advantages to holding a "U Decide" event (see deciding to do a PB event). Pilots have shown that "U Decide" events help to contribute to a number of National Indicators including NI4 the number of people who feel that they can influence decisions in their local area, and NI5 Satisfaction with local area. Following initial pilots in Manchester, the Member/ Officer Panel looking at Neighbourhood Working considered how "U Decide" events have worked in a number of wards in the city and has recommended that Members consider its use in their wards.

How will "U Decide" encourage more groups to get involved?

> **"The nature of PB brought known groups into the process who would otherwise not be involved."**
> Quote from staff member involved in PB

"U Decide" pilots have show that they can help to engage with residents who have not recently been engaged in council services. For residents and voluntary/community groups who want to bid for funding, the process is

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[1] "Duty to Inform, Consult and Involve Act" April 2009, requires councils to inform, consult and involve residents or representatives in all significant one off or ongoing decisions

straight forward an simpler than other processes e.g. filling in a CASH grant form. Applicants need to identify a project idea, which will help to improve the area. It is envisaged that people who come to the event to vote will in the future submit project ideas themselves at subsequent events.

How long will the "U Decide" process take?

"It is time consuming, and people should plan for that."
Quote from staff member involved in PB

It is advisable to begin the "U Decide" process about 3/4 months prior to the actual event in order to plan effectively and ensure everything runs according to plan.   It is hoped that the toolkit will limit the amount of time required but careful and timely planning and preparation for the event will be required.

Task	What this may involve	Total estimated time
Discussing/ Briefing Members	Initially, you will need to agree with members to do a PB event and brief them regularly on the progress	3hrs
Setting up and running the steering group to oversee the event	It is envisaged that 3 steering group meetings may be required at 1 ½ - 2 hours each. There will also be preparation time required and writing up of minutes/notes	8hrs
Publicising the event	This will depend on how you plan to do it (e.g. website, radio, newsletter, letter) but it will probably take the most amount of time and effort. You will need to ensure you have informed local community, voluntary organisations, resident and tenant groups, local schools and services within your ward.	9hrs
Workshop	It is recommended to hold 2 half day sessions to provide information and support to potential bidders	8hrs
Compiling list of bids /checking against criteria and informing applicants	It will take time to prepare and notify applicants and publicise the projects going through to the "U Decide" event	2hrs
Preparation for the U Decide Event	This will include organising a suitable venue, refreshments, order of the event and presentations on the day	4hrs
Overseeing the delivery of projects	This will depend on the number of successful projects and the level of support they require. This will be an ongoing process until the projects are completed	4hrs
Follow up and evaluating the process	Giving feedback following the event. Writing report and feeding back to/from steering group and members	6hrs

Where will the money come from to put on the event?
For wards wishing to do a "U Decide event using CASH grant funding, a small amount of funding may be available from the Area Coordination and Third Sector Team. For 2009/10, there was up to £200 per ward allocated.

Where can you get advice and support?
You can get further advice from the Angela Hillas and Jolanta Shields in the Area Coordination Team.

2. Deciding to do a "U Decide" event

> **"Allows residents to decide what local projects get funding and to hear people talk about projects they are passionate about"**
> Quote from Chorlton Resident involved in PB

In Manchester "U Decide Events have been carried out using CASH grant funding and also funding allocated from central government "Connecting Communities" program in order to: -

- Increase the number of people who feel that they have been able to influence decision making in their locality measured by National Indicator 4 (NI 4)
- Increase general satisfaction with local area measured by National Indicator 5 (NI5)
- To strengthen participatory engagement, local democracy and resident empowerment
- To strengthen transparent and accountable decision making

Following the pilots there were other national indicators that the events contributed to such as NI 6 The number of people participating in regular volunteering.

Where wards are oversubscribed with CASH grant a "U Decide" event to find out what local people think are the priorities within the ward. Where a ward does not usually generate enough CASH grants the event can be used to encourage further projects and engage with groups who have not participated in CASH before.

If you decide to do an event, please complete **Appendix 1 Decision to carry out a "U Decide" Event.**

> **"It's a really good way to meet the different groups living and working in the area, finding out what everyone is doing"**
> Quote from Fallowfield Resident involved in PB

It is important to recognise that when holding a "U Decide" event, skills and time are needed to engage with communities and build their capacity to participate. However, there are many advantages to both staff and residents in carrying out an event:

Advantages for Councillors, Ward Co-ordinators and Support Officers

- Can help to find out what really matters to communities
- Can demonstrate accountability and shows that people can influence and make a difference in their local area
- Shows that they are responsive to local needs
- Can help to improve social cohesion in wards
- Leads to better-targeted and cost effective projects/services

- Encourages communities to take ownership of projects
- Where necessary it can help to re-engage councillors, Ward Support officers and Coordinators with the community
- Can help to reconnect people with the democratic process
- Can increase and help to prioritise the number of cash grant applications received

Elected members have a key role in driving the process and it is important that they are comfortable with it and informed.

Advantages for individuals and wider community

- Opportunity for people to engage in the process of public spending and enables them to decide on priorities at a neighbourhood level.
- Ensures greater influence and transparency over budgets
- Can help to build trust
- Encourages people to come together and find out what else is happening n their ward
- Can help to develop people's sense of place and feeling of belonging within their ward
- The process will help to capacity build communities to develop new skills e.g. managing budgets, presenting reports
- Enables communities to take ownership of projects

Feedback from local PB Events

In 2009 / 10, 4 "U Decide" pilots took place across the following wards:

Chorlton
In Chorlton, £10,000 was allocated from Chorlton Wards Cash Grant budget to hold a Participatory Budgeting event for residents in Chorlton in October 2009. The maximum amount accepted for each bid was £1,000. 16 project bids were submitted to the value of £13,966.85, and accepted in line with the funding criteria. A total of 141 people attended the event and 102 people were eligible to vote. A number of people were not eligible to vote as they did not live in the Chorlton ward. Of the 16 project bids submitted, and 12 projects were funded.

Fallowfield
In February 2010 Fallowfield ward allocated £10,000 to hold a U Decide event for residents in Fallowfield. The maximum amount accepted for each bid was £1,500. 11 project bids were submitted to the value of £14,350, and accepted in line with the funding criteria. A total of 46 people attended the event and 34 people were eligible to vote as they lived in the Fallowfield ward. Of the 11 project bids submitted, 8 projects were funded to the value of £10,150.

Whalley Range
Whalley Range allocated £12,000 to carry out a U decide event in March 2010. The maximum amount accepted for each bid was £1,000. 17 project bids were submitted to the value of £14,965, and accepted in line with the funding criteria. A total of 102 people attended the event and 84 people were

eligible to vote as they lived in the Whalley Range ward.   Of the 17 project bids submitted, 14 projects were funded to the value of £12,265.

Northenden

In January 2010, Northenden Ward secured £50,000 from central government to increase community engagement activity in the ward and empower local residents. £15,000 of this was allocated to a "U Decide Event which took place in March 2010. The maximum amount accepted for each bid was £2,000. In Northenden the U Decide event was part of an ongoing dialogue with residents as part of the connecting communities funding received. 12 Project bids were submitted to the value of £20,383, and accepted in line with the funding criteria. A total of 90 people attended the event and 71 people were eligible to vote.   Of the 12 project bids submitted, 9 projects were funded.

Further information on local pilots can be sought from Angela Hillas, Senior Programme Officer Community Engagement at a.hillas@manchester.gov.uk or on 0161 234 4093.

National Pilots

A number of national PB pilots have taken place and feedback has been largely very positive. In Keighly, Bradford £130,000 was available for local projects from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. A Reference group was set up made up of staff at Bradford Vision, Keighley Voluntary Services, Bradford Council and the wider voluntary sector. Residents prioritised spending themes – approximately 400 responses were generated from door to door interviews and at community events. Local groups were invited to send in project proposals to bid for the money. Bids were reviewed by the scrutiny panel of local service providers and councilors. Invitations to the Decision Day were sent to all residents in the eligible areas. At the event voting took place in 2 parts, 2 sessions in the morning and 3 in the afternoon. Participants were allowed 3 minutes to make their presentation and voting was carried out on paper sheets after every 5 presentations. After the event Bradford Vision distributed funds to the successful projects. Keighley Voluntary Services provided support and monitoring.

Following the event one participant said:

"The process contributed to community cohesion as there was a coming together of different communities and a greater understanding of each others different needs".

For further information on PB see www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk

3. Identifying how much budget will be allocated and setting a cap.

> **"Event a good idea which should be sustained. Needs a bigger budget"**
> **"Some groups asked for too much money"**
> Quotes from Chorlton Residents involved in PB

Allocating a Budget

Prior to carry out a "U Decide" event, it is important to establish how much of the CASH grant budget will be used for a PB event. This may depend on the number of cash grant applications being generated in your ward. The amount you decide to use should be relevant to the local issues in your ward. If it is the first time you are doing the event you may feel more comfortable in using a small amount e.g. £10,000 with a view to increasing the amount in future years.

Don't forget you will need a separate budget for admin and publicity costs, holding the event, refreshments etc. This should not come out of the general CASH grant budget. For WSO's carrying out a "U Decide" event using CASH grant funding, a small budget may be available from the central team. In 2009/10 up to £200 will be available for each ward to do a PB event.

Setting a Cap for Bids

You will need to decide if you want to set a maximum amount per bid. There are advantages and disadvantages to this.

Advantages
If you decide to set a cap you will be able to influence the number of bids that are successful e.g. if you had a total budget of £10,000 and set a cap of £1,000 you would be able to fund at least 10 projects. It is also one way of preventing the process being taken over or dominated by one specific group. So far all of the pilots which have taken place in Manchester have set a cap.

Disadvantages
One disadvantage of setting a cap or setting a cap too low is that you will limit the number of larger scale projects received which would cost more than the amount set. If you decide to set a cap you must make it clear in the publicity information what the cap is and bids over this amount cannot be considered.

4. Setting up a steering group

One of the key successes to PB is about engaging the right people at the right time in the right way. The most effective way of ensuring this is to set up a steering group to drive the PB process forward and ensure the community is engaged effectively.   The steering group should be made up of resident representatives, community and voluntary organisations, council officers and other services from the local area. This will ensure joint ownership of the process rather than people feeling something is being imposed on them. There may already be a group set up who could oversee this (e.g. Ward Coordination meeting). It is recommended that between 5 and 10 people sit on the steering group. It is important to have input from community representatives but it also needs to be manageable.

To set up the steering group:

- Identify who the key community and voluntary groups are in your local area. 1 central place may help to do this www.**onecentralplace**.org/
- Identify local residents who would be happy to be a part of the group. This could include a representative of residents committees, local Key Information Networks (KIN's), Local Involvement Networks (LINk's) members, older people's network, young people's network, BME/faith groups etc
- Identify local services in your ward such as schools, Parent and Teacher Associations, police, libraries etc
- Identify if there are any possible conflict of interest issues and how you will address these e.g. can members submit project bids/vote at event?

Suggested introductory information to give to members of the Steering Group can be found in **Appendix 3 Draft letter to steering group participants**.

1st Steering Group Meeting

It is important to give people enough notice to attend the meeting and ensure that they have appropriate information including venue, time etc. You may need to arrange an evening meeting so that community members are able to attend. There needs to be a balance between giving enough information and an overload of information. It is important that they understand what PB is; CASH grant requirements and specific WARD priorities, purpose of the group, the proposed project plan and timescales for activity. See **Appendix 4 Draft agenda for first steering group meeting.**

Terms of reference for the group

It is good practice to set terms of reference for the group so that people are clear of the purpose and parameters of the group and their role in driving the process. It is important that they are developed with the group so they are comfortable with them. See **Appendix 5 Terms of reference for steering group**, which could be used as a suggested list or a prompt as part of the discussion.

5. Planning (work plan)

Difficult to hear (need to use microphones). Clear voting instructions needed and better publicity (which would have got more ideas in)
<div align="right">Quote from Resident involved in PB</div>

Preparation for the event should be done through a steering group. It is important to develop a work plan to ensure the process runs smoothly and that people know in advance what needs to be done, by whom and when. The document should be developed and owned by the steering group who will be responsible for taking the process forward. The plan should be reviewed frequently to ensure that everything is running in line with the timescales set. **Appendix 2** Draft work plan includes the main actions required to carry out an effective "U Decide" event.

Feedback from Local U Decide Pilots

In order to plan for the events it is useful to look at the key areas for improvement identified through the 4 local pilots in 2009/10:

- **Publicity** - people felt that the event should be publicised more effectively and people should have had more time to submit applications
- **Microphone/PA system required** - In 2 areas people felt that a microphone should have been used and some people struggled to hear.
- **Registration Process** – As part of the registration process we asked residents to give their name, address, contact details. We also asked people how they had heard about the event and if they had attended any council meetings in the last 6 months. Whilst the questions were helpful in evaluating the event, they did slow down the registration process. We have therefore built these questions into the evaluation.
- **Venue not fit for purpose** - At 2 events people felt that the venue was not fit for purpose and should have been bigger with better seating arrangements and more room for stalls.
- **Voting system** - Some people felt the voting and scoring system should have been clearer. This appeared largely due to the explanation of the scoring rather than the scoring mechanism itself. We have used a ranking system rather than a scoring system to make the process fairer

Ideally try to ensure a 3/4-month timeframe in which to plan and organise the event. This will ensure that you have sufficient time for preparing and publicising the event and providing support to community groups who want to submit bids.

Time of event
It is important to think about the timing of the event to maximise participation and ensure the majority of people who want to, are able to attend. Some feedback from the National pilots suggested that Saturday afternoon would

attract the optimum number of residents. In Manchester PB pilots have tended to be held on an evening. Ensure that the event does not clash with cultural / religious festivals or other important events to ensure you are not preventing people from attending.

Location of event
You will need to: -
- Identify a suitable venue – it is advisable to use an existing community resource within the ward (e.g. school, community centre)
- Ensure the venue will be big enough to hold the amount of people that may turn up. You may also want to allow local groups to have display stalls to market their projects and advertise other engagement opportunities
- Also be prepared to scale down the event
- If possible have separate room for refreshments / food and stalls/information
- Ensure that there are enough staff or people to support the event
- Ensure that the venue is accessible to people with a disability, to people on public transport, to people in a car
- Best practice advises to avoid religious places and places that serve alcohol as this could also exclude people
- You will need a microphone / PA system so that people can hear the presentations? Even if you think you will be heard other people doing the presentations will normally follow your lead so make sure you use the microphone. You may need to remind people to hold the microphone close to their mouth when speaking
- Will you be providing childcare facilities for people who have children?
- Will you be covering transport costs?

Advertising the event
Ensure that the opportunity to bid for projects and the "U Decide" event is advertised effectively and is inclusive (see section 6 and 7)

Providing refreshments/food
Ensure that enough refreshments/food are ordered as this could make or break an event. Check that there is:
- Refreshments available on arrival (sometimes people arrive early)
- Refreshments available during the break – to ensure the smooth running of the event and that there is enough time to count the votes, make sure people have completed and returned their voting form before refreshments for the break are served
- If serving food ensure all dietary requirements are catered for e.g. vegetarian, halal etc
- Staff/ steering group members/ volunteers to help with refreshments

Feedback from the event
You will need to get feedback from people who attend the event to evaluate if it has been successful and if anything could be improved in the future (see section 9)

6. Ensuring a fair process

"Some well established groups already had large support and influence the decision"

Quote from Northenden Resident involved in PB

It is important to agree with the steering group process for: -

- Deciding who can and can't vote
- Developing a transparent system for counting votes
- Allocation of funding
- How projects will be monitored

Deciding who can and can't vote

In the previous pilots the following issues arose:

- **Living in the ward** - anyone living within the boundaries of the ward is eligible to vote. **Residents who submit project bids** are entitled to vote and can vote for their own project. The ranking systems adopted ensures that they also score other projects in order of preference
- **Young People** - Through the national pilot there were issues raised about what age people should be able to vote at. Following advice from youth services in the previous pilots it was agreed that any young person at secondary school or older should have the opportunity to vote at the event. It is important to engage young people and allow them to get involved and participate in democratic processes. This will be reviewed following future PB events.
- **Steering group members** - When deciding on membership for the steering group you will need to work out whether representatives should be able to submit project proposals and vote at the event. If you think they should not then you will need to make this clear to people when setting up the steering group. This should be agreed at a local level

Developing a transparent system for counting votes

- On arrival to the event, people should be registered, given a voting slip with a voting number on and be required to give their postcode or first line of address to prove that they live in the ward. See **Appendix 6 Voting slip and Appendix 19 Registration Form**
- If you are giving out any written information about the bids, make sure everyone receives the same information about each bid.
- Feedback from the national pilots found that a ranking system rather than a scoring system was more effective in ensuring that the process is fair. Voters should be invited to rank each presentation in order of importance e.g. if there were 12 projects to vote on, they would be asked to put the projects in order from 1 –12, 12 being the projects they would most like to see funded and 1 being the least they would

like to see funded. This must be done correctly for their vote to be registered otherwise the vote could be spoiled.

- When the votes are being counted **(see Appendix 20 Voting Spreadsheet**) make sure the inputting of data and the totalling of scores is checked by at least one other person (preferably 2). It may be helpful to provide some form of entertainment for when the votes are being counted e.g. local school children doing a performance.

Allocating of funding

Before funding can be given: -

- All necessary information is received from the group e.g. bank account etc
- People are aware of their contract responsibilities in terms of providing monitoring information etc
- Timescales agreed for carrying out the project
- Ensure people are aware of how long it will take to receive funding (you may need to check this with Area Coordination and 3rd Sector Team prior to the event)
- Ensure contracts are issued and signed

Option of "Giving back" some grant

At some "U Decide" events, there has been an option for any successful project to give back some of their funding to help fund another project. If you want to include this option you will need to think about the following:

- Will the original projects still be able to be completed with a reduction of funding?
- What if some projects agree to give some money back but it is not enough to fund a whole project?
- Which projects will you fund if people do offer to give some back – should this be the project with the next highest score?

How projects will be monitored

Clear processes should be agreed for: -

- Frequency of monitoring returns re spend and progress, when and how they will be collected (see **Appendix 15 "U Decide" Project progress form** and **Appendix 16 "U Decide" End of project form**)
- How any requests for changes to original proposal will be considered (e.g. by steering group)
- How projects will be signed off
- What overall feedback will be required from the project

7. Inviting project ideas and to "U Decide Event"

> **"Promotion for this event needs to be pushed to get a broader range of Fallowfield residents in. Great start though; I feel it will have a profound effect on the community"**
>
> Quote from Fallowfield resident involved in PB

It is important to have a name or branding for the event and in the Manchester pilots we have used "U Decide". It is vital that both the opportunity to bid and the "U Decide" event are published well in advance and as widely as possible to ensure that as many residents as possible aware of the process and are able to submit bids and/or attend event.

Publicising the opportunity to bid for projects

You will need to give at least 10-12 weeks publicity and preparation/notice time to residents in order for them to put in bids and arrange to attend the event. Information needs to be developed in line with how you plan to market the event. You will need to explain: -

- Who can submit a bid
- How they can submit a bid and what the bid should contain
- Deadline for the bid
- What happens once the bid has been submitted
- The purpose of the "U Decide" event and what they will be required to do
- What will be required by bidders if projects are successful at the "U Decide" event

See **Appendix 9 Letter re project bid and Appendix 18 Publicity**

It is important to identify ways of attracting or advertising to residents who are not affiliated to a specific active group. There are a number of ways of doing this

- Entertainment can be used particularly to target those not engaged
- Targeted publicity - if there is a lack of representation from young people, invite some young people's groups to put forward bids and/or provide entertainment
- If possible, allow local groups to have stalls to market their project and advertise other engagement activity.

Who can submit a project bid?

Anyone living or working in a ward can submit a project proposal, which they feel, will benefit residents living within the ward. This includes residents who are submitting a proposal.

How do you submit a project bid and what should it contain?

To submit a bid you will need to provide: -
- How much are you bidding for?
- What difference the project will make?
- Who will benefit?
- How will it be delivered?

See **Appendix 7 Project Submission Form**

Deadline for the bid

Ensure that people are clearly informed of the deadline for bids to be received and that any bid submitted following this date cannot be considered

What happens once a project bid has been submitted?

A small panel made up of council officers and community members will check the bids to ensure:
- Bids are in line with council policy
- There are no perceived legal or health and safety issues
- It is not considered as personal items, e.g. individual training
- The bid is not from commercial or profit-making organisations
- The activity has not already taken place
- The activity is not deemed to be of a religious or party political nature
- The bid does not involve the purchase of alcohol or gambling activities
- The bid is not deemed to be for the financial benefit of the applicant

See **Appendix 8 Eligibility Criteria for "U Decide Event"** which should be completed by Ward staff and councillors.

You will then need to inform bidders if their project has been put forward to the "U Decide" event. See **Appendix 10 Letter re project bid going forward to "U Decide" event** and **Appendix 11 Letter re project being unsuccessful in going forward to "U Decide" event**

Inviting to "U Decide" Event
When inviting people to the event you will need to explain: -

- Date, time and venue
- Why you are inviting them to the event
- Who can attend / vote at the event?
- What will happen at the event?
- What kinds of projects can be funded?
- Where has the money come from?

Be clear what time the start and what time people will need to be there for if they want to vote. This will ensure maximum attendance for this part of the event

You will also need to get some idea of the number of people who will be attending the event and if they have any specific requirements e.g. dietary, access, childcare.

See **Appendix 12 Letter re "U Decide" event.**

Bidders attending the "U Decide" Event

If a bid is put forward, bidders will be required to attend the "U Decide" event and do a 3 minute presentation on their project saying
- What is their project idea?
- How much they are bidding for and how the money will be spent?
- What difference the project will make to the local area and who will benefit?
- How will it be delivered?

Local residents who attend the event have the opportunity to rank all projects to show what they think will benefit the community the most. The results will be announced at the end of the event and the projects that score the most will be funded.

What will be required by bidders if projects are successful at the "U Decide" event

People will be notified at the "U Decide" event if their project bid has been successful. If it is they will need to: -
- Ensure that we have all necessary information such as bank account details, referee etc
- Sign a contract to say that they will carry out the project in line with agreed requirements
- Provide feedback from the project including feedback from people involved and people who will benefit, photos, etc
- If the project is over a long period of time, provide regular monitoring returns regarding spend and progress of the project

For audit purposes, for each successful bid you are required to:

- Put a "U Decide" **Sticker (Appendix 17)** on the front of a CASH grant form and attach the completed Project Submission Form **(Appendix 7)** to the first page of the form.
- Complete the bank details information on the CASH Grant form (including referee organisation if group does not have bank account) and pass to the Area Coordination Team

Other things to consider

Find out how you can attract bids from members of the wider community in addition to residents affiliated with community and voluntary groups. In

addition to sending out information, arrange a series of meetings/ workshops or coaching sessions which community groups to explain the process and encourage them to bid. Support can be provided for groups or local people in putting a bid.

Groups may need support in preparing a presentation for the evening. Guidance should be given to all groups offering simple pointers.

8. "U Decide" Event

Registration process

On arrival to the event, people should be registered, given a voting slip with a voting number on and be required to put their postcode or first line of address to prove that they live in the local area. See **Appendix 19 Registration Form.**

The registration process was identified by residents and staff as a key area for improvement. At least one registration desk is needed with 2 staff members supporting it – this could be split into residents and non residents.
In order to ensure the voting process was fair it is necessary to:

- Take peoples' name, address and contact details and check that they live in the ward (they are only eligible to vote if they live within the ward)
- issue people with a reference number and a voting pack
- Voting pack should be made for residents and non residents.
    - For residents this should include agenda for the event, summary of the project bids, voting form and feedback sheet.
    - For non residents Agenda for the event, summary of the project bids and feedback form

Agenda for "U Decide" Event

Make sure there is an agenda for the event so people know the running order, when breaks will be and when the event will end. Always try to ensure you stick to this and if not explain any changes

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

- Welcome people to the event and thank them for coming
- Chair to introduce themselves and anyone else supporting with the event
- Explain fire procedure, where toilets are etc

2. **Purpose of the event**

Suggested introduction:
- £**{amount}** has been allocated from MCC Cash Grants to help **{ward name}** Ward residents decide on local priorities
- This is one of a number of pilots carried out in Manchester to:
    - Help people feel they can influence local decision making,
    - Help people improve their local area
    - Strengthen resident involvement

- Information in packs contain agenda for the event, further information on the projects submitted, ranking form and event evaluation form
- People who live and work in Manchester have had the opportunity to put in funding proposals for up to £**{cap amount}** with ideas of how to improve their local area. Tonight people who live in the Ward can vote on what projects they think will help improve their area the most. Projects that are successful will be announced at the end of the event
- Explaining the rules – Each group that have put forward a project proposal will do a 2 minute presentation on their project. At the end of all of the presentations people will have 15 minutes to rank the projects in order of preference.
- To make your vote count you must follow the instructions on the form, ranking all of the projects from **{no of projects}** to 1, **{no of projects}** for the project you would most like to be funded and 1 for the least
- not all projects can be funded and funding will be allocated to the projects that score the highest on the night

3. Ground rules

You may wish to set or establish some ground rules with the group to explain the principles to abide by during an event. These may include:
- Turning phones off or on silent during presentations
- Respect for speakers
- Rules on ranking projects (e.g. must rank projects from highest to lowest or will be disqualified)
- Any limitations on who can vote (e.g. only people in area, age restrictions etc)

4. Presentations on the project

- Each bidder to do a 2 minute presentation on the project
- Make reference to the time available when introducing the projects to stop people going over their time limit
- Ensure projects keep to time limit and do not over run as this could be seen as providing an unfair advantage

5. You Decide

- Ensure voters only have 1 voting form, voting reference number and have postcode/address on form to show they are from the ward
- Ask participants to score each presentation by putting projects in order of most important to least important. E.g. if there are 12 projects rank the projects from 1-12, 1 being least important, 12 being most important. This must be done correctly for their vote to be registered

6. Break / Adding up the scores
- Ensure refreshments are available for people at the break once they have completed and handed in their voting forms

- If applicable put on entertainment once people have had a chance to vote and get refreshments
- Total the scores for project
- Ensure at least one person checks the inputting and totaling of the scores to ensure it is accurate
- Rank the bids from highest to lowest and work out which project bids will be funded depending on level of grant

7. **Final scores and allocating funding**
   - Tell people how many votes have been counted
   - Announce successful projects, starting with the highest score and go down to the last bid to be funded
   - If you have enough time and a lap top it may help to show the scores on a projector
   - Option of successful projects giving back some grant?
   - Put a "**U Decide" Sticker (Appendix 17)** on the front of a CASH grant form and attach the completed Project Submission Form **(Appendix 7)** to the first page of the form.
   - Complete the bank details information on the CASH Grant form (including referee organisation if group does not have bank account) and pass to the Area Coordination Team

8. **Announcement of Winning projects**
   - Explaining that all successful projects will be required to complete a grant acceptance form in line with funding criteria
   - Projects will be required to be completed by September 10
   - Groups will be required to complete an evaluation form to say what the outcome of the project was
   - Announcing projects and number of votes

9. **Feedback from the event**
   - Ask participant to complete a feedback form and monitoring sheet to give us feedback from the event and help us to improve any future events. If possible provide an incentive to completing the form
   - Explain how you will feed back to people following the event and how you will inform them of the completed projects **(see Appendix 14 "U Decide" event evaluation form)**

9. Evaluation

Evaluation of the "U Decide" Process

Prior to the "U Decide" event you will need to work out how you are going to evaluate if the process is successful. You will need to write an evaluation report to see if the project aims have been met i.e.

- The number of people who feel that they have been able to influence decision making in their locality (NI 4)
- General satisfaction with local area (NI 5)
- To strengthen participatory engagement, local democracy and resident empowerment
- To strengthen transparent and accountable decision making across the ward

Evaluation of "U Decide" Event

To help you evaluate the event, it is advisable to get feedback from participants to assess whether the aims and objectives of the event were met, what went well and how future events could be improved. **See Appendix 14 "U Decide" event evaluation form**

Evaluation of Projects

The purpose of monitoring and evaluating the projects is to ensure projects are successfully completed and that evidence is provided to show that public money is spent appropriately.

Projects will be required to provide feedback from the project including feedback from people involved and people who will benefit. See **Appendix 16 "U Decide" End of project form**. If projects are carried out over a long period of time you may require them to provide regular monitoring returns regarding spend and progress of the project. See **Appendix 15 "U Decide" project progress form**.

The report should also contain information on:
- No of participants who attended
- Equality monitoring information to find out if we are engaging with all sectors of the community
- Evaluation of "U Decide" event
- Feedback from members of the steering groups
- What have you learnt as a result of the process
- What would you do differently next time
- How will you measure the longer term success of the project e.g. Measuring NI 4 and 5 scores in your area following event.

You may also want to provide further information on evaluation of the projects once they have been completed